

# Importance of sports

Business



Many people do not realize the importance of high school sports; let me tell a story. There were two completely different kids that went to the same high school. One of them participated in high school sports from Fall to Spring. This kid kept up with his grades and kept busy with sports and homework. The other kid did not participate in any kind of school sports. The kid who didn't play any sports went home after school every day, so instead of playing sports or doing homework in the free time available, he had to find something else to keep busy. Having all this free time led trouble. There is no need to go into more depth in the story; the point is that people do not realize that high school sports are a crucial part of being a good student and becoming a successful adult. “ The evidence supporting sports participation for young people is overwhelming.

.. It has the power to combat everything from racism to low self-image, to the high-school drop-out rate.” (Castle) One of the many benefits of playing high school athletics is that the Student has to sign a code of conduct that will keep the student athlete responsible for their actions. “ 1) Use or possession of tobacco products. 2) Being present more than 5 minutes at a function where alcohol and/or drugs are being consumed/used or have been consumed or used.

3) Use or possession of intoxicating beverages and illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia. 4) Committing unlawful acts that have or could have resulted in a misdemeanor or higher penalty. 5) Serious and/or repeated violation of school rules. 6) Serious and/or repeated unsportsmanlike conduct.” This is a list of the rules that must be strictly followed in order to participate in a

sports team at Nooksack Valley High School. If any of these rules are broken during season the athlete is penalized by being ineligible to play for 60% of the season.

If the code is violated during the off-season, the penalty is disqualification for 40% of the season. Athletes that take their sport seriously, and hope to move on to a collegiate level know that missing 40% to 60% percent of a season will hurt their chances of being scouted substantially. The risk taken by breaking the athletic code is not worth losing a chance of a scholarship to continue playing a sport a student loves at a competitive level. The Sumner School District has a great way of explaining the code of conduct to the community. “ This activities code is designed to establish a reasonable, high standard for participants in co-curricular activities that empower our participants to make appropriate decisions, rather than to be punitive and deny access to such activities.

Co-curricular activities are a privilege and completely voluntary. Along with this privilege comes the expectation of a higher standard of behavior and conduct. Participants in these activities are considered to be in positions of leadership representing themselves, their families, the team, school, district and community.” (Sumner Athletics) This brief blurb from the Sumner Athletics Code of Conduct represents the higher standard athletes, actors, singers, dancers, and all participants of extracurricular activities are held to. Being involved in sports does not only reflect the athlete, but is a representation of the entire student body and staff members. The responsibility held by athletes to uphold this good reputation is one of the

main reasons student athletes are proven to perform better in school, and stay out of trouble.

Being a student athlete in high school does not only keep the student responsible, it also provides physical activity for students who have been sitting in the classroom all day. Not only does physical activity contribute to a healthy body weight and prevention of heart disease and type 2 diabetes, but also shows astounding benefits in academic performance and lowering depression. Penny McCullagh, a psychologist, found in her research that exercise has the ability to work like an anti-depressant. McCullagh states, “The most common treatments for depression, for example, are psychotherapy or medication. Psychologists have found that exercise is a third successful alternative.

” (McCullagh) The article states the best results to help depression comes when a combination of exercise and psychotherapy happens together. The physical exercise from sports also helps brain function. “ According to a study done by the Department of Exercise Science at the University of Georgia, even briefly exercising for 20 minutes facilitates information processing and memory functions.” Just the exercise alone from sports is already helping with depression, brain functions, or just staying fit and in shape. There are many studies with evidence to support the benefit exercise has in the classroom. “ Researchers at Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan tracked the grades and exercise habits of 266 undergraduates. It was found that students who regularly participate in vigorous physical activity had higher G. P. A.’s.” (Parker-Pope) Regular exercise has a

tremendous effect on the brain, especially in the high school years when it is still developing. Along with these benefits, being part of a sports team influences attitudes on and off the court or field.

Student athletes are proven to have a stronger sense of leadership, motivation, and work ethic than their peers who do not participate in after school activities. Belonging to a team or club creates a drive in students to succeed in all aspects of life. Many Americans today are suffering from being obese or overweight. According to the American Heart Association, “ 23. 9 million children ages 2 to 19 are overweight or obese; 33. 0% of boys and 30.

4% of girls.” (AHA) That means almost two thirds of all the Americans are at an unhealthy weight. According to Centers for Disease Control, obesity brings in \$147 billion in healthcare costs per year. There are many different causes for obesity such as stress, inactivity, and depression. There is one simple solution to decrease the amount of obese adults and children in America.

Playing sports helps with all three of the problems. Habits are formed at a young age, so if sports are a part of a lifestyle as a young child, they will most likely be a part of their future. When some people think about exercise, they instantly think boring, tedious, painful workouts in an over packed gym. What most people don't know is that exercise can be fun! All it takes is the motivation to get off the couch. Exercising with others increases the chance that you will stick with it.

Sports teams are the ultimate example of this. When a support system is built in, with the drive to not let your teammates down, the motivation to be physically fit comes naturally. People argue that playing sports leaves no time for homework. However, there is a system at Nooksack Valley High School called study table. Study table is an hour long class where any missing homework can be complete before school.

This system was made to give extra help to kids that are failing classes while playing sports. Nooksack Valley's athletic director, Tom Harmon, checks the grades of each student athlete every Sunday. If any students are failing a class a study table is assigned each morning for the entire week. If the student is failing more than one class then they are not allowed to participate in any games or tournaments held that week. The phrase "student before athlete" is commonly used among coaches and staff members. Being a successful student is far more important than making touchdowns or scoring goals.

Student first, athlete second is the only way to ensure students are prepared for higher education or entering the work force after graduation. Some people may argue that high school sports need to be cut due to lack of funding. Personally, I think without the opportunity to participate in sports students will lack the development of very important life skills. From experience, I can say that being a member of the NVHS football team has taught me how to work hard for what I want, how to step up and be a leader, and how to communicate with others and be a team player. These skills and personality traits are all things that future employers are looking for when making hiring decisions.

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Managers know that people who have grown up being involved in sports teams and clubs are trained to work well with others, and have a strong work ethic. Marty Brounstein lists ten qualities of an effective team player as the ability to demonstrate reliability, communicate constructively, listen actively, function as an active participant, share openly and willingly, exhibit flexibility, show commitment, work as a problem solver, and, finally, treat others with respect and support. “ Team players with commitment look beyond their own piece of the work and care about the team’s overall work. In the end, their commitment is about winning — not in the sports sense of beating your opponent but about seeing the team succeed and knowing they have contributed to this success. Winning as a team is one of the great motivators of employee performance. Good team players have and show this motivation.

(Brounstein) In conclusion, being actively involved in high school sports shows success on and off the court or field as well as in future career choices. Participation in sports teams is not only beneficial while in high school but in all stages of life. Skills learned from coaches and teammates can be applied in meeting new friends in college, at job interviews, and in many other instances. “ We have data indicating sports and other extracurricular activities do better than academic classes in teaching leadership, teamwork, time management and other skills crucial for success in the workplace.” (Mathews) While some may say that high school athletics need to be cut because the money spent on them could be put to better use, the evidence of many studies proves this statement to be false. Without the

opportunity to be a part of a team or club, students lose out on a great learning experience that acts as a foundation for the rest of their lives.

The ability to manage being a successful student as well as a good athlete takes a special skill that is developed during the high school years. There needs to be a balance between academic and athletic commitment. A student's high school career cannot only be based on one or the other. It needs a combination of the two in order for the student to reach full potential. Michael Jordan is one of the most inspiring athletes to kids around the world. He often stems his success back to his experiences with high school sports.

I believe it is stories like his that demonstrate the importance of being involved in sports teams, and the life lessons that are learned throughout the experience. A famous quote from Jordan states, " I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life.

And that is why I succeed." Works Cited American Heart, A. (2013).

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