

Contact sports

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Introduction: According to the oxford dictionary a “ Contact sport” is a sport in which participants necessarily come into bodily contact with one another, this includes football, rugby, hockey and la cross. Children and parents must be warned of the mental, physical and social risk factors that are associated with contact sports before being able to participate in them, doing so will lead to less children taking unnecessary risk. One factor that parents should be aware of is the increased risk and occurrence of injuries in children at such a young age.

Many injuries such as concussions go unnoticed therefore prolonging and escalating the severity of injuries, in some cases leading to death. For example, second impact syndrome occurs when an athlete returns to a sport too early after suffering from an initial concussion and obtains another concussion shortly after. This often causes fatal effects. Several concussions go undetected because of the difficulty in diagnosing whether one is present or has fully healed.

Although death from a sports injury is rare, the leading cause of death from a sports-related injury is a brain injury. According to stats Canada about 4. 27 million Canadian aged 12 or older suffered an injury sever enough to limit their usual activities in 2009-2010. (MAYBE CHANGE IT TO A CONTACT SPORT STAT) In more recent years there has been a discovery associated with multiple concussions known as CTE. Chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) caused by cumulative, long term neurological consequences of repetitive concussions and hits to the brain.

This causes cognitive and neuropsychiatric impairment which included depression, suicide attempts, insomnia, paranoia, and impaired

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memory. Another issue that parents need to be aware of is the increase in violence and aggression that is common in contact sports. Children are often rewarded for being aggressive which can lead to aggression and violence off the playing field. It makes it difficult for children to draw the line between what is acceptable aggression and unacceptable and may lead to violent behavior.

According to a study found results strongly suggest that participation in powered sports actually leads to an increase of enhancement of anti social involvement in the form of elevated level of violence (Participation in power sports and antisocial involvement in preadolescent and adolescent boys. Research Center for Health Promotion (HEMIL), University of Bergen, Norway) . So not only does this lead to children being violent in day to day life but also being dangerously violent in sports adding to an increase in injuries.

The glorification of violence and aggression in sports leads to kids focusing more to use their bodies rather than skill in the game, In a Dutch population-based study on 1818 school children aged 8 to 17 years showed that Over a period of 7 months, 399 sports injuries were reported in 324 youngsters. The most common types of injuries were contusions (43%) and sprains (21 %). Medical attention was needed in 25% of all cases. This is problematic because it puts children at an unfair playing field and reduces enjoyment of the game for smaller and non athletic children.

In addition coaches may unknowingly promote stereotypes such as homophobia and gender roles. It seems to be more amplified in contact sports where aggression is considered to be a more masculine trait. This can severely affect the child's ideas and concepts during the prime learning age.

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Discourse surrounding contact sports coming from coaches, even parents and fan tends to encourage the common stereotypes and leads violent behavior this view is supported by an article called (THE SPORT BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN PARENTS AND COACHES THE GOOD THE BAD THE UGLY by david light shields uni of missouri , st. ouis). Overall there are several factors that children are exposed to during contact sports that can lead to mental, physical and social risk factors. Many of these issues are unknown and unclear to parents and its our job to warn them. These factors not only harm the children themselves, it can also be detrimental to their growing process and even friends and families associated with them