

THE EFFECT OF THE STAR SPORTSMANSHIP EDUCATION MODULE ON
PARENTS' SELF-PERCEIVED SPORTSMANSHIP BEHAVIORS IN
YOUTH SPORT

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
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The purpose of this study was to examine how the STAR Sportsmanship education module affected parent behavior attached to their experience of their child's sporting endeavors. The Parent Experiences in Youth Sport (PEYS) was utilized to collect data on 95 parent's self-perceived behavior in youth sport. The PEYS consisted of an 18-item survey focused on how each participant rated their behavior as he/she experienced their child's participation in some type of youth sport activity. Each participant was administered the PEYS before and following the STAR Sportsmanship education module for parents. Participants rated their behavior based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (always) to 1 (never). Psychometric testing (e.g. content validity, known-group validity, test-retest reliability, and internal consistency) was conducted on the PEYS to provide validity and reliability evidence. The results were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 software to generate descriptive statistics of frequencies, means, and standard deviations.

The results indicated that 1) the PEYS is a reliable and valid survey for the assessment of parent sportsmanship behavior in youth sport and 2) the STAR Sportsmanship education module was an effective tool in teaching sportsmanship concepts to parents.

DEDICATIONS

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, my rock and my redeemer.”
Philippians 4:13

This dissertation is dedicated to the following:

The Lord for His wisdom according to James 1:5, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (NKJV); to Jesus, my Savior for His intercession according to Romans 8:34, “...who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us” (NKJV); and to the Holy Spirit for His comfort and guidance according to John 16:7, 13, “...for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you...Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...” (KJV). Without these three I would not have the opportunity to type these words and close this chapter of my life.

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Even though my academic pursuit has ended, I will never stop pursuing knowledge because it's the application of knowledge that makes one powerful. Now, in the words of my Lord and Savior, who was wounded for [my] transgressions, who was bruised for my iniquities: who the chastisement of [my] peace was upon and by whose stripes I am healed (Isaiah 53:5, KJV), spoke on the cross at Calvary before committing his spirit to the Father, "IT IS FINISHED!"

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The date: July 5, 2000. The activity: Youth hockey practice. The story: Youth hockey players were engaged in practice at an ice rink in Reading, Massachusetts. Thomas Junta watched as his son participated in team drills. What happened next would impact more than just the practice; it would change the lives of everyone involved. In a fit of rage, Junta confronted, attacked and beat to death Michael Costin over what witnesses said was a disagreement about how rough the practice had gone. When the assault ended, Costin lay unconscious in a pool of blood as his children helplessly looked on. Two days later, Costin was pronounced dead (Pallerino, 2003; Dahlberg, 2001). This incident did not end with Costin's death; it ended when Junta was sentenced to 6-10 years in prison for manslaughter. Incidents like this one illustrate the level of unsportsmanlike conduct by parents in the youth sport environment. More and more parents seemingly are becoming overly disruptive, hostile, and even violent (Bach, 2006) at youth sporting events.

Unruly parent behavior and violent confrontations at youth sporting events have become increasingly frequent (*Learning Through Sports*, 2007). Consequently, these behaviors have damaged parent's relationships with coaches, officials, spectators, other parents and even their own children (Singh, 2006). Parental violence and parental sports

rage (Clifton, 2003; Fiore, 2003; Heinzmann, 2002) paint a portrait of the youth sport environment as one lacking in moral and ethical conduct. Examples of parental violence at youth sporting events include the following:

- 2005: An angry father came out of the stands onto the field at an elementary football game in Washington, Indiana. The referee instructed him to return to the stands, but when the referee turned around to walk away, the parent reportedly pushed him to the ground. As a result the parent was charged with battery (Topp, 2005).
- 2004: Four parents involved in an argument with the coach at a youth football game in Lower Burrell, Pennsylvania were cited for disorderly conduct after supposedly fighting during the game. The four parents were charged with a summary count of disorderly conduct (*Valley News Dispatch*, 2004).
- 2003: The parent of a basketball player in Iowa, upset about a call, assaulted a referee, who was getting ready to shower after the game (Topp, 2005).
- 2002: Two parents engaged in a fist fight at a rugby tournament after consuming alcohol (Singh, 2006).
- 2001: A parent in Pennsylvania was criminally charged for biting a coach and shoving the official after his seven year-old son lost a pee wee wrestling match (Topp, 2005).
- 1997: Twenty-six police units responded to a riot among parents fighting at a youth football game. The incident occurred after a parent hit the referee, who marked the ball out of bounds (Topp, 2005).

- 1996: A dentist in Albuquerque, New Mexico sharpened the face guard of his son's football helmet so he could slash opposing players. Five players and a referee were hurt and the father was sentenced to two days in jail and community service (cited in Dahlberg, 2001; Palmquist, 2003).
- 1975: A mob of adults in Kissimmee, Florida attacked four coaches of a winning team of 12-year-olds with clubs and pipes, sending one coach to the hospital (Underwood, 1975). This particular example was documented as one of the first reported incidents of violence in youth sport.

Dahlberg (2007) stated, “Bad calls can lead to attacks and near riots. Sometimes, though, parents become dangerous by using misguided logic to try to help their children” (p. 1). Children are an extension of their parents; thus, they tend to see their child’s faults and successes as their own. Unfortunately, in some situations, parents get so involved in the it’s about me attitude that they lose sight of what is really important (Sanders, 2005) to the child – to have fun (*Learning Through Sports*, 2007).

In the August 2001 edition of *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, 3,000 youth were surveyed about their perspective on parental violence in sports. The survey showed that 74% of the respondents said they witnessed out-of-control adults at their games and the two most common behaviors observed were those of parents yelling at children and parents yelling at officials or coaches (Bach, 2006). Continual exposure to such conduct reinforces to the youth athlete that aggression is the best way to resolve conflict.

If parents are the critical factor in shaping both the meaning of sport and the role that sport plays in their child’s life, then educators and youth sport administrators must

create a system that addresses both the youth leagues' expected values and subsequent behaviors surrounding the production and consumption of sport. Essentially, educators and youth sport administrators must facilitate sportsmanship education for youth athletes and their parents. Sportsmanship education would articulate what sportsmanship is and why sportsmanship is needed in youth sport.

Sportsmanship is taught through educational resources and programs implemented by sporting agencies, schools, community sport and recreational programs. Currently, there are several programs that attempt to deliver sportsmanship education to parents; two of the most widely used include the Parents Association for Youth Sport (PAYS) and the American Sport Education Program (ASEP). The National Association for Youth Sport (NAYS) created PAYS, an educational program that offers a simple, effective way to make parents aware of their roles and responsibilities as they experience their child's sport. This program offers traditional educational material such as a handbook, a parent card and a subscription for *SportingKid Magazine*.

The American Sport Education Program (2008) has educated more than one million coaches, officials, sport administrators, and parents. The ASEP model provides traditional learning resources such as video tapes, workbooks, and CD-ROMs. In addition to the traditional learning resources, ASEP also provides online sportsmanship courses available for purchase and download to a person's personal computer.

Trends in education over the last decade have been revolutionized by the use of online technologies to assist or, in many cases, supplant traditional modes of instruction (Bjorner, 1993; Velsmid, 1997). The use of online or web-based learning over traditional

learning has caused debate among educators. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages; however, with the trend in education progressing toward the availability of more courses and course material online, online learning will increase in becoming the learning method of choice, especially for those whose lifestyles do not permit sitting in an actual classroom.

Online or web-based learning (Online2college.com, 2007):

- Allows anyone, anywhere, anytime the opportunity to participate, without pressure from limited time or public speaking in front of a group. Whereas, the traditional classroom usually requires everyone travel to a single location, and there is a fixed amount of time for interaction offering little to no flexibility for the student.
- May decrease the cost of attending an online program than traditional college tuition.
- Does not require textbooks, which save students money. In contrast, most traditional classes require the purchase of textbooks. The burden of purchasing a textbook can become very costly to the student's budget.
- Requires the student's self-motivation and self-discipline, which are critical success factors in online learning.
- Requires that the student have computer & internet knowledge, because everything is based on computers and internet.

End-users of online courses are often less intimidated learning material online than in a traditional classroom. Online courses can provide end-users the flexibility to learn

subject matter such as sportsmanship concepts at their own pace not being restricted to time and space. To support the use of online or web-based learning, the University of Phoenix conducted a study which demonstrated that graduate students enrolled in online courses scored 5% to 10% higher on achievement tests than graduate students enrolled in on-campus classrooms at three Arizona universities (Gubernick & Ebeling, 1997).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how the STAR Sportsmanship education module affected parent self-perceived behavior attached to their experience of their child's sporting endeavors. The STAR module educates parents on sportsmanship concepts in the context of youth sport. This module seeks to facilitate the immediate application of information presented by its users. This particular teaching tool provides multi-media that illustrate key principles, contiguity, modality, redundancy, coherence, and personalization to get the point across to parents without condemnation. Without question, as time and energy costs continue to be depleted, for parents this educational tool could serve as the most efficient and effective way to articulate those values and behaviors that better define the meaning and purpose of sport for both parents and children.

Research Question

What effect does the STAR sportsmanship education module have on a parent's self-perceived sportsmanship behavior in experiencing their child's sport?

Hypothesis

Parents will report a higher self-perceived sportsmanship behavior score following the use of the STAR Sportsmanship education module for parents.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used operationally for the purpose of this study:

1. Behaviors – action or reaction of an individual to a stimulus (Behavior, 2000)
2. Parents – one who begets, gives birth to, or nurtures and raises a child: a father or mother (Parent, 2000)
3. Sportsmanship – showing respect to others in everything one says and does (*Learning Through Sports, 2007*)
4. STAR (Stop, Think, Act, Replay) Sportsmanship – A disciplined thinking methodology based on core values attached to a behavioral skills education program (Shulman, 2007)
5. Web-based education – 12 minute online module that presents critical sportsmanship concepts to parents based on the STAR Sportsmanship method
6. Youth sport – any of the various athletic programs that provide a systematic sequence of practices and contests for children and youth (Seefeldt, Ewing, & Walk, 1991)

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made by the researcher:

1. Participants have computer and Internet to complete online questionnaire and web-based intervention.
2. All participants who complete the survey instrument do so honestly.

3. Participants had knowledge of the information requested.
4. Being a participant in this study will enhance the participants understanding and modeling of sportsmanship in the youth sport environment.

Limitations

Specific limitations of this study are listed below:

1. Data will be based solely on participant's response to the survey instrument.
2. Participants may evaluate and respond to each question differently based on education level and knowledge of sport behavior.
3. Youth athlete's sportsmanship knowledge or behavior will not be evaluated.
4. Some data may be manipulated due to participants reporting on their perception of personal behavior (what they want people to think, rather than how they actually behave).

Delimitations

Specific delimitations of this study are listed below:

1. The selected population of this study will be parents who have at least one child involved in some type of sport activity.
2. Responses to the survey instrument are predicated upon interest and time to respond.

Significance of Study

Sportsmanship is a behavioral concept worth exploration because of the seemingly disconnect between the understanding of it and its practice in youth sport. Most people identify sportsmanship with the mindset of "I know it when I see it"

(Vandenabeele, 2004, p 1). However, with the disruptive and vulgar behavior displayed in youth sport, sportsmanship may be difficult to see.

Parents significantly influence their child's perception of sportsmanship and have seemingly lost sight of what youth sports were originally intended to do. Gone are the days when children would gather and play a game just for pleasure. Now fun has been replaced with a win-at-all-cost, skill development, and championship attitude perpetuated by the parent. This mindset, in effect, creates a climate for unsportsmanlike behavior that is recognized by sport administrators as a problem.

A challenge expressed in the literature regarding research on sportsmanship is the absence of a clear-cut definition of sportsmanship (Brafford, 1998; Vallerand, Deshaies, Cuerrier, Briere, & Pelletier, 1996). Researchers and authors (Feezell, 1986; Keating, 1978; Miscisco, 1976; Shea, 1978; Stoll & Beller, 1993; The Josephson Institute for Ethics, 2008) have developed definitions to illustrate sportsmanship. Definitions suggested by Vallerand et al. (1996) include ideas related to general attitudes toward sport, ethical norms within athletic contexts, positive social interaction related to game play, and moral reasoning in light of constraints related to success. However, for the purpose of this study, sportsmanship is defined as showing respect to others in everything one says and does (*Learning Through Sports*, 2007).

Past studies examined youth athletes and their sportsmanship behavior as it related to team members, coaches, and officials. However, there is a lack of quantifiable research regarding parents and sportsmanship. This study will enable all who participate in youth sport better understand parents and their knowledge or lack thereof of

sportsmanship values and behavior in this setting. Products like *Learning Through Sports* STAR Sportsmanship education module for parents will force parents to turn the camera on themselves, take a snapshot of exactly what they value, and how their subsequent behaviors may manifest while experiencing their child participation in sport.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

“The organized sports many kids participate in are managed by adults; difficulties that arise are not worked out by kids but adjudicated by adult referees” (Marano, 2008).

Introduction

The sport environment provides the opportunity for investigators to study and understand the complexities of social life (Frey & Eitzen, 1991). This environment is structured according to a set of rules and customs that allow participants to engage in sport competitively and fairly. Three types of rules exist in modern sports used to standardize and regulate play as well as try to prevent harm. These rules are known as constitutive rules, proscriptive rules, and sportsmanship rules. Constitutive rules guide the play of a specific sport activity. These rules provide the structure needed to facilitate a fair competition. Proscriptive rules forbid specific actions of participants. These rules prohibit players from intentionally trying to harm opponents. Sportsmanship rules are established to have participants honor the spirit and letter of the rules. These rules serve as a guide for the ethical behaviors of participants (Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 2003). However, the pressures of competition and obsession with individual achievement in sport can weaken the constitutive, proscriptive, and sportsmanship rules, which result in unsportsmanlike behaviors.

The epidemic of unsportsmanlike behavior at sporting events is denigrating all levels of American athletics (Rudd & Stoll, 1998). At the youth sport level, unsportsmanlike behaviors are demonstrated when an irate father head butted a softball umpire in a confrontation or a mother is ejected for berating the referee (Topp, 2005). Incidents similar to the aforementioned question the existence of sportsmanship in youth sport (Beller & Stoll, 1993). This literature review addresses the subject of sportsmanship, dynamics of parents in youth sport, parents' identification with their child's participation in sport, theories, and parental sportsmanship education programs.

Sportsmanship

According to Berg (2001), studies have shown that school personnel, coaching staff and community members are not in agreement on the definition of sportsmanship. Researchers and authors, such as those cited in the following examples, have provided definitions for sportsmanship; however, the plethora of definitions lend to multiple interpretations. Individuals then have the opportunity to choose the interpretation best suited to their agenda. The following are examples of sportsmanship definitions.

Sportsmanship is

- Pursuing victory with honor (The Josephson Institute for Ethics, 2008).
- The attitude and conduct which competitors display through their actions (Keating, 1978).
- Conduct in sports whose characteristics include honesty, integrity, fairness, generosity, courtesy and graceful acceptance of results of competition (Miscisco, 1976).

- A mean between excessive seriousness, which misunderstands the importance of the play-spirit, and an excessive amount of playfulness, which might be called frivolity and which misunderstands the importance of victory and achievement when play is competitive (Feezell, 1986).
- Being courteous and fair to others, while gracefully accepting the results of the game (Stoll & Beller, 1993).
- The show of respect to others in everything done and said while playing sports (*Learning Through Sports*, 2007).
- A disposition of how those engaged in sport situations are expected to behave (Sportsmanship, 2008).

Diane Stevens, an assistant professor of sports psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, agreed that a definition isn't clear cut. She stated, "Sportsmanship is something I talk a lot about, but I've never thought about the best way to conceptualize it" (as cited in Brafford, 1998, p. 1). Once agreement on a definition has been reached, investigators can then begin to examine evidence that substantiates why 15% of parents at youth sporting events step over the line (Heinzmann, 2002).

Sportsmanship is learned according to the structure of sport setup by the community, administrators, and coaches (Gano-Overway 1999). In order to have a resurgence of sportsmanship values and behaviors displayed by participants, the community, administrators, coaches, and even spectators must be clear on the significance of sportsmanship. These groups of people essentially determine whether or not sportsmanship can exist in the sport environment.

Stoll and Beller (1993) stated that sportsmanship appeared contextually out of alignment and ideally no longer exists in daily practice and play of the game. A sporting contest where participants exhibit good sportsmanship promotes a cooperative atmosphere among athletes, officials, coaches, and spectators (Kampf, 2005). Yet, Stoll and Beller's declaration is confirmed by the evidence of trash-talking parents, in-your-face players, fist-throwing coaches, who constantly push and defy the boundaries of acceptable behavior (Gehring, 2001), and spectators, who commit assault and battery (Aicinena, 1999; Fattah, 2004; Murphy, 2007a; Ramey, 2008).

Regarded as a component of morality in sport, sportsmanship is inclusive of fair play and character (Bredemeier & Shields, 1984). Fair play refers to behavior developed from self-respect inclusive of the following: honesty, straightforwardness, and a firm and dignified attitude when others do not play fair; respect for team members, coaches and officials, which is displayed through positive efforts to cooperate with them at all times; and an awareness that an opponent is a necessary partner in sport, to whom one is bound by companionship in sport (Butler, 2000; Canadian Commission for Fair Play, 2007). Character is the determiner of conduct (McCloy, 1930) or the outward moral demeanor (Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 1994) of the individual in his/her relations with society (as cited in Hansen, Stoll, & Beller, 2000). These characteristics can be enhanced or hindered by messages communicated to participants throughout the sport experience.

The fostering of sportsmanship is inherently communicative, enacted through encouragement and reminders. Kassing and Barber (1997) believed sportsmanship is intimately connected to communication. They examined the content analysis of

sportsmanship messages provided to a sample of coaches, parents, and officials associated with youth soccer. The population surveyed included seventy-two adults who resided in a large metropolitan area in the Southwest region of the U. S. Respondents participated in highly structured interviews before, during, and after soccer games they attended. Respondents were told that sportsmanship was the topic of interest; however, a definition for sportsmanship was not provided. Investigators then asked respondents to provide three statements they would communicate to youth athletes concerning sportsmanship. Responses were written verbatim.

The investigators found nine types of messages were provided. The greatest proportion (23%) of messages offered by respondents concerned enjoyment of the sport. The next largest proportion (17%) was concerned with respect and concern for opponents and respect/concern for team/teammates (16%). About 14% of the population responded to the commitment to participate messages referred to as playing hard, playing well, and competing at the highest level of one's ability. Overall, these messages incorporated a collection of issues related to athletic participation: 1) being well prepared to participate, 2) maintaining one's composure, 3) playing fairly, and 4) respecting officials, coaches, opponents, and teammates. These issues reflected conceptualizations of sportsmanship behavior (Vallerand et al, 1996 as cited Kassing & Barber, 1997).

Communication of sportsmanship is very important and the results of the aforementioned study give credence that sportsmanship is not an antiquated concept. However, sportsmanship is not supported when organizations, such as The National Federation of State High School Association (NFSHSA), send mixed messages. The

NFSHSA asked high schools across the nation to promote and make sportsmanship a priority yet, offered trash-talking tee shirts that made deriding comments toward other athletes as door prizes at an event (Rudd & Stoll, 1998).

Between teams, sportsmanship is communicated through the post-game handshake. Parents and society believe that sportsmanship cannot exist without the post-game handshake (Dobbins, 1995, as cited in Rudd & Stoll, 1998). It is supposed to be a sign of good will or good sportsmanship; unfortunately, because of fights that ensued after the handshake, organizations such as the U.S. high school athletic league banned them. Contrary to popular belief, sportsmanship is more than a handshake.

In studies conducted by Stoll and Beller (Beller, 1992; Beller, Stoll & Sumanik, 1992; Stoll & Beller, 1992), they found that athletes believed sportsmanship only related to how they treated others on their team. The teachers and coaches believed sportsmanship was either antiquated, relative to each school, or relative to the level of play. When Beller and Stoll (1993) surveyed 20 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I U.S. football players' attitudes toward sportsmanship, the athletes responded with statements e.g. it is being good for our side, it is supporting the team, and it is speaking up for your team. None of the players ever mentioned being courteous, fair, or showing respect for their opponents. In fact, when athletes were asked about being courteous, they retorted with "why" because to them their opponents were their enemies.

If football players at the NCAA Division I level do not have an accurate impression of sportsmanship, it can only follow that neither the core values nor the demonstration of behaviors of sportsmanship is clear to the athlete. It is possible that

those who should be demonstrating sportsmanship behaviors do not know themselves. At some point in the history of character education, which has become synonymous with sportsmanship, a breakdown in expectation has occurred.

The breakdown is said to be grounded in the British elitist educational system. Persons involved in this system excluded those who did not have the birthright or social status in the country's government (Hansen, Stoll & Beller, 2000). The commonality of the competitors because of birthright and social status allowed for unquestionable unwritten gentlemanly rules. The belief was sport would help to build character and develop traits of moral courage, devoted team work, and group spirit in young boys and men (Armstrong, 1984). Therefore, the definition for character became defined as those qualities contributing to the national welfare such as "courage, team spirit, and sportsmanship" (McIntosh, 1969, p. 177). The same strong belief ingrained in the British has been taken on by American culture and incorporated in the American educational system and sporting model (Hansen, Stoll, & Beller, 2000). These traits are becoming uncommon in American sport. Values have changed from sportsmanship to winning at any cost even if it means deliberately hurting someone in the process.

While administrators, coaches, and educational leaders combat unsportsmanlike conduct in all levels of sport, in particular youth sport; persons who have an instrumental role in facilitating sportsmanship conduct are those closest to the young athlete, the parent.

The Dynamics of Parents in Youth Sport

Almost 30 million youth participate in some type of organized sport and for some of them, the opportunity to participate in sport provides an avenue to meet new friends, play a game they enjoy (Weaver, 2004), and have fun. This opportunity can be strengthened or hampered depending on parental involvement, influence, and behavior.

Parental involvement. Fagen and Cowan (1996) termed parental involvement as the amount of time the parent spent in activities with the child and participation in relevant areas of the child's life. Sport is an activity where the parent is afforded the opportunity to spend time with his/her child. Parents often become involved for reasons such as their own lifestyles are unexciting where gratification and/or prestige may come through their child's sport accomplishments; they want to protect their child from winning-at-all-costs philosophies of some coaches; or they want to foster the possibilities of scholarships and/or potential sport careers for their child (Ortega-Samper, 1984). Child sport involvement requires commitment on the part of the parent because parents become motivators, financiers, chauffeurs, booster club members, fundraising assistants, etc.

Parental support and parental pressure are significant attributes of parental involvement. According to Leff and Hoyle (1995), parental support is parental behaviors perceived by their children as the facilitation of athletic participation and performance. Supportive parents encouraged (i.e. shouting praise for a good play or exhibiting joy or excitement when a goal is scored) their child, provided constructive criticism through early coaching and teaching skills, assisted in athletic development, and exemplified self-control, how to handle conflict and emotional situations (Murphy, 2007a). Parental

support had significant influence and long-term effects that could enhance child sport participation (Leff & Hoyle). For example, baseball players who made it to the minor leagues indicated parental support when they were young. Their parents provided financially for equipment, attended games regularly, gave them allowance, advised them to pursue professional baseball careers, and practiced with them regularly (Murphy).

Parental pressure is behavior perceived by their children as indicating expectations of unlikely, unattainable heights of accomplishment (Leff & Hoyle, 1995). Fred Engh, president of the National Alliance of Youth Sports (NAYS), stated that children at one time participated in sport for the fun and healthy atmosphere that it provided for them. Now adults and their personal agendas have polluted that atmosphere. Instead of being enjoyable, for many children, it has become an anxiety-filled experience (Martin, 2000). They deal with so much that just being a kid and having fun playing a sport is not achievable. To prevent little league parent syndrome, parent and child's motives should be aligned with the top agenda being that of child skill development and having fun (Martin).

Leff and Hoyle (1995) researched children's perceptions of their parent's involvement in their sport activities. The researchers discovered that children felt varying levels of support, pressure, and involvement from their parents. Parental involvement ranged from a positive level of parental support to a negative level of parental pressure. Female athletes perceived similar levels of support and pressure from both their mothers and fathers, whereas male athletes perceived higher levels of support from their mothers and higher levels of pressure from their fathers. According to Stein, Raedeke, and Glenn

(1999), parental involvement level is neither positive nor negative, but qualitatively can be subject to the perception of the athlete evaluated. For example, one athlete may perceive his/her parent's involvement as adequate, while another athlete may perceive his/her parent as either too involved or not involved enough.

Leff and Hoyle (1995) examined the association of parental support and parental pressure with enjoyment, performance, self-esteem and other characteristics of young tournament tennis players. Participants were male and female players attending a regional tennis academy. The tennis players provided information about the role their parents played in their tennis game, their personal view of their game, self-esteem, and state, regional, and national rankings.

The researchers found parental support was significantly associated with enjoyment and the importance players' ascribed to their tennis game. Players who reported a high level of parental support reported greater enjoyment of tennis, viewed tennis as an important part of their lives and fell higher in state rankings than players who reported a lower level of parental support. Parental pressure was not indicated as strong as parental support suggesting that the young athletes had similar perceptions of their parent's involvement in their sport participation.

The level of involvement a parent has in their child's sport experience will determine the parents influence on their child's participation in sport.

Parental influence. Parents influence the development of perceived competence, intrinsic motivation, and emotional development (Hedstrom & Gould, 2004) of the child. For example, when a child participates in sport, competence is reinforced by the parent.

The child then becomes motivated to perform the skill. According to Hedstrom and Gould, researchers have generally supported these contentions and found through research that

- “Parental expectations and orientations towards achievement are related to children’s perceptions and motivated behavior” (Brustad, 1992, p. 72).
- Parental influences are conveyed through modeling and reinforcement (Brustad, 1988; Swain & Harwood, 1996).
- Parents are the main socializers influencing children’s sport involvement (Greendorfer, Lewko, & Rosengren, 1996).
- Children’s perceptions of their parents’ level of interest in their sport are predictive of children’s initial and sustained involvement (Greendorfer, Lewko, & Rosengren, 1996).

To investigate parental influences, Eccles and Harold (1991) devised the expectancy-value model. The model proposed that parents influence their child’s choices by providing different levels of support for activities. Eccles and Harold further proposed that the parent’s level of support is based on likelihood of success of their child and the personal beliefs about the value of success in that domain (as cited in Barber, Sukhi, & White, 1999). Over time with continued support, children will adopt the values and beliefs of their parents (Eccles & Harold).

Woolger and Power (1993) presented a framework for understanding parental influences in sport primarily based upon literature concerning academic achievement. They noted the differences between sports and academics. Differences between the two

included the nature of skills requiring mastery and the role of self and others. Similarities included the involvement of learning, practicing, mastering, and hierarchically organizing basic skills in the development of expertise; learning to cope with successes and failures; and learning to benefit from the evaluative feedback.

Parents have differing expectations of their youth athlete. Some parents expect their child to do well in a particular sport because of either not being afforded the opportunity to participate when they were young (Kidman, McKenzie, & McKenzie, 1999) or not being good at playing a sport. Whatever the reason, parental ambitions to fulfill personal agendas influence and sometimes exceed fulfilling the agenda of the child.

Parental behavior. Parents behave the way they do because no one tells them they cannot behave that way (Gehring, 2001). Literature has provided examples of parents behaving poorly at youth sporting events. Smith (1988) described occurrences of parents getting into verbal arguments, fighting with one another, and hurling insults towards opponents in youth hockey leagues. A parent put Ipecac, an herbal extract that induced vomiting, into his son's juice telling his son to give it to a teammate during practice. Because of the father's request, the son was so traumatized that he did not want to play sports anymore (cited in Dahlberg, n.d.). Martin (2000) mentioned that aside from youth sports providing its athletes with opportunities for confidence building, skill development, and teamwork; it is also an area for verbal, emotional or physical abuse, depending on the attitudes of the adults involved (Martin).

Kidman, McKenzie, and McKenzie (1999) studied the nature of parents' verbal behavior during selected youth sporting events. The researchers utilized the Parent Observation Instrument for Sport Events (POISE), a systematic observation instrument, to observe approximately 296 parents during 147 games/matches from 7 different team sports. Teams comprised of both female and male children between 6 and 12 years of age. The frequency of verbal comments were tabulated and expressed as numbers and percentages according to each sport and by the nature and target of each comment. Results revealed that while most comments were positive overall (47.2%), a high percentage of negative comments (34.5%) were also present. Parents of rugby players exhibited the highest percentage of negative comments (40.8%) and almost half of the comments directed at their own children were negative (45.6%).

Hellstedt (1990), Passer (1984), and Petlichkoff (1993) suggested that negative parental behaviors at children's sport events can lead to competitive stress, parent-child conflict, discouragement, sport performance inhibition, and cause children to drop out of the sport. Other researchers have supported this view (e.g. Evans, 1993; Gould, 1993; Gould, Feltz, Horn & Weiss, 1982; Randall & McKenzie, 1987).

DeFrancesco and Johnson (1997) found that several elite tennis players were being physically assaulted by a parent following an unsatisfactory performance. In an article entitled *More Schools Calling Foul on Unsportsmanlike Behavior*, Gehring (2001) mentioned an incident involving the unsportsmanlike behavior of a father of two daughters on the varsity softball team. According to the article, the father had grown increasingly belligerent throughout the year. He showed up at practices even though the

practices were closed to parents, intimidated coaches and harassed other players and parents at games.

Jim Thompson, director of the Positive Coaching Alliance at Stanford University, noted one of the biggest problems surrounding escalating situations at youth sporting events is that adults do not know how to intervene when they see a situation ensue (Pallerino, 2003). According to a poll conducted by Survey USA of 500 parents in Indianapolis, Indiana, regarding overzealous and aggressive parents

- 55% of parents witnessed other parents engaged in verbal abuse at youth sporting events
- 22% would allow aggressive parents to remain in the stands
- 21% witnessed a physical altercation between other parents at youth sporting events
- 5% were not sure what to do about parents who were prone to sport-induced tantrums (Morrison, 2005).

The problem has become so out of control that finding officials to referee youth games has become increasingly difficult. According to a report from the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO), 90% of state level sports leaders reported the shortage of officials in their respective states. The biggest reason cited was the intolerable conditions of disrespectful, unsportsmanlike conduct of parents, coaches, and athletes (Gehring, 2001).

It is apparent that certain situations and circumstances happen beyond our control. These situations and circumstances can make one frustrated and/or angry. Given that

some parents have very lofty goals for their child or the coach/official is not making decisions they believe are right or fair, their frustration could potentially escalate into aggressive behavior.

Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears (1939) set forth the hypothesis that frustration leads to aggression hence the *frustration-aggression theory*. In order to apply this theory to the drama that is poor parental behavior in youth sport, both frustration and aggression need to be defined. Frustration refers to an emotion that occurs in situations when a person is blocked from reaching a personal goal (Frustration, 2008). Aggression refers to any behavior that is intended to do harm to another person (Moeller, 2001). There is a level of complexity when dealing with the frustration-aggression theory. Human behavior is complex and people believe in the validity of their actions, whether or not it is justifiable. One person's frustration may not necessarily lead to an aggressive state while another person's frustration may lead to an extreme case of aggression.

The *frustration-aggression theory* focused on frustration that elicits a motive to aggress due to the blocking of one's efforts to achieve goals. This theory has its validity; however, it does not lend to explicate all forms of aggression. People become aggressive for many different reasons, whether it relates to financial matters or challenging an official at a youth sport event for not making a proper call.

Measuring Parent Behavior

Holden and Edwards (1989) noted that measuring parental behavior is fruitful because the connection between parenting attitudes and parenting behaviors remains unclear. According to Ortiz (1999) parenting self-report instruments have been published

for years (e.g. Block, 1981; Kendall & Bloomfield, 2005; Pridham & Chang, 1989; Sheppard & Watkins, 2000; Sandler, & Walker, 2002; Whetsel, Hoover-Dempsey); however, there is not an inexpensive, comprehensive, psychometrically sound, and easy-to-use instrument that has been validated on parent behavior. In Ortiz's study, he evaluated the Parent Behavior Scale (PBS), which composed of items to measure the following four parent-training interventions:

- A comprehensive parent-training protocol developed by Webster-Stratton,
- A program by Patterson and his colleagues at the Oregon Social Learning Center devised to reduce coercive interactions between parents and children,
- Forehand's treatment to change maladaptive patterns of family interaction that reinforce coercive behaviors, and
- Berkley's program aimed to reduce child noncompliance by changing the interactions between family members that contribute to child noncompliance.

The PBS consisted of 26 items divided four ways in order to tap the four types of parent behavior that are the focus of most parent-training interventions. The items were statements in the first person about child behaviors and parent responses to those behaviors. The PBS was evaluated with a sample of 114 parents and their 4- and 5-year old children. The scale demonstrated adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability.

Another parent self-report scale was the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ) (Frick, 1991; Shelton, Frick & Wootton, 1996). This questionnaire was a 42-item parent-report scale made for parents of children age 6 to 13 years. The APQ measured five types

of parent behaviors: 1) parental involvement, 2) monitoring and supervision, 3) use of positive discipline techniques, 4) consistency in applying disciplines, and 5) use of corporal punishment. The questionnaire was validated with a sample largely composed of European-American women. The questionnaire had favorable reliability and validity. According to Hinshaw et al. (2000) and Wells et al. (2000), the APQ was useful for studying how parenting practices influence disruptive behavioral problems and how interventions on these problems were mediated by parenting.

Mowder and Saunders (2008) examined the psychometric characteristics of two parenting measures: the Parent Behavior Importance Questionnaire (PBIQ) and the Parent Behavior Frequency Questionnaire (PBFQ). Both research questionnaires were based on the parent development theory (PDT) developed by Mowder (2005) and offered parent respondents as well as non-parent respondents the opportunity to rate 38 parenting behaviors in terms of importance or frequency. The parenting behaviors corresponded to one of six PDT parenting characteristics - bonding, discipline, education, general welfare, protection and responsivity (sensitivity). These characteristics varied in importance and frequency according to the child's developmental levels and needs. Psychometric examination of these questionnaires revealed that the scales had strength in terms of reliability and validity.

King (1992) measured sportsmanship behavior of coaches. The 23-item quiz was designed to help coaches determine how they effectively serve as appropriate role models. King provided a rating scale for ethical behavior to be utilized upon completion of the quiz equaling excellent, good, average, below average, or poor (p. 18). Stewart

(1996) used this quiz to determine the level of sportsmanship of parents of high school athletes and examined parents' perceptions of sportsmanship in light of the primary functions of sport. Stewart found that all of the parents scored in the good category on the modified sportsmanship quiz and 31% specifically used the term sportsmanship as one of the primary functions of sport involvement for their children.

There are two factors that define how and why parents react the way they do during their child's game. The first is defining the power of the situation, which includes the factors that cause a parent to react the way they do. The second is the level of identification a parent has with his or her child (Pallerino, 2003). The next section discusses in detail parent identification with their child and how this identification plays a role in their child's athletic experience.

Parents' Identification with Their Child's Participation in Sport

Parents naturally identify with their child because their child is an extension of the parent. They see their child's success as the key to success in life (Taylor, n.d.). The problem occurs when the parent over-identifies, takes control and manipulates (Stroebe, 2006) their child as he/she participates in a sporting activity. Over-identification, control, and manipulation can lead the parent to ignore the child's feelings and focus on their own agenda (Murphy, 2007b). Parents who live vicariously through their children are guilty of overidentification. Their self-worth is linked to the child's success thus failing to see the importance and value of allowing their child to experience sport on his/her terms (Singh, 2006). Kamm stated that some parents were athletes themselves and want their child to be at least as good if not better than they were. On the other hand, some parents weren't

good athletes and they want their child to become what they were not (as cited in Martin, 2000).

In Melanie Axelrod's 2000 ABC report by, Teitelbaum commented:

Winning is seen as not just for the kids but also for the parents. The larger element is the problem of overidentification with their children ... there is a blurring of identity between parents and their children. They get involved to protect the child and their own turf.

Overidentification is a broad psychological term. For parents, it means overreacting to the demands of a child and accomplishments because of the overinvestment in the child. When parents over-identify, they give and want more from their child than the parent should (Klein, 2006). The following excerpts, as cited by Klein, offer how different parents perceived overidentification with their child.

Over-identifying with your child can be an inadequacy on the part of the parents who did not accomplish what they set out to do themselves...
— Linda

We want so much for our children. We often project our hopes and dreams on them. I do hope my children are happy and that they reach their potential. Sometimes we are too sensitive to their needs and wants because of our own need to be perfect. So-called perfect parents want perfect children. When we see them not reaching the bar we set for them emotionally, intellectually, and socially, we freak out and think there is a problem that we can fix. The problem usually doesn't exist. Overidentification is when the child coughs and the mother takes the cough drop. — Isabelle

There are two pitfalls and one possible advantage associated with overidentification. The first pitfall is seen in many Westside LA parents – they try to live through their children. They want their children to be achievers in sports, music or academics. It is not fair to expect a child to achieve to make his parents happy. The second pitfall is that when something happens that is upsetting to your child, it upsets you as well, more than it out to. Often this is because the upsetting event reminds you of things that happened to you as a child. Then your own child senses that you are very upset, and gets even more upset than he was to begin with. Don't make a bad situation worse by projecting your own feelings onto it. The good thing—the possible advantage—to overidentification is that it may go hand-in-hand with an ability to identify with your child in a healthy way, which is very useful... — Janice

Overidentification can be detrimental to both the child and the parent. Parents need to be careful about making their personal issues into issues for their kids. My advice is to be very careful about what you verbally dwell on with a child regarding disappointments, favoritism, etc., since you can pass issues down to kids. A parent who overidentifies with his child's baseball strike-out can lead the child to believe that such incidents are disappointing instead of just part of a fun game. — Angela

I tend to overidentify with my son's emotional struggles. I sometimes remember similar situations in my childhood and re-experience the pain. Oftentimes, I feel responsible, somehow, for not adequately diverting the pain makers or being able to help enough when pertaining to a situation brought on by adults. Perhaps my inclination is somehow connected to my childhood, bringing up feelings of helplessness in me... — Tony

Because some parents, such as those cited, tend to over-identify with their child, they may exhibit the following characteristics: an overemphasis on winning, a drive for their child to succeed for economic investment benefits, and the misguided attempt to compete with other parents.

Parents' overemphasis on winning. Younger athletes should be encouraged by parents to perform at their best and strive to win. Winning builds confidence, gives one

access to rewards and special privileges, increases in importance as kids get older, builds spirit de corps, cohesion and team spirit, and increases motivation (Feigley, n.d.); however, a parent's desire to win should not supersede what the child desires – to have fun.

The emphasis of winning increases when overzealous parents become aggressive in their quest for being number one (Morrison, 2005). Overemphasis on winning is extended when a parent has moved past the benefits of youth sport participation to a win-at-all-cost attitude. How important is winning in youth sports? For the youth athlete, winning is not very important at all (Clark, n.d.). A national sample of youth, aged 10 to 18 years, were asked why they participated in sport, interestingly, winning was not one of the top reasons cited. Younger athletes were more interested in the fairness of their games (Clark). Too much emphasis on winning, for the youth athlete, makes the experience no longer fun but a duty.

Clark (n.d.) stated:

Adults who believe that an accent on winning is essential to success make much of the best record or leading scorer. They place overweening emphasis on which division they play in on the travel level. They count the trophies they bring back from tournaments. They peruse the standings to see who has to win and who has to lose for them to move up. They recruit players to their teams rather than develop player from within.

Those parents who overemphasize winning as the goal of participating in sport look at their child in light of adult activity rather than activity that is child appropriate. Child appropriate is allowing them to have fun, giving them the opportunity to develop

socially (Seefeldt & Ewing, 1997), affording the opportunity to learn the rules of the game, and being able to develop sportsmanship.

Some parents internalize a narrow-minded concept of winning (Clark, n.d.). The parent's view of their child being good or bad in sport is based on whether or not the child wins the competition. As a result, the child's beliefs may become distorted. The challenge for adults is to redefine winning in terms of effort and to restructure play to promote effort. This challenge can be accomplished through the following examples: the creation of balanced competitions, players setting achievable goals, athletes being taught to measure success in terms of attaining such goals, and the celebration/rewarding of players who attain their goals (Clark). Parents must have an understanding that success in youth sports does not necessarily mean winning; rather it means having put out 100% effort and doing the best one could on a given day (Sachs, 2000). The overemphasis on winning can be amplified when the parent sees their child as a potential economic investment.

Parents who see their child as an economic investment. Parents love their children and desire the best for them. They can become emotionally charged, and in some cases, potentially lose perspective when they see their young athlete as an economic investment (Weaver, 2004). Parents may come to see their sacrifices as investments with hopes that the investment will have future return (Murphy, 2007b). Rather than regarding sport as a potential facilitator of fun or healthy activity for their child, some parents make their child participate as a means for fame, glory, and material rewards (Murphy, 1999).

Parental violence sometimes occurs when the potential of their child's athletic success is put in jeopardy. In many instances, parents push their kids to succeed at all costs in order to get highly competitive sports scholarships (Weaver, 2004), especially when faced with the dilemma of finding adequate funding for their child's education, or to obtain a professional sport contract. It is interesting to note that in the two high profile sports of football and men's basketball, for every 10,000 high school student athletes, nine will play in the NFL and three will play in the NBA (as cited in Heinzmann, 2002). However, even if the child is gifted, their chances of obtaining these benefits are somewhat remote (Heinzmann).

Parents who compete with other parents. Parents want their child to excel but can easily become entrenched with keeping up with other parents. Competition usually is a result of an insecure parent (Miller, 1941). The competitive spirit of the parent, in turn, makes much demand on their child's performance in hopes that the other children will fail and that their child will shine (Murphy, 2007). Competition between parents to prove that their child is better than another child can result in personal bashing, provocative personal assaults, name calling, and get-even determination (Dominowski, 2001).

All modern sports are inherently competitive and concerned with dividing people between winners and losers (Dunning, 2003, p. 904). Competitive parents become frustrated with the idea of their child being known as the loser. The frustration could possibly lead to sport rage defined as any physical attack upon another person. A direct participant or spectator, in this case a parent, who takes part in the sport environment can have a frustrating experience which is conducive to aggression arousal and violence

(Dunning). The end result of aggression arousal can be demonstrated in the forms of striking, wounding, or otherwise touching in an offensive manner, or any malicious, verbal abuse or sustained harassment which threatens subsequent violence or bodily harm (Heinzmann, 2002).

Theories

Social learning theory. The social-learning theory by Bandura (1977) proposed that instrumentally aggressive behaviors are learned through direct experience or through observation. People learn not only to behave aggressively, but depending on the target, people learn what behaviors justify aggressive retaliation and in what situations it is appropriate. The payoff individuals hope to gain by being aggressive come in the forms of (a) stopping aggression in others, (b) getting status, praise or some other goal by getting aggressive, (c) getting self-reinforcement and self praise, and (d) reducing tension (Tucker-Ladd, 2005). The theory also incorporated cognitive processes that include rational problem-solving, “trial runs” (p. 32) in fantasy to see what might happen if I did [blank], and the self-control procedures of self-observation, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement (Tucker-Ladd).

To determine the relative merits of the social learning theory, Goldstein and Arms (1971) conducted a field study in which spectators at a football game were interviewed before or after the game. The study was designed to assess hostility, team preference and additional demographic data. Interviews were conducted at the 1969 Army-Navy football game and also at the Army-Temple gymnastics meet held during the same month. The researchers chose the Army-Navy game because of the emotional involvement in its

outcome. The fact that the two schools were traditional rivals and the game was played on neutral territory ensured a relatively even split among observers' and their team preferences.

Interviewers paid 13 undergraduate students who received detailed instructions concerning interview procedures. Each interviewer memorized a prepared introductory speech to be presented to chosen interviewees. The interviewers were to exclusively interview male spectators as they came through the gates to the game. Subjects were asked demographic questions as well as team preference and how upset they would be if their team was to lose. Following these items were three scales taken from the 1957 Buss-Durkee inventory, designed to measure hostility. Following the completion of the hostility items, subjects were asked to state their reactions to the study and to indicate what they felt the study was about.

The five interviewers at the Army-Temple gymnastics meet interviewed only male spectators and the interview schedule was identical to that employed at the Army-Navy football game. The only difference was that gymnastic items replaced the football items on the appropriate questions. The researchers found that from the 150 subjects interviewed at the football game, hostility was higher post-game than pre-game. However, hostility did not significantly increase as a result of observing the gymnastics meet (eighty-one subjects were interviewed).

Structural development theory. Structural development theory suggested that moral reasoning is a major determinant of behavior in sport. Traditional structural development moral theory suggested that discussing hypothetical moral dilemmas leads

to growth because it fosters the thought process of the individual. Structural forms of knowledge develop from the active view of the world that arises during interaction with it. The world in which people interact can be physical, social, or aesthetic. Interaction with the physical world produces a sequence of thought-structures that become increasingly stable in the face of shifts of perspective. Interaction with the social world produces a sequence of structures of moral judgment that become increasingly stable in the shifts of a person's position in the social situation. Interaction with the aesthetic world produces a sequence of structure of aesthetic judgment that become increasingly stable in the face of differences between different people's aesthetic experiences (Rosenberg, Ward, & Chilton, 1988 as cited in Kampf, 2005).

Expectancy value theory. The expectancy value theory has been used to understand motivations underlying individuals' behavior, founded by Martin Fishbein in the 1970s. Expectancy is defined as the measurement of the likelihood that positive or negative outcomes will be associated with or follow from a particular act (Mazis, Ahtola & Kippel, 1975). Thus, the individual's outcome expectations affect one's attitudes towards the behavior (Cruz, 2005).

The expectancy value theory proposed that if one can determine elements that impact intention, then one can more accurately predict whether an individual will engage in a particular behavior (Cruz, 2005). The core assumption of the theory is that behavior is a function of the expectancies one has and the value of the goal toward which one is working. This theory holds that people are goal-oriented where behaviors performed in response to their beliefs and values are undertaken to achieve some end.

The expectancy value theory suggested that people orient themselves to the world according to their expectations and evaluations – the degree of affect, positive or negative, toward an attribute or behavioral outcome (Palmgreen, 1984). The level of one's willingness to perform a particular behavior is dependent on a) the extent to which the individual believes a consequence will follow and b) the value the individual places on the consequence (Mazis, Ahtola & Kippel, 1975).

The application of the expectancy value theory by Geiger et al. (1996) reported various outcomes that impacted students' motivations in college. Students were more willing to increase their efforts in a course if they valued increasing their grades. Other factors that heightened efforts included increases in self-esteem, academic success, and job opportunities post graduation (Cruz, 2005). One of the main weaknesses of the theory is the focus on limited cognitive processes. Borders, Earlywine, and Huey (2004) found that before engaging in behaviors, individuals chose from a variety of alternatives and examined a variety of expectancies.

Parental Sportsmanship Education & Intervention

The Georgia Youth Soccer Association came to a conclusion: parents need a time out (*Grow up parents*, 2001). The problems that have risen because of unsportsmanlike parental behavior at youth sporting events have warranted something be done. Parents must be sportsmanship educated and internalize its related concepts in order for there to be a change in the youth sporting environment. Interestingly, according to a study by Stewart (1996) parents believed that teaching athletes to play by the written rules alone was a sign of good sportsmanship teaching.

Sportsmanship education provides 1) learning about good sportsmanship traits and their link to good behavior to be practiced in play, 2) learning about expectations of administrators, coaches, players, cheerleaders, and fans during an athletic event, 3) learning that each individual can control choices concerning his/her behavior, and that such control is worthy of praise and respect, 4) using of co-curricular activities to promote understanding, and 5) inspiring the development of good sportsmanship traits among all students (Wake County Public School System (WCPSS), 2008).

Many school districts have implemented the *Parent Code of Ethics* as part of their sportsmanship educational programs. The code established a contract between the parents and school that the parent understood the expectations and rules regarding their child's involvement in school sports (Berg, 2001). Lord (2000) stated that over 170 athletic associations have offered videos, handbooks, and other materials to promote sportsmanship education. Those mediums have a significant effect; however, parents need to be actively engaged in learning and applying sportsmanship concepts to their daily lives.

In response to parents and athletes pushing the limits with their unsportsmanlike behaviors, New Albany Plain Local School District in New Albany, Ohio, required parents to take sportsmanship classes before their children could participate in athletics. The class lasted 90 minutes addressing the topics of sportsmanship and ethics. Following the session, parents signed the sportsmanship code of conduct. The Jupiter-Tequesta Athletic Association in Jupiter, Florida, held the nation's first mandatory sportsmanship training program for parents. The training outlined appropriate behavior so parents could

clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in the youth sports environment (Martin, 2000).

The parks and recreation administration of Las Vegas, Nevada, along with the local university and its Center for Sports Education developed and implemented a program intended to evaluate its affect on parents and coaches in youth sports. A behavioral assessment called the Youth Sport Behavioral Assessment System (YSBAS) was used to take a literal perspective on parental and coach behavior at youth sports. The YSBAS was a modification of the Coaching Behavior Assessment System (CBAS). For this particular program, both parents and coaches were required to attend a 1-hour youth sports orientation training session. The purpose of the program was to emphasize the philosophy of the community parks and recreation department in an effort to eliminate disruptive, inappropriate, and violent behavior seen at youth sporting events.

The YSBAS included information that (a) could be easily taught to observers and that would hold high reliability; (b) could be used for both parents and coaches; (c) could have observation data quickly extracted for rapid and instantaneous feedback for parents and coaches; (d) could have its findings quickly infused in on-going training sessions to enhance the youth sports program; (e) could put the findings in terms that parents, coaches and administrators could easily relate to and understand; and (f) could be used in any youth sports event (Apache, 2006).

Traditional methods of teaching sportsmanship education (i.e. videos, workbooks, workshops, etc) is an effective way of getting the message across to those who participate in sport; however, with the growing trends of technology, the multifaceted vehicle of the

Internet, and the depletion of time and energy, traditional methods may not be able to totally support the demands of time and convenience that the world has seemingly become accustomed to. Technology has advanced to web-based education that provides educators an avenue in which to present subject matter to individuals without the constraints of time and location.

According to Berg (2001), "Sportsmanship education can sometimes be overlooked in an attempt to solve other pressing issues such as the state regulations on budgeting, scheduling athletic events and other administrative duties" (p. 2). Through sportsmanship education, parents have the opportunity to learn how to resolve conflict resolution, how to respect individual freedoms and right of others, and how to communicate with peers (Berg).

STAR Sportsmanship Education

The STAR Sportsmanship education module is the web-based educational tool used in this study. The educational tool was developed by *Learning Through Sports, Inc.* a leading educational publisher of digital game-based learning programs for K-12. The founder, Brian Shulman, pioneered a way to teach sportsmanship education via the Internet in a way that is fun, user-friendly, cost-effective, and not bound by time or location. The company publishes *Kid's College*, a math and literacy intervention program that has proven effective in raising test scores for underachieving students and offers a product called STAR Sportsmanship, the first and only interactive sports video game to teach sportsmanship. STAR Sportsmanship is a web-based program that combines athletics with academics to better motivate today's students, who demand an engaging

learning experience. The goal of the educational tools is to create motivated students using motivated learning (*Learning Through Sports*, 2007).

STAR Sportsmanship is an innovative and comprehensive solution for teaching good sportsmanship. The web-based instructional program captivates users with contemporary graphics and situations relevant to sportsmanship situations. Decision-making activities are presented that increase the likelihood of long-term integration based on analysis of audience needs and aptitudes, research literature, and instructional content. The developers of STAR Sportsmanship researched national and community organizations (Character Counts!; Department of Education; Education World; Gatorade; Gatorade Sports Science Institute; National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA); Tiburon Peninsula Soccer League, CA; and Wake County Public School System, NC). STAR Sportsmanship is a hybrid version of three approaches used to teach sportsmanship: (1) a sportsmanship creed, (2) behavioral traits for young athletes to exemplify, and (3) interaction classifications with different groups (i.e. coaches, team, and officials) (*Learning Through Sports*, 2006, p. 2).

Learning Through Sports, Inc. decided to teach sportsmanship as a principle based on the context of instruction of individual's interactions with team, opponents, and officials. The use of real-world examples to teach sportsmanship was a motivating factor in the development of the web-based tool. Based on the following definition for sportsmanship – being friendly to others in all you do and say during sports, the STAR (Stop, Think, Act, and Replay) Player guidelines were formulated:

1. Stop when it's time to make a sportsmanship decision,

2. Think how your actions could affect you, your team and your opponents,
3. Act right away to show good sportsmanship, and
4. Replay your actions in your mind and decide if you showed good sportsmanship.

Even when situations vary, the foundation that the STAR metaphor provides assists learners to respond ethically and properly to the situation (*Learning Through Sport*, 2007). The information in the modules is presented using the following e-learning development principles: multimedia, contiguity, modality, redundancy, coherence, and personalization. The dramatic treatment varies on the age-appropriate version (Elementary, Middle School, High School, Coaches/Parents) using real-world settings that show examples and non-examples of how to be a good sport. The assessment activities of STAR Sportsmanship are strategically placed so that learners encounter them at vital stages throughout the learning module. Clark and Mayer (2003) support this approach stating that practice is more effective when it is distributed throughout the lesson rather than placed in one location (as cited in *Learning Through Sports*, 2006). According to *Learning Through Sports*, distributed practice throughout the lesson results in long-term retention. The activities located throughout the modules are augmented by audio feedback that helps learners evaluate their progress during every stage of instruction that in some way conditions the actions of the learner. According to Gibbons and Fairweather (1998) failure to provide feedback has the same effect on a learner as failing to answer during a conversation.

The STAR Sportsmanship education module shifts the parent from a traditional learning environment to one that is a click and learn environment (Aggarwal, 2003). This course makes provision for the parent to obtain sportsmanship education via the Internet according to personal schedule and lifestyle. To demonstrate the effectiveness of online courses, which is a part of web-based education, Wantland, Portillo, Holzemer, Slaughter, and McGhee (2004) focused on the use of the Internet to deliver web-based interventions to chronically illness patients. The primary focus of self-care interventions for chronic illness is the encouragement of an individual's behavior change necessitating knowledge sharing, education, and understanding of the condition. The use and effectiveness of web-based interventions to encourage an individual's change in behavior compared to non-web-based interventions have not been substantially reviewed. In this meta-analysis, the researcher provided information on patient/client knowledge and behavioral change outcomes after Web-based interventions were compared to outcomes seen after implementation of non-Web-based interventions.

The effect size comparisons in the use of web-based interventions compared to non-web-based interventions showed an improvement in outcomes for individuals using web-based interventions to achieve the specified knowledge and/or behavior change for the studied outcome variables. These outcomes included increases in exercise time, knowledge of nutritional status, knowledge of asthma treatment, participation in healthcare, and slower health decline, improved body shape perception, and 18-month weight loss maintenance.

Kerfoot, Conlin, Trivison, and McMahon (2007) investigated whether a web-based program could effectively teach and assess elements of systems-based practice. The researchers enrolled 276 medical students and 417 residents in the fields of surgery, medicine, obstetrics-gynecology, and emergency medicine in a 9-week randomized, controlled, crossover educational trial. Participants were asked to sequentially complete validated web-based modules on patient safety and the US health care system. The primary outcome measure was performance on a 26-item validated online test administered before, between, and after the participants completed the modules. The research yielded that of the six hundred forty (92.4%) enrollees, their test scores improved significantly after completion of the first module. Overall learning from the 9-week web-based program, as measured by the increase in scores (posttest scores minus pretest scores), was 16 percentage points in public safety topics and 22 percentage points in US health care system topics. The web-based educational program on systems-based practice competencies generated significant and durable learning across a broad range of medical students and residents.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how the STAR Sportsmanship education module affected parents' self-perceived behavior as it related to their child's sporting endeavors. The only requirement for a person to be a participant in this study was to have at least one child, 18 years and under, whom participated in some type of sport activity. Participants were identified through the researcher's personal and professional contacts across Middle Tennessee.

Participants were asked to complete a survey indicating their experience in their child's sport participation as well as complete the STAR Sportsmanship education module for parents. This chapter presents the research methodology utilized during the investigation detailing the description of participants, data collection procedures, instrumentation, psychometric testing, and data analysis strategy.

Participants

Participants selected for this study consisted of 95 male and female parents of children who participated in some type of youth sport activity in the Middle Tennessee area. Participants were selected for participation by virtue of their having at least one child involved in a sport during the time of data collection. Participants were contacted

by e-mail explaining the research and asking for their participation in the study.

Participants who agreed to participate in the study were directed to the website via a link included in the email to complete the online survey and sportsmanship module.

Procedures

Approval for the proposed research was obtained from the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at Middle Tennessee State University (see Appendix A) to administer both the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport (PEYS) survey created by the Center for Sport Policy and Research (2008) and the STAR Sportsmanship education module. Potential participants were sent an email that included a web-link to the PEYS survey. Informed consent (Appendix B) was provided to each participant on the website's homepage. The informed consent stated the purpose, voluntary nature, and confidentiality of the study as well as clear instructions for completing the PEYS. Participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and any information obtained kept confidential. Participation in completing the instrument signified a participant's consent in the study; however, the participant had the opportunity to decline participation at any time during the study.

After the participant read the informed consent, the participant then proceeded through the instrument in following order: 1) Parent Experiences in Youth Sport (PEYS) survey (pretest), 2) the STAR Sportsmanship education module, and 3) Parent Experiences in Youth Sport (posttest). Upon completion of the post-survey, participants answered demographic questions. The entire process took participants approximately 25 minutes to complete. Participants were also asked at the conclusion of the study if they

wanted to be included in a drawing for three Target gift cards. Participants provided their email address to signify their inclusion in the drawing. These gift cards were offered for participants taking time out of their schedule to participate in the study.

Data was collected via Key Survey (www.keysurvey.com), an online survey software company, for research purposes only. Key Survey provides intelligent survey technology that helps the end-user to automate the online data process and ensures complete accuracy. This company also enables the end-user to create, manage, deploy, and dynamically manipulate surveys. Security functions provided by Key Survey keeps the researchers results confidential and accessible to those who have need of access to data. This company is designed to collect and store responses as well as provide immediate data analysis. The data in this study was stored on a secured server provided by Key Survey where only the researcher and researcher's advisor had access via username and password. Only data from the PEYS will be included in this study.

Instrumentation

Participants were asked to complete the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport (PEYS) online survey (Appendix C) and the *Learning Through Sports* STAR Sportsmanship parent module (Appendix D). The PEYS was an assessment and evaluation instrument designed for this study to measure parent self-perceived sportsmanship behaviors in the youth sport setting before and following the STAR Sportsmanship parent module. The PEYS, developed by the Center for Sport Policy and Research (2008), is based on past literature and similar instruments (discussed in the

Literature Review under *Measuring Parent Behavior* section) that measured sportsmanship behaviors in other groups (i.e. athletes, coaches, and officials).

The PEYS instrument was a 5-point Likert-type scale administered pre and post STAR Sportsmanship education module for parents. The response categories for the scale were labeled as 5 = always, 4 = often, 3 = sometimes, 2 = rarely, and 1 = never. A higher PEYS score indicated the respondent's strong self-perceived sportsmanship behavior. Questions 9, 11, 16, 17, and 24 were reversely scored (e.g. 1 = 5, 2 = 4, and 3 = 3) prior to data analysis.

A demographic section, found at the conclusion of the instrument, was composed of one dichotomous, four Likert-types, one short answer, and five choose all that apply items. Questions required responses for participant's age, gender, education level, income level, number, age, and gender of children participating in sport, and in what sport the child participated.

Psychometrics Evidence for the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport

A priority in this research was to develop an instrument that would accurately measure the construct of parent sportsmanship behaviors. Validity and reliability issues were addressed during the conceptualization, design, implementation and analysis of the PEYS.

Evidence based on test content. To establish content validity, two content experts examined each test item. Items were critically reviewed with prior sportsmanship literature. Studies and articles, such as King (1992), Barber, Sukhi, and White (1999), Taylor (2002), etc., on sportsmanship reflected issues with parents behavior and how

those behaviors influence their children. Therefore, the PEYS adequately represented the content area of sportsmanship in the context of youth sport. The 18-item test was also determined to be a uni-dimensional representation of sportsmanship.

Evidence based on relations to other variables. Known-group validity determines whether or not the instrument has the capacity to distinguish different levels of knowledge (Chung, 2003). Known-group validity was conducted using a One-way ANOVA on the gender variable. The gender variable was selected based on literature denoting the differences in men and women in relation to sport. The expectation is that one group should possess more knowledge of sportsmanship behavior thus score higher on the test than the other group.

Test-retest reliability evidence. Test-retest reliability evidence provided the stability of the PEYS measure. Reliability was estimated by administering the PEYS to a sample of 35 participants. The respondents were tested twice within a period of three days. The expectation was that self-perceived behavior scores would be the same when the PEYS was administered to the sample on two different occasions. The correlation coefficient between pretest and posttest self-perceived sportsmanship behavior scores and a paired *t* test were used to examine test-retest reliability. A correlation coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered as satisfactory or good (Nunnally, 1978).

Internal consistency evidence. The internal consistency of the PEYS was examined. The PEYS was estimated on how well the items reflected the same construct thus yielding of similar results. Internal consistency showed how consistent the results

were for the 18-item PEYS construct. Cronbach's alpha was conducted for the overall PEYS.

Data Analysis

Participant's responses from the survey were retrieved from Key Survey. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0. A descriptive analysis was performed to evaluate the frequencies of questions relating to the participants demographic items. Validity and reliability analysis were performed accordingly. The research question was addressed using paired *t* test to examine parents' sportsmanship behavior in pre and post data.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine how the STAR Sportsmanship education module affected parent behavior attached to their experience of their child's sporting endeavors. It explored possible reason why parents may not conceptualize sportsmanship. This chapter presents the results of the analysis performed in the study. This chapter will detail the following topics: 1) Psychometric results of the PEYS, 2) PEYS descriptive results, and 3) the result regarding the research question.

Psychometric Results of the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport

Relation result for the gender variable. In addition to providing content validity for the PEYS, it was determined that known-group evidence would assist in strengthening the validity of the PEYS. With the known-groups validation design, data was collected for each participant's gender to find whether the measure showed the expected difference. A One-way ANOVA was conducted on the pretest data. The One-way ANOVA result showed that the self-perceived sportsmanship behavior score was significantly different between male and females which supported known-group validity evidence $F(1, 90) = 8.275, p = .05$.

Test-retest reliability result. To obtain test-retest reliability data, 35 additional parents completed the PEYS. A t test was conducted on the pretest data and showed that

there were not a significant difference between self-perceived pretest and posttest scores $t(34) = 0.937, p = 0.356$. The test-retest correlation was high (0.81).

Internal consistency result. To further strengthen the PEYS measure, reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to insure internal consistency of the overall PEYS instrument. An alpha coefficient of 0.70 was used as the minimum level of acceptance (Nunnally, 1978). The uni-dimensional test result obtained for internal consistency was a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70.

Summary

Overall, the test items of the PEYS demonstrated to adequately cover self-perceived sportsmanship behavior of respondents. The test scores revealed that the test items were not as difficult or technical to reflect a respondent's lack of familiarity with sportsmanship terminology. Self-perceived behavior is what the instrument intended to measure. For this instrument to confirm content validity, measurement of self-perceived behavior was not confused with unidentifiable variable. Known-group evidence was intended to verify that the instrument measured self-perceived sportsmanship behavior between two groups noting which group would be more receptive to the sportsmanship construct. The PEYS proved the ability to discriminate between the two groups relating to the gender variable.

Based on the results, the PEYS demonstrated to be a reliable measure for sportsmanship behaviors. The test-retest correlation value suggested that the additional participants were seeing the same thing when they responded to the questions of the instrument, an indication of a moderate level of reliability. Internal consistency

confirmed that the test items were related and proved to contribute to the overall construct of the instrument.

Parent Experiences in Youth Sport Descriptive Summary

Women made up over 68% of the sample and males made up 31% of the sample. A total of 95 participants were in this study; however, three participants did not provide gender data, one participant did not provide data for their relationship with the youth athlete or their age, and four participants did not provide their education level or annual income. Of the remaining responses, over 95% reported being a parent. Over 70% of the population was between 45 and 54 years of age. No participant reported being 24 and under or 54 and older. Almost 70% of the participants reported having obtained a bachelor's degree or more advanced degree. Participants who reported an annual household income level of \$75,000 or more accounted for more than 67% of the population (see Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristics	<u>n</u>	%
Gender		
Female	63	68.50
Male	29	31.50
Relationship to youth athlete		
Parent	91	96.80
Legal Guardian	3	3.20
Age range		
25-34	18	19.10
35-44	7	7.4
45-54	69	73.40
Highest level of education completed		
High School	16	17.00
Associate's	13	13.80
Bachelor's	39	41.50
Master's	18	19.10
Doctorate or other terminal degree	8	8.50

(Table 1 continues)

(Table 1 continued)

Characteristic	<u>n</u>	%
Income		
Up to \$39,000	7	7.80
\$40,000 to \$74,999	22	24.40
\$75,000 to \$99,999	22	24.40
\$100,000 or above	39	43.30

Parent Report of Child's Sport Participation

One parent did not indicate how many of his/her children participated in sport. Among the parents and legal guardians who responded to the survey, over 85% reported having at least two children participating in some type of sport (Table 2). Parents reported that 38.64 % of the children were girls and 63.92% of the children were boys. Parents reported that 15.82% were between four and six years of age ($n = 25$), 59.49% were between seven and twelve years of age ($n = 94$), and 24.68 % were between the ages of thirteen and fifteen years of age ($n = 39$). No child was reported to be younger than four years of age or older than fifteen years of age.

Table 2

Parent Report of Child Sport Participants

Characteristics	<u>n</u> *	%
1 Child	35	37.23
2 Children	45	47.87
3 Children	9	9.57
4 Children	4	4.25
5 or more Children	1	1.06

N = 94, *number of parents

Paired t test Results for the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport

The research question for this study was what effect does the STAR sportsmanship education module have on a parent's sportsmanship behavior in experiencing their child's sport? The hypothesis was parents will report a higher self-perceived sportsmanship behavior score following the use of the STAR Sportsmanship online course module for parents.

A paired *t* test was used to determine whether there was a difference in parent behavior scores between the parent's pretest score and posttest score. Parent behavior scores from the posttest ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.313$) were significantly higher than their behavior scores from the pretest ($M = 3.94$; $SD = 0.267$), $t(94) = 3.84$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.344$.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine how the STAR Sportsmanship module affected parent behavior as they related to their child's sporting endeavors. This study utilized parents who provided feedback on the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport (PEYS) survey regarding their behavior and experience as they were engaged in their child's sport. The 18-item survey was developed specifically for this study because of the lack of assessment tools that could accurately measure parent sportsmanship behavior. The development of the PEYS provides future researchers a tool to measure parent behavior in the context of youth sport. Because the test can be administered online, researchers can acquire parental behavior feedback in a timely manner from anywhere in the world.

Participants were 95 parents and legal guardians from various socioeconomic backgrounds who had at least one child participating in some sport activity at the time the study was conducted. Each participant completed the PEYS survey and provided demographic information related to the participant's gender, relationship to the youth athlete, age, education, income, number of children in youth sport, age, and gender. This chapter discusses the significance of the study's findings.

The PEYS was a self-report. The test was created specifically for this study. According to Kuh, et al. (2001), self-reports are likely to be valid if they meet five general conditions: 1) the information requested is known to the respondents; 2) the questions are phrased clearly and unambiguously; 3) the questions refer to recent activities; 4) the respondents think the questions merit a serious and thoughtful response; and 5) answering the questions does not threaten, embarrass, or violate the privacy of the respondent or encourage the respondent to respond in socially desirable ways (p. 9).

The participants in this study responded to all items in the survey, however, some participants did not provide responses to the demographic questions. No participant was excluded from the study based on every item having a response. Being that the PEYS relied on self-reported information, two general concerns came forth: 1) the inability of respondents to provide accurate answers and 2) the unwillingness of respondents to provide truthful information (Kuh, et. al. 2001). Those who did not respond to the demographic questions were part of the analysis; however, their lack of response to the demographic questions was analyzed with those who did provide a response.

Known-group validity was significant for the variable gender. The significance suggests that the scores differed for men and women. In this case, the men scored higher than the women in pretest data. Sports have been traditionally geared towards men. The realm of athletics has held on to the mindset that women are not as intelligent or strong to handle the tough and very competitive nature of athletics. This is mostly due to the reassertion and legitimization of male power and privilege in sport (Messner & Sabo, 1990) as well as the socialization process that has defined distinct roles for men and

women in society. Men are more engrossed with sport than women are engrossed with sport, thus men know more of the expected behaviors, values, and rules of a particular sport. Men or fathers, in the context of involvement with their child's sport participation, tend to spend more time engaged in physical play (sport participation) with their children than women or mothers spend time in physical play with their children (Lamb & Oppenheim, 1989). According to Wuerth, Lee, and Alfermann (2003), fathers tend to score higher than mothers in relation to directive behavior on surveys centered on parental behavior. This means fathers give sport specific advice to their children (i.e. pointing out what their child did bad or telling the youngster how to improve) and push them to train harder and give their best.

Limitation of the Parent Experiences in Youth Sport

A limitation of the instrument is that it has, prior to the proposed study, not been used in parent behavior research. Versions of parent behavior questionnaires (Michaels, 1977; Ortiz, 1999) and checklists have been used in scholarly research. However, three studies have incorporated parent sportsmanship behavior (Ortega-Samper, 1984; Kidman, McKenzie, & McKenzie, 1999; Davis, 2005), but the inventory has not been measured in the proposed field.

Conclusion

Hypothesis: Parents will report a higher self-perceived sportsmanship behavior score following the use of the STAR Sportsmanship online course module for parents.

Analysis of the *t* test found a significant difference in the parent's self-perceived sportsmanship behavior score from pretest to posttest. This significance confirmed that

the module is an effective learning tool for parents to learn sportsmanship concepts. Studies (Wantland, Portillo, Holzemer, Slaughter, & McGhee, 2004; Kerfoot, Conlin, Trivison & McMahon, 2007; Oenema, Brug, & Lechner, 2001) that have examined the effect of web-based interventions on a particular behavior confirm that individuals improve their comprehension of subject matter with web-based instruction than with using traditional means of learning.

Implications of the Study

Overall, this study can be added to the body of knowledge that encompasses sportsmanship knowledge, behaviors, and values. The PEYS and the STAR Sportsmanship module are promising sportsmanship assessment and educational tools, respectively. The instrument and module were both easy to use and future research can examine the responsiveness of the instrument as parent behavior changes over time. Researchers and sport administrators, who hope to implement effective sportsmanship education and training for parents in youth sport, will gain insight needed to make informed decisions regarding the role of parents engaged in their youth sport programs.

Suggested strategies for implementing sportsmanship should include defining and emphasizing sportsmanship, stressing participation rather than results, teaching values as part of the program, and educating and involving parents (Vandenbeebe, 2004). The STAR Sportsmanship module addresses each of the aforementioned strategies. Therefore, sportsmanship education programs can influence the self-perceived and actual behaviors of their parents by including the STAR Sportsmanship education module to their curriculum.

The present data demonstrated that the 18-item PEYS was a valid, reliable, and internally consistent test to measure parental self-perceived sportsmanship behaviors. Sport administrators and researchers can utilize the PEYS to evaluate, assess, and adjust the impact of their sportsmanship programs. Given that the PEYS was developed for use in the present study, further research with more parent groups involved in youth sport will be needed to evaluate the instrument's discriminating ability. This continued research will also make the PEYS a stronger instrument for adaptation in other research disciplines. The instrument demonstrated good internal consistency, however, further evaluation of the PEYS will be expected to refine the scale and increase the alpha as well as strengthen the other psychometric based evidence associated with the instrument.

Given these findings, the PEYS can be considered a valid and reliable instrument to determine the difference in parent self-perceived sportsmanship behaviors. There is a lack of studies where parents self-report their own behaviors and attitudes. Sportsmanship can be taught, learned and even required, but without careful examination of the athletic environment and why parents behave the way they do, the desired behaviors will not be perpetuated or valued by those for whom the sport activity was created for in the first place – the child.

Recommendations for Future Studies

For future research, the following recommendations can be made based on the results of this study:

1. Expanding the demographics to include parent's ethnicity and nationality.

2. To examine parents sportsmanship behaviors at different levels of their child's youth sport participation. It would be interesting to note how parents adjust their behavior as their child grows and moves from one age group to the next age group when participating in sport.
3. To utilize the STAR Sportsmanship education module in research to collect continuous time data of parents for specific sport behaviors. An individual's behavior can change dependent upon the revelation one receives regarding a particular subject matter. The results of this research would provide information as to whether or not the parent's behavior changed as well as whether or not the behavior is sustained.
4. This study did not focus on participants socioeconomic backgrounds; however, studies that examine the socioeconomic backgrounds of parents could provide youth sport administrators with insight on possible factors that motivate parental behavior.
5. To examine parents who are professional athletes and how they engage in their child's sport. Athletes are competitive and research could possibly benefit from observing what type of sportsmanship messages these parents send to their own children.
6. To observe parent sportsmanship behaviors based on the region of the United States in which they reside (i.e. North, South, Southeast, West, East, etc.).
7. On a global level, researchers could examine parental sport behaviors in different countries. Countries around the world have their own cultural norms and it would

be interesting to note the similarities and differences in parent behavior as their children participate in sport.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval

Middle Tennessee State University
Institutional Review Board
Sam H. Ingram Building, MTSU P.O. Box 124
2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd.
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

August 15, 2008

Names: Dwedor W. Ford, dwf2g@mtsu.edu
Dr. Colby B. Jubenville, jubenvil@mtsu.edu

Protocol Title: "The Effect of the STAR Sportsmanship Education Module on Parents' Self-Perceived Sportsmanship Behaviors in Youth Sport"

Protocol Number: 09-015

Dear Investigator(s),

The MTSU Institutional Review Board, or a representative of the IRB, has reviewed the research proposal identified above. The MTSU IRB or its representative has determined that the study poses minimal risk to participants and qualifies for an expedited review under 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110.

Approval is conditionally granted provided written consent is obtained from all participants.

Approval is granted for one (1) year from the date of this letter for ~~300-500~~ participants.

According to MTSU Policy, a researcher is defined as anyone who works with data or has contact with participants. Anyone meeting this definition needs to be listed on the protocol and needs to provide a certificate of training to the Office of Compliance. **If you add researchers to an approved project, please forward an updated list of researchers and their certificates of training to the Office of Compliance (c/o Tara Prairie, Box 134) before they begin to work on the project.** Any change to the protocol must be submitted to the IRB before implementing this change.

Please note that any unanticipated harms to participants or adverse events must be reported to the Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918.

You will need to submit an end-of-project report to the Office of Compliance upon completion of your research. Complete research means that you have finished collecting and analyzing data. **Should you not finish your research within the one (1) year period, you must submit a Progress Report and request a continuation prior to the expiration date.** Please allow time for review and requested revisions.

Also, all research materials must be retained by the PI or faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years after study completion. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joe Hawkins,

Joe Hawkins, Member
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent and Instructions for Parent Experiences in Youth Sport

Dear Participant,

You are being asked to participate in this study because you may be a parent of at least one child who participates in some type of youth sport activity.

You should have received an e-mail, along with a username and password which provides you access to the STAR Sportsmanship Parent Module, which is a major component of this study.

To begin the questionnaire you need to click on the next button below. Upon completion of the questionnaire you will be instructed to click on the link (at the bottom right) to open the STAR Sportsmanship Parent Module. When you have finished the module, please close out that window and complete the follow-up questionnaire found in the previous window.

The confidential questionnaires and module will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. You are encouraged to complete the research instruments in one sitting.

Additional information:

1. There are no expected costs associated with your participation in this study.
2. Discomforts, inconveniences, and/or risks that can be reasonably expected are no greater than those encountered in everyday life.
3. There are no unforeseeable risks associated with this study.
4. There is no compensation for your participation in this study.
5. If you should choose to withdraw from this study, you are free to do so without any penalty or consequence.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact Dr. Colby Jubenville at (615) 898-2909.

This survey has been approved by the MTSU Institutional Review Board. The research protocol has been reviewed and it has been determined that the study poses minimal risk to subjects and qualifies for expedited review under 45 CFR.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. Thank you for your participation. Please click on continue if you wish to complete the study.

Because we know your time is valuable, three (3) TARGET gift cards valued at \$100 each will be issued at random. Please provide your email address if you would like to be included in the drawing for the gift card.

APPENDIX C

Parent Experiences in Youth Sport

PARENT EXPERIENCES IN YOUTH SPORT

Do/Will You:	1 Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Always
Encourage your child with positive verbal responses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pursue knowledge by learning more about the rules of the game.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer your child coaching pointers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applaud your child's coach and team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Applaud opponent's good play.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acknowledge and accepted the referees decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Congratulate opponents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Point out good sportsmanship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Critique your child's play.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disagree with coaching decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physically confront persons in the stands that criticized your child or team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Explore the use of supplements to increase your child's performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criticize your child's performance after the game.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tell your child what skills they need to practice more on after the game.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thank opponents and referees after the game.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Praise your child and the team after the game, regardless of outcome.

Push your child to perform in pursuit of collegiate or professional play.

Absorb your child's success or failure as a reflection of your (sport) parenting.

Demographic Section

1. What is your relationship to the youth athlete?
 - a. Parent
 - b. Grandparent
 - c. Legal Guardian

2. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

3. What is your age range?
 - a. 24 years or younger
 - b. 25 – 34 years
 - c. 35 – 44 years
 - d. 45 – 54 years
 - e. 55 – 64 years
 - f. 65 years or older

4. What is the highest level of education completed?
 - a. GED
 - b. High School
 - c. Associate's degree
 - d. Bachelor's degree
 - e. Master's degree
 - f. Doctorate or other terminal degree

5. What is your annual household income?
 - a. Up to \$39,999
 - b. \$40,000 to \$74,999

- c. \$75,000 to \$99,999
- d. \$100,000 or above

6. How many children do you have participating in sport?
7. What is/are the age (s) of your child (ren)?
8. What is/are the gender of your child (ren)?

APPENDIX D

STAR Sportsmanship Education Module Home Page

STAR Parents

STAR Parents Set A Positive Sportsmanship Example

Let your children have fun playing, and they'll make athletics a lifelong commitment. According to numerous national reports, over 75% of kids stop playing sports by age 13. The No. 1 reason? It's not fun anymore.



THE CENTER FOR THE PARENTS

PREVIEW

- Sportsmanship For Parents Teaches Parents.
- How to keep the fun in sports by refraining from overidentification and setting a good sportsmanship example
- How to Stop and Think before they Act
- How their actions impact others, their children and teammates, other fans, coaches and officials
- The warning signs of steroid use
- How to support good decision-making about steroids/drugs, fitness & nutrition
- How to communicate in parent coach & team meetings