

A Case Study Analysis of the Fiesta Bowl Youth Football Clinic and Kaboom
Playground Build

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by

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ABSTRACT

A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF THE FIESTA BOWL YOUTH FOOTBALL CLINIC AND KABOOM PLAYGROUND BUILD

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This project served as a case study of community programs currently hosted by the Fiesta Bowl Organization, in Phoenix, Arizona. The first program studied was the Youth Football Clinic, which is a collaborative effort hosted annually in October alongside Positive Coaching Alliance, Boys and Girls Club of Metro Phoenix and Special Olympics. The second program studied was the Kaboom! Playground Build, which takes place annually through a local partnership with the City of Phoenix and a corporate partner who underwrites a portion of the project, and is subject to change year to year. In the process of researching this topic and conducting the case study, the author visited each of the programs, participated as a volunteer and surveyed local participants. This project was designed to serve as a resource for the Fiesta Bowl organization, as well as other non-profits that seek community partnerships to fund similar programs.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

Research into the outputs produced by youth sports programming has increased in recent years as society tries to look for solutions to a growing epidemic of childhood obesity and other delinquent behaviors. Organizations that seek to implement programming with a positive outcome on youth and the communities they grow into are often under-funded or lack the quality programming that draws participants in, due to high facilitation costs. This case study looked at two programs implemented in Phoenix, Arizona by the Fiesta Bowl organization. The Fiesta Bowl, while filed as a non-profit, understands first-hand the lucrative nature of sports and entertainment. With their charitable arm, Fiesta Bowl Charities, however, they push their boundaries to grant over two-million dollars annually to Arizona based non-profits that are working to make a difference in the community, specifically amongst youth.

The Fiesta Bowl itself partners with non-profits on occasion to offer its own programming focused on Arizona youth and their communities, two of which are being reviewed in this study, the KaBoom! Playground Build and the Youth Football Clinic. To understand why these programs are significant, we must first understand the need that exists in the community. The following statistics on Arizona families and the impact of being considered low-income serve to assist in painting that picture.

The median household income in the United States was \$56,516 in 2015 (Proctor, Semega, & Kollar, 2016) while the median household income in the Phoenix, Arizona area is \$51,492 (Phoenix, Mesa, Glendale, 2016). In 2014, low income, nationally, was defined as a household of four that makes \$24,008 or less.

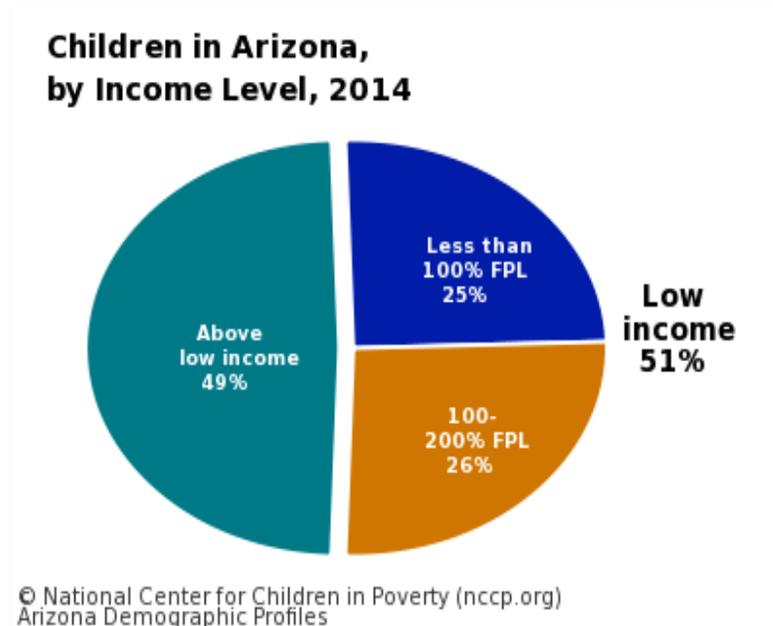


Figure 1: Children in Arizona, by Income Level

The following chart shows that 51% of children in Arizona live in low-income households. In Arizona, there are 761,313 families with 1,562,678 children, 51%, (793,298) of those children live in low-income families, which is 7% higher than the national average of 44%. (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2016)

These numbers are important because of the correlation to low-income and at-risk youth. Children that grow up in at-risk environments are less likely to successfully

transition into adulthood. Youth in low-income, urban areas are particularly at risk for engaging in aggressive, violent, and disruptive behaviors. (Lewis, et al., 2013)

In a report for *Neumann Business Review*, Kyle Tysoe makes the following claim in support of the positive effect of sport on at-risk youth: “One benefit of sport programs used with at-risk youth is that the programs often help with the issue of crime prevention”. Tysoe continues, “A sport program is able to reduce criminal activity and antisocial behavior by engaging at-risk youth in sport, rather than leaving them to their own devices”. These views are not original to Tysoe, but rather are shared by many who have studied the positive impact that sport can have on youth who, due to outside factors like economic status or family history, lack positive programs to participate in.

Often organizations that use sport to reach at-risk youth are also incorporating educational sessions on topics that could likely affect their lives and their ability to successfully transition into adulthood. These topics in some cases include heavier subjects such as drug use and avoiding gang association; but even topics as simple as sportsmanship and the importance of making healthy choices can start to point youth in the right direction. Programs such as the Fiesta Bowl Youth Football Clinic, which we will be looking at later in this study, incorporate the latter.

The Phoenix, Arizona area has many organizations that host youth sport programs, the most affordable being the YMCA and City of Phoenix. What you find, however, in most cases with programs hosted by a Parks and Recreation Department is that there is a minimum number of participants needed to host the program. With that, many programs that children get excited about end up being cancelled. Similarly, budget

is on the top of organizations' minds; and in many cases, the actual coaches or instructors lack training, leading to low return rates.

Low-income families are used to the opportunities available to them. They are limited, and not incredibly attractive. They do not in most cases stack up to the higher-cost programs that are available to their peers in mid-high-income homes. Therefore, it is critical for high-profile, locally based sport organizations to make giving back to their areas' youth a priority. For Phoenix, some of those groups would include the top four professional teams: Arizona Cardinals (Football), Arizona Diamondbacks (Baseball), Phoenix Coyotes (Hockey), Phoenix Suns (Basketball). These four organizations, with a focus on revenue generation, fall short. There is, however, a fifth organization with a tremendous opportunity to make youth development through sport a priority. That organization is the Arizona Sports Foundation, popularly known as the Fiesta Bowl.

This study will look at what, in a single-season, the Fiesta Bowl does to drive this important work forward, and the immediate impact it is having on youth in underserved areas. We will look at three major programs to witness the power of inclusion, how confidence can be built through participation, and the impact that moderate attention to a low-income neighborhood can have on a child's future.

CHAPTER TWO: SUPPORTING LITERATURE

Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring. Those are the Five C's of positive youth development as outlined in the 2008 publication "Ways to Promote the Positive Development of Children and Youth" (Zarrett & Lerner, 2008). This model lists five components that are the outcome goals of a positive youth development program. When executed with these outcomes in mind, youth programming can have a tremendous impact on communities. Later in this study, you will see responses from volunteers and coaches who were interviewed in regard to their involvement. Their responses, in one way or another, all point back to one of these Five C's.

Both these components and "the role of sport organizations in designing programs that develop better people, rather than simply skilled individuals" are targeted in an article published in 2005 titled "Youth Sport Programs: An Avenue to Foster Positive Youth Development" written by Jessica L. Fraser-Thomas, Jean Co[^]te' and Janice Deakin. The idea is that organizations have a duty to deliver programs to their communities that are going to build out the Five C's in their youth, leading to stronger citizens. This is not always possible, however, due to an economic factor that the authors give mention to as well stating, "socio-economic status, race, gender, and environmental factors can all limit youths' opportunities. For example, youth sport programs are becoming increasingly expensive, competitive and elitist" (Fraser-Thomas, Co[^]te, &

Deakin, 2005). Due to cost or other limiting factors, youth in communities that are most in need often find themselves without any options to participate, and they therefore miss out on the opportunity to build the positive characteristics that youth sport programming, when done right, has to offer.

In a 2014 NBC News article written by Kelley Holland, the effects of rising participation cost on lower income families is a focus. Holland spoke with Michael Sagas, Chairman of the University of Florida's Department for Tourism, Leisure and Sport Management, and what Sagas shared is that he believes "from a sport development perspective I think we're in trouble" (Holland, 2014). Sagas, who has a daughter who plays soccer and around the time of the article had just competed at the U.S. Youth Soccer National Championships, had the following concern to add from his experience observing the lack of diversity of participants at that event, saying it was "a sliver of the upper middle class, mostly upper middle class to wealthy. We're seeing the best of that group, but we're definitely not reaching the entire population." (Holland, 2014).

The article written by Holland (2014) and the insight provided by Sagas look at the growing epidemic that, as the cost of participating in youth sports rises, the opportunities available to lower income households diminishes. Even our schools are becoming pay-to-play environments, which naturally cuts out a segment of our population that you could argue are most in need of these programs to teach healthy lifestyles and provide a safe, positive environment.

Just between 2011 and 2012, the percentage of youth participating in sport fell from 54% to 50% (Holland, 2014). As the importance of competition and experience

grow, the access to sport opportunities is limited. Low-income families, for the most part, cannot afford the equipment and fees now made the norm in youth sports; but even beyond that, many of these families are single parent and cannot afford to take upwards of three weeks of their year off for the travel required to participate. Holland continues through interviews with participating families and directors of youth sports organizations trying to tackle this issue, to point out the societal issues being caused by this lack of inclusiveness; “children and adolescents who do not play sports are at greater risk for obesity. And if low-income kids do decide to go outside and move around, they are more likely than wealthier kids to live in high crime neighborhoods where the chances of getting in trouble are greater.”

Project Play is an initiative out of the Aspen Institute that, through recognition of similar concerns as voiced by Holland (2014), are hoping to bring youth sports back to the core of why they exist and are effective. I will share a few infographics created by the Aspen Institute that speak to why the concern for youth sport and inclusive play opportunities are valid, and how they are just one of the entities working to change the course. These infographics strengthen the case for inclusive play opportunities for youth in our underserved communities. They show the decline in availability due to cost and the growing negative effect on a child’s health and cognitive development.

The decline in participation is simply linked to a decline in affordability and inclusiveness. The more competitive the sport and the more equipment required, the greater the decline in participation. More of a focus is placed on profit and less on the good that is being gained by those participating.

KIDS ARE LEAVING SPORTS
SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN PARTICIPATION AMONG 6-12 YEAR OLDS

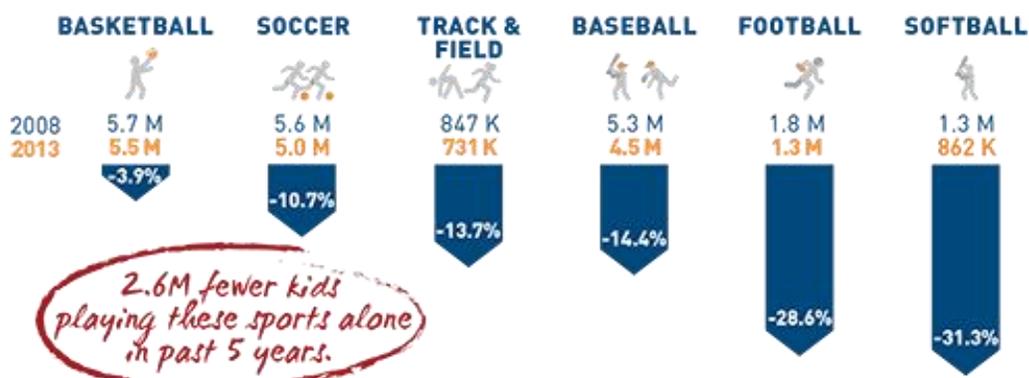


Figure 2: Decline in Participation

(Lee, 2015)

The following chart from the Aspen Institute shows the direct correlation between household income and participation in the top sports in America. “Families that can afford more, play more” (Lee, 2015) is a statement that makes sense in that the more disposable income you have, the more you can purchase. That should not, however, be a defining factor when it comes to youth sport involvement and a child’s access to formative activities in his/her neighborhood. Lee opens her argument of this fact with a quote from U.S. Olympic Committee Member, Anita DeFrantz; “Sport is a birthright” (Lee, 2015)

INCOME IMPACTS SPORT PARTICIPATION
PERCENTAGE OF CORE PARTICIPANTS, BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

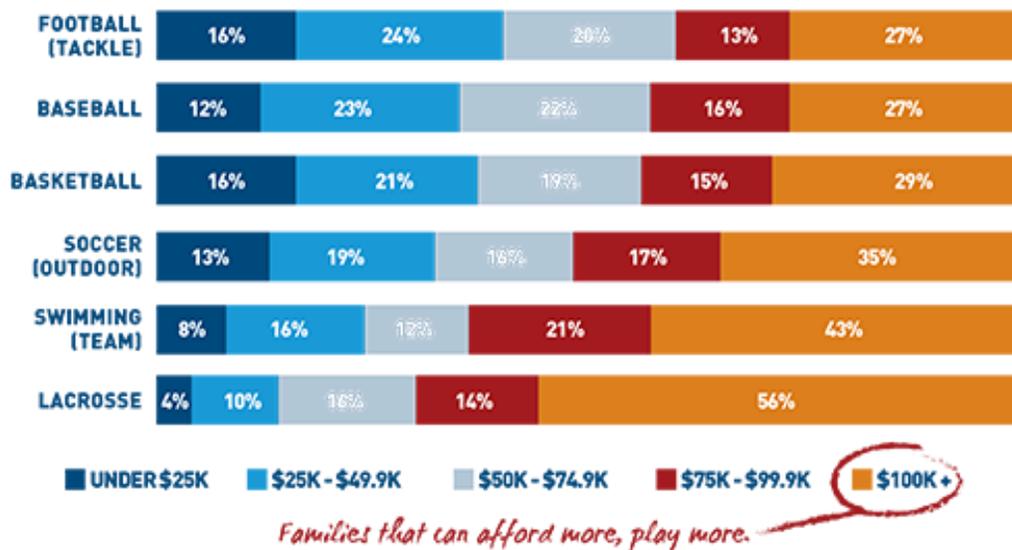


Figure 3: Income Impact on Participation
 (Lee, 2015)

The other implication that we have discussed briefly through the articles above is overall health and cognitive development. The next three charts from the Aspen Institute show the percentages of children considered active, how the United States stacks up to other countries on the front of childhood obesity and the cognitive effect of being active even for a small portion of your day. Weekly involvement in sport and play in a safe and inclusive environment for children five to seventeen truly influences their physical development and overall confidence.

...AND ARE LESS PHYSICALLY ACTIVE THROUGH SPORTS

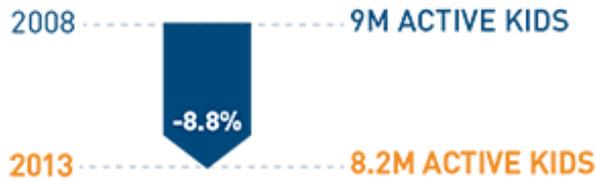


Figure 4: Activity Level
(Lee, 2015)

THE RACE WE DON'T WANT TO WIN PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT/OBESE CHILDREN IN 16 PEER COUNTRIES

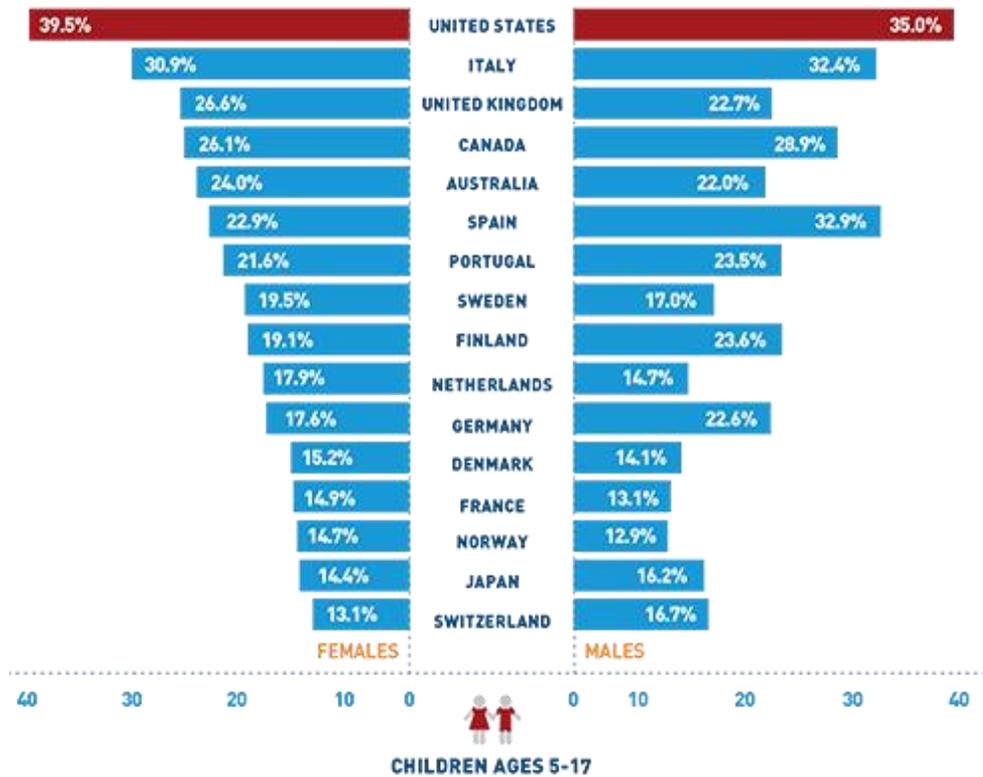


Figure 5: Childhood Obesity
(Lee, 2015)

MOVE BODY, ACTIVATE BRAIN
WHAT MRI SCANS TELL US*

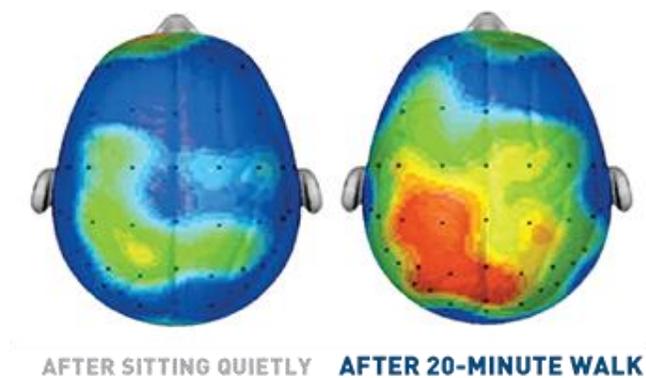


Figure 6: Brain Activity
(Lee, 2015)

Finally, to bring these points together, the Aspen Institute builds the following infographic that shows the overall affect that being physically active as a child can have on the transition into adulthood. When speaking to these statistics and the positive outcome of having inclusive play available for low-income communities, Lee (2015) states that children who are involved in play “are one-tenth as likely to become obese, 15 percent more likely to go to college, and they are more likely to be productive adults than children who do not play sports.”

ACTIVE KIDS DO BETTER IN LIFE WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS ON THE COMPOUNDING BENEFITS

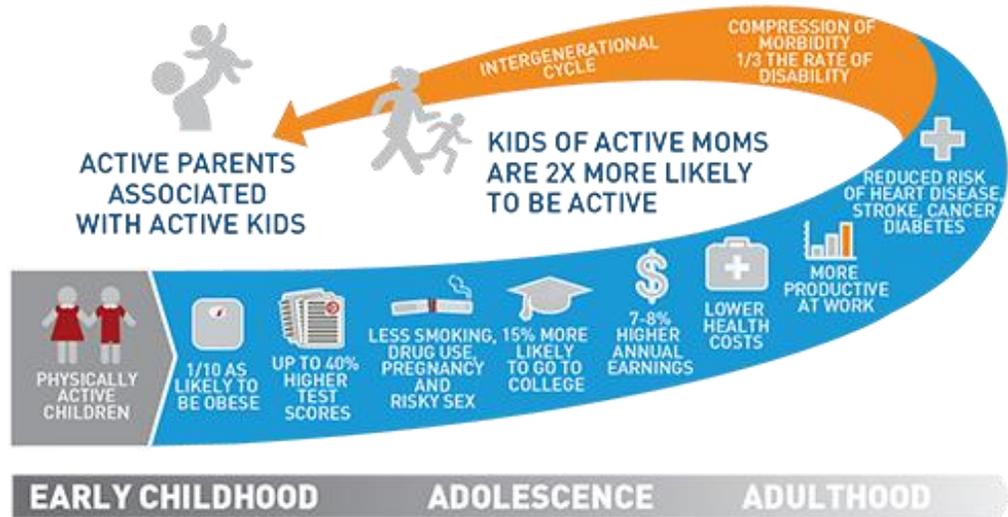


Figure 7: Active Kid Cycle
(Lee, 2015)

Arizona Central is a local news outlet for the Phoenix Metro area. Kelly Morris, through gathering data from the Mayo Clinic, The President’s Council, Special Education Advisor’s and the University of Florida, made a case locally for the important role that sport plays for children. The major takeaways from that entry were as follows:

Positive Effects on Physical Health

The Presidential Council recommends one hour of physical activity per day at a minimum. Children who adhere to those guidelines and are involved in sport and play activities are less likely to be obese and are more likely to prevent other health consequences in the future including; high blood pressure, heart disease

and diabetes. Children involved in sports are also significantly less likely to smoke, drink alcohol or experiment with drugs. (Morris, 2015)

Positive Effects on Mood and Mental Health

“Physical activity triggers the release of endorphins in the brain, chemicals that boost mood and help prevent and relieve depression, per the Mayo Clinic. In fact, the University of Florida reports that kids who participate in sports are less likely to develop depression than kids who don’t participate. Physical activity also relieves anxiety.” (Morris, 2015)

Positive Effects on Self-Esteem

“The University of Florida reports that participation in sports helps children develop self-esteem and that girls who participate in sports develop increased confidence and have a healthier body image than girls who don’t participate in sports. Improved self-esteem and self-confidence also help improve mood and mental health.” (Morris, 2015)

Positive Social Effects

“Kids who participate in sports earn better grades in school and develop better social skills, according to the University of Florida. Participating in sports provides opportunities for children to develop friendships, to learn to lose and win gracefully, to practice taking turns, to take on leadership roles, to learn to follow rules and to practice managing conflict. The social interaction experienced while participating in sports also improves mood and mental health.” (Morris, 2015)

While these articles point out the benefits that all children see through participations the Special Education Advisor website through the Morris (2015) article suggests that participation and inclusion may yield even more benefits to kids with special needs. We will be looking at that element particularly when we review the work of the Fiesta Bowl through the Youth Sports Clinic, which invites special needs children to participate, and through the Fiesta Bowl Player Event that will bring high-profile college athletes into an environment where they are impacting the lives of some of Arizona's special needs children through the power of sport.

Additionally, an article written by Dalton LaFerney (2016) with the Dallas News hits on all the items noted above, but adds the hope that organizations are starting to recognize the lack of inclusiveness. "Athletic organizations are starting to become more aware of this problem and are nursing programs to accommodate groups that are often targets, like LGBT kids or players who are autistic." Focus on inclusion is at the core of what many U.S. based programs are doing to encourage children to get outside and be active in sports and play regardless of economic status, disability or other factors that can limit opportunities.

Finally, in November of 2016, the Society of Health and Physical Educators, published a press release stating that "less than one quarter of children in the U.S. meet current physical activity guidelines" (Society of Health and Physical Educators, 2016). SHAPE identified four major recommendations to help reverse this decline in physical activity among youth:

1. “Schools should work to increase physical activity opportunities among youth and should be a key part of a national strategy to increase physical activity.
2. Preschool and childcare centers should enhance physical activity.
3. To advance efforts to increase physical activity among youth, key research gaps should be addressed.
4. Changes involving the built environment (such as safe outdoor and indoor recreation spaces) and similar sectors are promising, but need additional work.” (Society of Health and Physical Educators, 2016)

The programs that the Fiesta Bowl is partnering to offer help address these recommendations by both increasing the programs available to school-aged children and assisting communities in creating safe indoor and outdoor spaces in which to play.

CHAPTER THREE: ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON PLAY

Playworks

Founded in 1996 and celebrating their twentieth anniversary this year, Playworks currently serves twenty states. The vision of Playworks is that “one day every child in America will get to play—every day “ (Playworks, 1996). Their goal is to lead children in positive play and to then pass those methods on to the children themselves to shape how they play in the future. “We create a place for every kid on the playground to feel included, be active, and build valuable social and emotional skills. We offer an essential opportunity for children to explore their imaginations, to connect with other kids, and to stretch and grow physically, emotionally and socially” (Playworks, 1996)

Playworks focuses on low-income schools and working with principals, teachers and students to build a culture of positive play during their recess time. While some think play is just that and does not carry the weight to teach serious lessons, Playworks and many whom support their efforts see the opposite: “Building a play culture that acknowledges the arbitrariness of most conflicts and provides a simple, playful tool for addressing them, ultimately makes it easier for kids to recognize and address more serious conflicts” (Playworks, 1996). The idea is that teaching positive interactions amongst students translates from recess to the classroom and from the classroom to their lives outside of school. And guess what? It is working.

% of staff that report an INCREASE in...

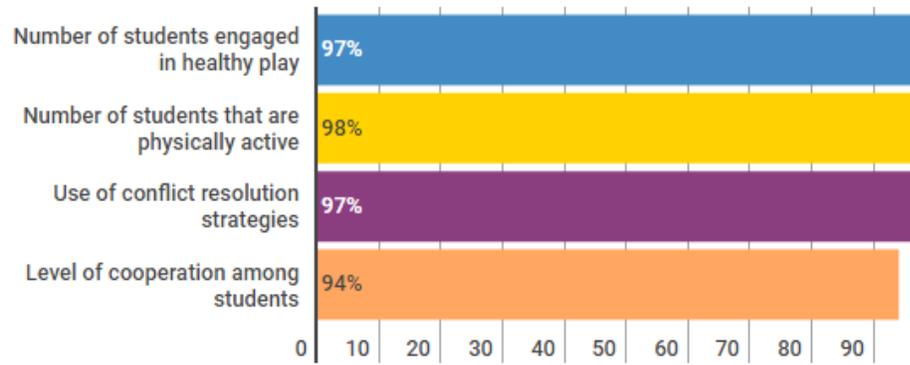


Figure 8: Playwork Results
(Playworks, 2016)

% of staff that report a DECREASE in...

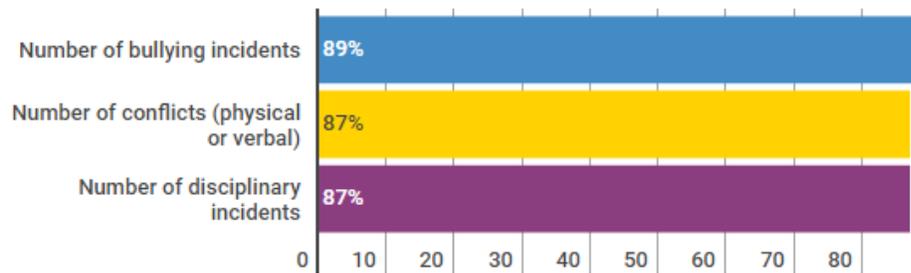


Figure 9: Playwork Results 2
(Playworks, 2016)

KaBoom!

“Children are missing out on the childhood they deserve. Play is disappearing at home, at school and in communities, particularly for the 16 million children living in poverty” (KaBoom!, 2016). Also founded in 1996, KaBoom! exists to provide underserved communities with brand new playgrounds through local partnerships, with the idea that “the well-being of society begins with the well-being of children” (KaBoom!, 2016).

The problem that KaBoom! has identified is that childhood activity is in a rapid decline. “America’s kids are playing less than any previous generation. Only one in four adolescents get the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity or active play per day, with the number of younger kids only slightly higher” (KaBoom!, 2016). This leads to children being unhappy, and unhealthy from a young age, which tends to translate also into their adulthood. As shown in previous research from the Aspen Institute, getting even twenty minutes of physical activity a day drastically increases the brains activity and releases hormones necessary for maintained happiness. This is largely prevalent in low-income neighborhoods where homes lack the time to engage in outdoor activity and safe and exciting places to play are scarce. Funding in these neighborhoods is often down, and even the simplest opportunity to engage in sport and play at a nearby playground is limited by a lack of usable, up-to-date equipment.

KaBoom! identifies play as the solution, using three major components of Playability outlined as follows:

Foster Play Everywhere: Play should be integrated into dead time and unexpected places such as clinics, bus stops, and sidewalks. By fostering play everywhere, play becomes the easy choice.

Make cities family-friendly: Make play more inclusive and appealing to the whole family, across all generations.

Create the corner store of play: Create mini play destinations "around the corner," for a quick and convenient play opportunity.

Communities are believing in the power of their impact and welcoming their presence. "In 2015 alone, KaBoom! built 150 playgrounds and brought play to 1,035,862 kids across the United States." (KaBoom!, 2015). These playgrounds also engage the entire community by utilizing local volunteers who come together and over the span of six hours, build an entire playground. In 2015 alone, KaBoom! activated 37,756 volunteers all working on their local projects. What this adds is a sense of ownership over a project. Bringing together volunteers from the community being served as well as surrounding areas gives an entire city or town insight into the importance of play in every child's life.

Fiesta Bowl Charities has funded two KaBoom! playground builds in the Phoenix metro area in the 2015-16 calendar year. This pairs together athletes and athletics supporters with their local community, and draws a parallel to the importance of sport non-profit organizations sharing the gift of sport and play with the underserved neighborhoods that surround them. In both cases, retired collegiate and professional athletes took part in the build.

DreamCourts

Starting in 2010, the Nancy Lieberman Foundation partnered with the WorldVentures Foundation to build high-quality basketball courts for children living in underprivileged communities across the country. The goal of this program is to keep children off the streets and to provide them with a safe and competitive environment where they can develop skills such as teamwork and good sportsmanship (Nancy Lieberman Foundation, 2016).

Since the inception of the DreamCourts program, the Nancy Lieberman Foundation in partnership with WorldVentures Foundation, Boys and Girls Clubs, and some celebrity funders including Billy Crystal, have built over six DreamCourts in underserved communities across the United States. Each DreamCourt dedication includes a basketball clinic for the children of that community to emphasize the positive type of play that should take place on these courts. DreamCourts provide a safe and positive place for children to play. It is a new addition to their community that shows they are worth investing in.

The Lieberman Foundation's strong contributions to underserved communities is a testament to the important role that sport plays in the growth of many youth. One of the cornerstones of the program is the clinic that is held during the court dedication, which also speaks to drug and alcohol awareness, as well as the importance of taking education seriously. These things fully support the notions that:

1. There is a lack of non-competitive sport and play contributions to underserved communities, and

2. These communities are worth investing in, because play can fill a void in building character where other aspects of these children's lives may be lacking.

NFL Play60

The NFL started their Play60 initiative in 2007 in an effort to fight childhood obesity. This program shows the importance of a revenue generating industry, such as the National Football League, giving back to their youngest fans by encouraging healthy lifestyles. It is a program that in many cases takes young fans' heroes on the field and teaches them the importance of hard work and being active. To date, the NFL has dedicated over \$200 million to youth health and wellness through NFL PLAY 60.

(National Football League, 2016)

The NFL Play60 program gives youth the opportunity to learn from those athletes and coaches that they aspire to be like, while also building character and important life skills shoulder to shoulder with their peers. Programs such as the NFL Play60 initiative and even the Nancy Lieberman DreamCourts, which we touched on previously, give children the tools to become leaders in their own communities long after these programs end. By teaching simple skills drills related to their respective sports, as well as lessons on healthy habits and the correlation of goal setting to future success, these programs are encouraging the next generation to achieve their dreams, regardless of their current social or economic status.

Additional Youth Sport Participation Statistics

Table 1: Youth Sport Statistics

Youth Sport Statistics (Ages 5-18)	Data
Number of kids who play organized sports each year	36,000,000
Percent of kids who play sports outside of school	60 %
Percent of boys who play organized sports	66 %
Percent of girls who play organized sports	52 %
Percent of coaches who are dads coaching their own kids	85 %
Percent of corporation executives who played sports as kids	73 %

(Statistic Brain, 2015)

Table 2: Youth Sports Survey Statistics

Youth Sports Survey Statistics	Data
Percent who participate in sports to be with friends	65 %
Percent who were reluctant to play sports	15 %
Percent who wanted to improve their sports skills	20 %
Percent who said they wouldn't care if no score was kept in their games	71 %
Percent who said they wished no parents would watch them play	37 %
Percent who said they see other kids act like poor sports frequently	51 %
Percent who would prefer to be on a losing team if they could play rather than warm the bench on a winning team	90 %
Percent who said they planned to stop playing the next year	35 %

(Statistic Brain, 2015)

CHAPTER FOUR: THE FIESTA BOWL

As mentioned in the introduction to this study, the Fiesta Bowl is a non-profit organization based out of Scottsdale, Arizona, a suburb of the Metropolitan Phoenix Area. The organization is primarily known for the college football game that they host annually, but their role in the community is much larger than that and growing rapidly. They do this through their community relations arm, Fiesta Bowl Charities.

The organization focuses on four pillars when assessing need and how to serve: Youth, Sport, Education and Human Services. The three programs that we studied are at the helm of this work: The Fiesta Bowl Youth Football Clinic, Fiesta Bowl Charities KaBoom! Playground Build and the Fiesta Bowl Player Event in conjunction with Special Olympics.

Mission

The Fiesta Bowl strives to create a positive economic impact for Arizona and focus on the community while having fun.

Vision

The Fiesta Bowl's vision is to be a world-class community organization that executes innovative experiences, drives economic growth and champions charitable causes, inspiring pride in all Arizonans.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE STUDY AND IMPLICATIONS

The same 4-5 questions were asked of 5-10 participants in each case study, allowing for unique responses. After giving a qualitative response, these participants were also asked to give a rating of those feelings on a ten-point scale. The following verbal recruitment script was used prior to the administering of the survey questions:

"Hello, we are doing a research study to learn more about the positive effects of affordable, inclusive sport programs in your community. The study consists of a single survey that I will administer verbally throughout the day by asking a series of questions. Participation will take no longer than 3-minutes per check-in. All your answers are confidential and no one will know your responses. You may choose not to participate if you do not want to. If you do, we will check in with you at three points over the course of the day."

Parents who allowed their children to participate signed a parental consent form, while any volunteers or staff providing feedback completed a similar consent geared towards participants eighteen and over. Interview questions were submitted to and approved by George Mason University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) in accordance with ethical considerations for conducting research.

Data Tables

Table 3: Case Study Survey

Event	Org	# part	Part type	Age	Male (1)	Female (2)	Indep variables	q1	q2	q3
Playground Build	KaBoom!	1	volunteer	27		1				
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	2	volunteer	38		2				
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	3	volunteer	47		1				
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	4	volunteer	51		1				
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	5	volunteer	35		1				
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	6	volunteer	39		2				
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	7	Participant	10		1		6	7	10
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	8	Participant	9		1		8	7	9
Youth Football Clinic	Positive Coaching Alliance	9	Participant	9		2		6	6	8
Playground Build	KaBoom!	10	volunteer	31		2				
Playground Build	KaBoom!	11	volunteer	24		2				
Playground Build	KaBoom!	12	volunteer	52		1				
Playground Build	KaBoom!	13	Recipient	13		1		5	8	10

Participants

The data gathered captures how certain participants and recipients at both the Youth Football Clinic and KaBoom! Playground Build perceived their excitement before, during and after participation. What we found by choosing a random three separate participants at the Clinic is that there was cautious excitement prior to arriving on site. This can be attributed to a level of excitement associated with finding out that they would be attending, but an uncertainty of what to expect having never participated in anything similar in the past.

During the event, we saw a dip or little gain in the excitement levels of the participants, which can be attributed to the challenges of taking on new drills that they

may not have previously attempted. Even with this dip or lack of change we noticed that the qualitative responses pointed to a welcomed challenge. Participant 7 stated “I needed some assistance with one of the drills, but it was fun” while Participant 8 recognized that he “had some difficulty participating and got a little frustrated”.

Finally post-event, all the participants gave a high rating to their experience stating that they enjoyed the opportunity and the environment and that they would like to participate again. This was a small, diverse pool of participants that were asked to give qualitative feedback on their experience at the clinic. Their comments included statements such as, “It was really good, I enjoyed the drills and would love to participate again, I am sad that it's over” and “[I] would love to join in again and had a good time with the coaches and other kids.”

Volunteers/Coaches

Volunteers and coaches were the majority of the participants sampled at each of these events. They were both more accessible and more willing to provide in-depth answers to the questions that were posed. Below are the themes that surfaced after analyzing the responses that were given.

Themes and Responses

Responses to our survey questions of volunteers and coaches led to the four primary trends outlined below. While the constituents that were interviewed varied in age, gender, race and experience, their responses to questions regarding what motivates them to volunteer were relatively consistent. They, for the most part, point back to the Five C's as discussed by Zarrett and Lerner (2008).

Impacting/Helping Others Was Important to Their Volunteerism

Impacting and helping others was a key component as to why individuals at both events decided to volunteer their time. Being able to see how their actions that day were directly affecting the lives of those in their community offered tremendous encouragement. This is not an uncommon motivator of volunteerism, and the responses that follow show that it is a significant driver of volunteerism for Fiesta Bowl Charities projects.

Volunteer #10 at the KaBoom! Playground Build had participated in a playground build previously and stated that she loves these types of hands on projects where you can see the direct impact that you're having. Similarly, when asked why he volunteered to coach at the Youth Football Clinic, volunteer #1 who was interviewed expressed that "coaching is an outlet for me", while volunteer #5 shared that he wants to be a role model for kids.

The theme of impacting the lives of others continued with volunteer #12 at the KaBoom! build stating, I believe strongly that it is important for underserved communities to see that the rest of their community cares enough to give up their time to work on projects such as these. The role that a community plays in inspiring healthy lifestyles is also a factor that volunteer #4 at the Youth Football Clinic touched on in his response saying, It's a positive impact on kids that encourages making better, healthier choices.

The desire to impact the lives of others was an intrinsic benefit felt by the majority of the volunteers that were interviewed. In a survey conducted in 2014 by Janna

Finch for The Able-Altruist online, “Proof of Impact” was the second highest factor to motivating individuals to volunteer, second only to “Convenient Scheduling” (Finch, 2014). This survey polled a random sample of 3,020 U.S. adults, with 59% responding by selecting one the motivators given as options as their reason for participating. Of that group identified 24% listed a “Proof of Impact” as their top reason why they engage in volunteerism.

These Programs Provide Positive Development for Kids

Positive development in these programs meant an opportunity to benefit from physical activity and social interaction. It also meant creating an activity that was safe and inclusive, steering the child’s choice in future activities from drugs, crime or other negative actions and towards something positive that will help develop them in the future. Many of the responses provided also eluded to the coach/volunteers own experienced growth from participating in similar programs in their childhood.

At the Youth Football Clinic, volunteer #4 touched on the important development that sports facilitate for youth by stating, sport motivates and shows kids that they can achieve things with hard work and effort. Volunteer #3 added that this is an avenue to be physically fit and learn social skills with other kids, while other participants also felt as though similar programs may help in keeping kids on a positive path. Volunteer #2 at the Youth Football Clinic started her comments on the programming out by mentioning that these programs keep kids out of trouble and helps put them on the right track, which was later supported by participant #1 at the KaBoom! Build who stated that these opportunities keep kids out of trouble and outside being active.

[These programs] help kids develop positive character traits that continue into adulthood, volunteer #2 at the Youth Football Clinic. Additionally, these programs have the capability of being impactful because there is little to no costs associated with participating. Volunteer #4 at the Youth Football Clinic expressed this opinion when asked about his favorite aspect of these types of events, Fully inclusive so kids see their peers from different life situations.

Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring (Zarrett & Lerner, 2008). These components that a youth sport program can yield were eluded to in all the qualitative responses above. Volunteers understood the positive character development that can come from these types of inclusive opportunities, either through their current and previous volunteer work or their own first-hand experience as youth coming up through recreation opportunities.

Both Participants and Volunteers Perceive Positive Outcomes

Participation is greatly encouraged when there is a perceived mutual benefit to both those participating as beneficiaries and those participating as volunteers or facilitators. Many projects that struggle to gain strong volunteer support are effected by the perception that a volunteer is giving his/her time to something that may not truly matter, or just be considered busy work. When a program can be hosted that shows a direct impact on the lives of others in the moment of volunteering, you tend to a stronger interest. Similarly, when both parties participating see only positive outcomes you are likely to have a more energized and engaged program. The responses cited below all point to that mutual perception of positive outcomes.

Participant #13 at the KaBoom! Playground build was a young boy who was also a member of the community that would benefit from the donation of the playground. He expressed excitement in enjoying the playground once completed stating, “I am very excited to be able to enjoy the playground with my friends once everything dries”. One of the young participants that was interviewed at the Youth Football Clinic had a similar sense of excitement when asked if he would participate in future events: “I would love to join in again and I had a good time with the other coaches and kids.” Responses given by adult volunteers and included above also speak to this outcome. The idea that they are giving back, being role models for young boys and girls and that they could see coaching or volunteering as an outlet in their own lives. Most of the feedback given led to the perception of positive outcomes for all parties involved.

There’s a Shortage of These Types of Programs

There was a theme in responses that led to the conclusion that there is a shortage of these types of programs in the community based on cost and competition level. Volunteer #4 at the Youth Football Clinic stated that “programs like these are a must if you want community buy-in for societal change” and that income shouldn’t play a role in opportunity shortage, local companies need to be engaged. The idea behind the second response was that local companies that have the resources to support these types of programs, and lower or eliminate the cost to participants, should do so.

“There’s a shortage of these types of programs in the Phoenix community,” added volunteer #3 at the same event. Affordable and inclusive opportunities were important to participants because of the great number of low-income families in the Phoenix area that

cannot afford to participate. Volunteer #6 at the Youth Football Clinic brought this point up in her interview when she stated that these programs are important because not everyone can afford to play in other leagues. Another contributing factor is a relation of cost to quality in programming and competition level, which is not always what kids are looking for. Volunteer #5 added to volunteer #6's point, "there's a shortage in the community and most are focused on competition."

It is suggested that "organizations serving inner-city children and youth are overburdened and underfunded." (Fraser-Thomas, Côte, & Deakin, 2005). There are several factors outlined previously that limit accessibility to sport programming for those youths who are arguably most in need (e.g., race, gender, income). Phoenix, as a metropolitan area, offers a wide range of socio-economic levels, with many affluent families on the outskirts of the city that are saturated with the opportunity to have their children engage in quality, competitive sport programming. This leads to organizations focusing on that segment of the population and depleting the resources available to serve the inner-city youth.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Through surveying at these events, we have learned that both community volunteers and participants can benefit from programs that increase activity for local youth. This was evident in the feedback that was provided by volunteers on-site, like volunteer #1 who expressed that coaching is an outlet for them, while we know from the quantitative feedback from participants that there was a perceived benefit simultaneously happening for them. Having a mutually beneficial program offering was important to the success of the event, because it had a direct effect on the overall environment and experience.

This positive mutual experience can serve as a unifier for community members from many walks of life as well. It is the desire to build a strong community through inclusive and safe play opportunities for youth that can help bring a community together for a common cause and encourage continuing these programs in the future. Building up these communities through the idea that by participating, you are “reducing criminal activity and antisocial behavior by engaging at-risk youth in sport, rather than leaving them to their own devices” (Tysoe, 2014).

Something like sport and play can prove effective in some cases when you bring in volunteers and contributors who have personally experienced positive outcomes from being involved in their own childhood. Participating causes them to remember their own

positive experiences and how they were led in a certain direction by the character building benefits that they developed. Items such as the five C's (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring, (Zarrett & Lerner, 2008), which are potential benefits of a positively run youth program. Based on the responses of those who participated, you could see which benefits were felt by each based on their own personal experiences with similar programs in their youth. This leads to their desire to share these similar opportunities that they had, and hopefully pass on similar benefits to the youth of their own community, creating a cycle of healthy behavior and community pride.

What can be learned by organizations, such as Fiesta Bowl Charities, is that conducting regular surveying of participants (both community beneficiaries and their own volunteers) can assist in gauging the effectiveness of the programs that they offer, and how they should evolve to continue to serve their community. Surveying can also help in supporting the advocacy efforts focused on expanding the youth program offerings by providing relevant feedback from those involved. Finally, it is essential for any organization to continue to grow and evolve based on need, and while specific programs such as the Youth Football Clinic and the Kaboom! Playground Build may not always be the most relevant offerings, they will be able to better assess the direction of their charitable arm by continuing to stay in touch with their community.

APPENDIX I

Examples of forms completed through interviewing participants at these programs are as follows:

SECTION A: TO BE FILLED OUT ONCE PER EVENT

Event Name:

Date: _____ Time:

Organizations Responsible

Elements of Event:

Number of Participants _____ Type

Age range (if applicable) _____

SECTION B: TO BE FILLED OUT ONCE PER PARTICIPANT

Participant Name (first only): _____ Participant Age:

Participant Gender: M F

How do you feel before participating? (Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)

How do you feel during? (Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)

How do you feel after? (Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)

Describe how you feel in one word:

Coach Name: _____

Coach Experience:

Why do you coach?

Why is it important that sports are made available to youth in our communities?

SECTION A: TO BE FILLED OUT ONCE PER EVENT

Event Name:

Date: _____ Time:

Organizations Responsible

Elements of Event:

Number of Participants _____ Type

Age range (if applicable) _____

SECTION B: TO BE FILLED OUT ONCE PER PARTICIPANT

Participant Name (first only): _____ Participant Age:

Participant Gender: M F

How do you feel before having this playground? (Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
10)

How did you feel when you were told it was going to be built? (Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10)

How do you feel now that you have it? (Scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)

Volunteer Name: _____

Volunteer Experience: _____

Why do you volunteer?

Why is it important to have safe play spaces for youth in our communities?

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BIOGRAPHY

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