

Nearly 80% of parents report decrease in children's wellbeing due to lack of sport during lockdown

July 14 2020

An international study of youth sport during the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that young people have been hit by a lack of exercise and competition, with results showing a decrease in their social, mental and physical wellbeing in the absence of sport.

Research carried out by Birmingham City University (UK), Michigan State University (U.S.), Illinois State University (U.S.), and Queen's University (Canada), showed that nearly 80 percent of parents surveyed (78 percent) reported a decrease in their children's social health and [wellbeing](#).

The effect of the youth sport lockdown was not only felt by children, however, as 75 percent of youth sport coaches reported feeling that the removal of organised sport had decreased their own social wellbeing.

Over 500 parents, sports coaches and youth sport administrators from 18 countries including Canada, South Africa, the U.S., Australia and the UK have taken part in the survey to date.

The importance of youth sport was also highlighted by parents, who said it was a vital part of their own social wellbeing too, describing the activity as 'our main social outlet' and 'where we spend our time outside being physically active with our community.'

The [online survey](#) remains open for responses.

Dr. Adam Kelly, Senior Lecturer and Course Leader for Sports Coaching and Physical Education at Birmingham City University, said: "It is unknown when or how youth sport activities will resume.

"Regardless, the opportunity to evaluate existing youth sport structures, alongside carrying forward the impactful strategies that have been forcefully developed during lockdown, may facilitate a greater emphasis on positive youth development in the future.

"As such, we can choose to adapt sports to meet the needs of those who want to participate. More specifically, we can change what and how we engage in youth sport activities, how we interact with peers, coaches, parents, and communities, as well as the environments where we engage in sport.

"We have also put together a commentary which offers considerations for researchers and practitioners working in youth sport. This article discusses the potential challenges and consequences during the time of COVID-19 on immediate, short-, and long-term developmental outcomes."

More information: Adam L. Kelly et al. Youth sport in the time of COVID-19: considerations for researchers and practitioners, *Managing Sport and Leisure* (2020). [DOI: 10.1080/23750472.2020.1788975](https://doi.org/10.1080/23750472.2020.1788975)

Provided by Birmingham City University

Citation: Nearly 80% of parents report decrease in children's wellbeing due to lack of sport during lockdown (2020, July 14) retrieved 26 April 2024 from

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