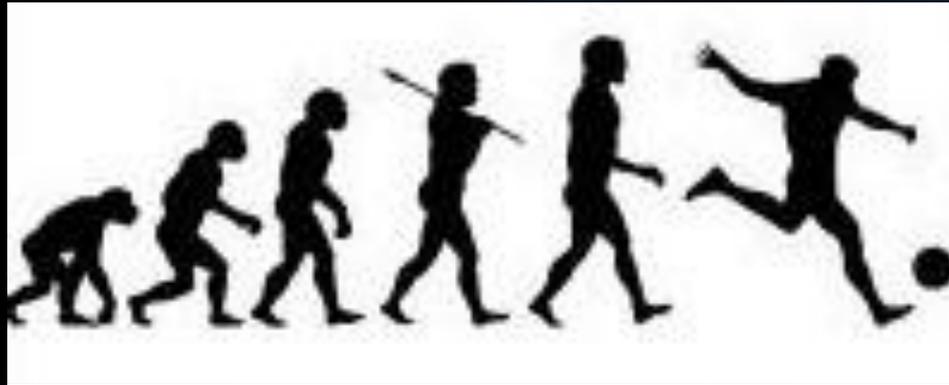


# Soccer as a Lifetime Sport



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# What is a Lifetime Sport?

- Lifetime sports are those which are enjoyed by the young and the old and can be enjoyed at various intensity levels.



# What is a Lifetime Sport?

- Soccer is a sport that can be enjoyed throughout one's lifetime – either as a young child or as an older adult as long as the passion, enjoyment, and camaraderie still exists for the participants.



# What is a Lifetime Sport?

- Soccer as a lifetime sport can provide many benefits for the participants – young and old.



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# Participation

- The number of youth soccer players in the United States has doubled, to 4.04 million players, since 1990, according to the United States Soccer Federation.



# Participation

- At the same time, the number of high school soccer players has more than doubled since 1990, to 730,106 athletes, the fastest growth rate among any major sport, according to statistics compiled by the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association.



# Participation

- The number of women's collegiate teams has jumped 115 percent since the United States hosted the World Cup in 1994, and the number of men's teams rose 27.6 percent over the same period, according to the N.C.A.A.



# Participation

- The number of registered Adult Soccer participants over the past year is over 250,000 according to the United States Adult Soccer Association.



# Participation

- There are currently more than 8200 youth soccer clubs in the US.
- More than 6000 of these play under the US Youth Soccer Association program.
- US Youth Soccer is the largest member of the United States Soccer Federation, the governing body for soccer in the United States.



# Participation

- US Youth Soccer is a nationwide body of over 600,000 volunteers and administrators, and over 300,000 dedicated coaches, most of whom also are volunteers.
- US Youth Soccer registers over 3,000,000 youth players between the ages of five and nineteen.
- US Youth Soccer is made up of 55 member State Associations; one in each state, and two in California, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas.



# Benefits of Participation in Youth Sport

- Improved Health
- Improved Academic performance
- Improved Socialization
- Improved Self-confidence
- Enhanced Self-esteem
- Helps to build a sense of belonging, worthiness, dignity, and control



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 1. SIMPLE

- Nearly every other major sport requires individual equipment, a specific area to play in, or both.
- Golfers need clubs. Lacrosse and hockey players require sticks. Football players need pads and a helmet. Basketball players need a court and hoop.
- Soccer requires one ball and a space to play.
- Competitive Play - must purchase cleats and shin-guards; however, you still require less equipment than other sports, and you can play almost anywhere.



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 2. SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

- Anyone that can kick a ball can play soccer. - (*even those who can't could play TOPSoccer*) - It's a blast for beginners and experts alike.
- Beginners love soccer because it's quick to pick up and play. There is inherent joy in kicking a ball around (even if you're not very good).
- Soccer can also be complex. If you want to play competitive, you must hone many skills, learn strategies, and develop incredible fitness. Even experts can always improve, and with each improvement, players enjoy playing more and more.



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 3. WORK ETHIC

- To become successful at soccer, you need good work ethic. You need to train hard, and focus on your play.
- Coaches and teammates push players to develop better work ethic, and when players work hard and succeed they build confidence (which translates to all aspects of life).



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 4. LEADERSHIP

- Leaders often form on a soccer pitch. Players learn that their teammates need someone to guide them in the right direction.
- Through trial and error, players learn how to lead effectively.



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 5. SPORTSMANSHIP

- Through good examples by coaches and teammates, players learn what it takes to play a sport gracefully.
- Bad sportsmanship is punished, and most players discover the value of great sportsmanship.



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 6. PERSEVERANCE

- At first, players get frustrated when they can't get something right. They eventually realize that through perseverance, their ability as a player will improve.
- Players may have to overcome injuries, cold streaks, bad coaches, and more. All these things teach perseverance.



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 7. FITNESS

- Through soccer, players develop fitness and create positive fitness habits. They learn what it takes to be in shape, and work at it.
- Soccer players tend to become lean and muscular. They develop endurance from constantly running, and muscles from work-outs.
- Players tend to think more about nutrition and drug use. They want to play to their full potential so they avoid drugs and unhealthy food.
- When players are playing they are not watching TV, playing video games, or texting. They are getting a full work-out that teaches them healthy habits.



# 8 Benefits or Reasons to Play Soccer

## 8. SOCIAL

- Soccer players often make friends with their teammates. Teammates share a common bond which promotes a sense of unity and fosters friendships.
- Some teammates even become lifelong friends.



# Social Advantages of Playing Soccer

- Soccer offers an obvious fitness benefit, as the game requires walking, jogging and sprinting for an hour indoors or 90 minutes outdoors. As a team sport that requires six players on the field in indoor and 11 outdoor, as well as substitutes, soccer also has built-in social advantages. As you get to know your teammates, you can make new friends outside of your family, school and work spheres and grow in unexpected directions.



# Social Advantages of Playing Soccer

- **Group Acceptance**
- At the youth level, being good at classroom activities may not enhance a child's acceptance and may even hinder a child's status. Competence in soccer and similar activities, on the other hand, is strongly and positively related to social acceptance, writes kinesiology professor Jane Watkinson in "Let's Play! Promoting Active Playgrounds." This may be a hard fact of life, but it exists, and social acceptance accrues to a child not only for playing soccer, but especially for being good at it, Watkinson observes.



# Social Advantages of Playing Soccer

- **Meeting People**
- As with other adult team sports, you meet people, but in soccer, "you meet people from around the world," says Wes Harvey, former men's soccer coach at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. More than other widely practiced recreation sports in the U.S., such as basketball, football, softball and baseball, foreign players from all over the globe enjoy and excel at soccer, and look for recreational and competitive league teams to continue their passion for the game. If you have an interest in finding international friends, soccer can deliver on this interest. Co-ed teams also offer opportunities for single players to meet and begin friendships and dating.



# Social Advantages of Playing Soccer

- **Interaction with Friends**
- Although soccer has rules and scorekeeping and requires a competitive focus, at heart it is play. First-graders on a soccer field know for example that their purpose is to attempt to win. Yet they enjoy the activity simply as an end to itself, as an excuse to play and interact with friends, writes University of Wisconsin-Green Bay psychology professor Fergus P. Hughes in "Children, Play and Development." The young player may even lose sight of the fact of his intended purpose -- athletics and exercise -- in playing soccer. Similarly, adults may love not only playing soccer itself but also driving to the game together; catching up by chitchatting about new jobs, children and pets; and conversing on the sidelines about their favorite professional teams or plans for a pub or sports bar outing.



# Social Advantages of Playing Soccer

- **Transition for Immigrants**
- Players with English-speaking ability or who are bilingual may join a club of primarily English speakers. Other immigrants to Europe, North America and Australia often struggle at first with the local language and a lack of social ties, especially if they don't speak English. Playing soccer with an ethnically based club offers them a avenue to develop ties and network with compatriots, notes contributing author and sports development writer Daniel Lock and colleagues in a chapter on "Soccer and Social Networks in Australia" in "Sport Policy: A Comparative Analysis of Stability and Change." The club can offer a chance to assist in their settlement while pursuing an activity they already know well, as well as chances to find employment and stay fit.



# Soccer as a Lifetime Sport

## QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION Items:

- When does it begin?
- How can we retain participants throughout their lifetime?
- Others?

# Soccer as a Lifetime Sport

It has the power to transform lives,  
the power to bring a lifetime of joy.

Start playing the world's most  
popular sport if you haven't.

You won't regret it.

## THE END.



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