



Why Do Kids Drop Out Of Sports?

Fact: Between the ages of 8-13, about 72% of all children drop out of organized sports programs.

Children are dropping out of sports at an alarming rate across the United States. In one recent study, the primary reason for quitting was an overemphasis on winning. Other reasons include: “The coach yelled at me when I made a mistake,” “I never got to play;” and “I wasn’t good enough.” Children who participated in the survey identified six reasons for dropping out:

- 1. Not Playing.** Lack of playing time is the number one reason for dropping out of sports. Children indicated that they would rather play on a losing team than ride the bench on a winning team.
- 2. Being Criticized and Insulted.** Children, like adults make errors. Errors are a normal part of learning. However, children interpret insults and criticism about their playing as statements about their worth as people. Being a “poor” player also means being an inadequate person.
- 3. Mismatching.** When children are mismatched in size and skills, there is little reason to be motivated to play.
- 4. Stress.** Children who feel anxious about their performance or about winning will almost certainly find little enjoyment in playing the game.
- 5. Failure.** As children grow into adolescence, chronic failure as an athlete will generate anxiety, inhibit performance, and lower feelings of self-worth. When children receive messages from adults that making errors and losing a game are indicators of failure, they will most certainly drop out of sports.
- 6. Poor Organization.** Practices that are too regimented, physically inactive, and boring are further reasons offered by children for dropping out of organized sports.

What steps have the Association taken to keep kids participating in baseball?

The Association provides divisional play based on ages from the Rookie Level (age 4) up to and including High School and Legion Baseball. The purpose of organizing leagues based on ages, is to ensure that children are provided with a specific and clear level of progression based on their physical, emotional, and social maturity.

The Association strongly encourages parents to allow their children to play in the Divisions that have been established for their child based on their age. Playing up from a developmental standpoint, can potentially lead to an increase amount of stress and failure in a child. Why rush a child if they are not physically or emotionally ready to play on a higher level?

In regards to our coaches, even though the majority of our coaches are volunteers, the Association provides training seminars for coaches to assist them in becoming more versed in the fundamentals of baseball and how to become more effective coaches. In 2002, coaching surveys were implemented to assess the effectiveness of our coaches and to identify potential problems.

For our participants, the Association will offer many instructional clinics with the goal of assisting our young players in skill development. Our belief is that the more skilled a young player becomes, the more he or she will enjoy participating in the game of baseball.

Parents are also important to the Association. We value your input and strive to do the best in communicating our mission, our objectives, and information that can allow parents to become active and productive sources of encouragement and support for their children. Good parents are informed about the benefits and responsibilities that everyone plays in providing a quality youth sports environment. They attempt to learn the game and strive to become familiar with the skills that are required of children to play the game of baseball.

If you are reading this information, you are on the right path in becoming an active, informed, and supportive parent. The Association trusts you will continue and together, we can make participation in youth baseball a rewarding experience for everyone!

