



WE NEED OUR CHILDREN TO PLAY AGAIN

**The Sports-Based Youth Development
Movement in America**

Paul Caccamo
Up2Us Sports Founder and CEO



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The human species was not designed to be this sedentary. And the lack of physical activity among our young people is now showing its negative, and even deadly, effects.

Most of us know by now that lack of physical activity leads to childhood obesity which leads to diabetes which leads to early death. But now science is demonstrating that inactivity also leads to poorly functioning brainsⁱ which leads to poor decision-making, increased risk for depressionⁱⁱ, greater susceptibility to mental deterioration and, yes, early deathⁱⁱⁱ.

We also know that little or no physical activity leaves our youth susceptible to other activities that may not be as socially beneficial. In urban communities, youth often cite that they join the gang because there were no sports programs available or because they aged out of the only sports program in the neighborhood. Under-resourced women say they became moms at age 14 because there were no female role models whom they trusted to show them they could become anything else. And academic institutions with few sports and physical activity programs have dropout rates that are sometimes three and four times higher than those that offer these programs on a regular basis.

We need our children to play again. It's not just a matter of who's going to be the next NBA, MLB or NFL star—it's a matter of whether the next generation is going to survive.

Let's start by redefining play.

“SPORTS”

“Sports” is the term you hear everyday for parents who enroll their kids in a team that will allow them to compete aggressively for the town, county and state championships. And “sports” cost a lot of money. How much money? Try \$5,000 a year for a high-schooler in a traveling soccer team. Try \$500 a year just for the best cleats, uniforms and sweats. That’s \$5,500 more than many Americans can afford.

The current philosophy of “sports” is that we can live with these rising costs because that’s the only way to make “sports” possible given all the budget constraints facing our communities and schools. After all, “sports” is not a given in a child’s education like reading, writing and arithmetic. It’s an extra and someone has to pay for it. Ironically, this is the same philosophy that took hold regarding the arts decades ago.

Today, arts, theater, and music programs are a rarity in most of our public schools^{iv}.

Seeded in the current “sports” philosophy is the belief that tal-

ented athletes of the future will still find their way to the leagues even with these financial barriers. After all, the thinking goes, teenage males in the under-resourced urban communities who are skilled athletes will still be discovered by scouts, still be sent to colleges, and still play professionally. Thus, in an economic sense, this “system” of survival of the fittest is more efficient: parents who can afford it will pay to develop talent in their kids and parents who can’t afford it will rely on their kids’ natural ability to get them on the high school basketball team. This philosophy redefines youth “sports” as a business—a lucrative one that is about talent, competition, getting that scholarship, and making that team.

Of course, the reality is that less than one percent of youth athletes will make it to the pros. In the meantime, more and more children are choosing to sit on the sidelines. The reason: this definition of highly competitive, overly stressful, profit oriented “sports” does not appeal to them anymore. It’s simply not fun.

More and more parents are beginning to observe these differences in “sports” today:

“My daughter is not having fun”

“My son is too stressed out by his coach”

“My son plays more games than a pro-athlete does”

“My daughter tore her ACL and she’s 12—who tears their ACL at 12?”

“My kids sit on the sidelines and don’t get the point of it”

“My son wants to try another sport but his coach won’t let him”

“It’s just not worth all the money because he doesn’t seem to be getting anything out of it anymore”

“She didn’t make the high school team and there’s no other team for her to join”;

“They’d rather play computer games and I don’t blame them”.

The tide is changing. It’s time to redefine our definition of “sports”.

INTRODUCING SBYD

SBYD or sports-based youth development is gaining a lot of attention nowadays. This attention is caused by the groundswell of programs, parents, youth providers and youth themselves who want to return youth sports to its rightful owners and to its rightful beneficiaries...the youth themselves.

As a field, SBYD is based on the simple premise that sports are a critical activity for encouraging the positive development of young people, all young people, not just the natural-born athletes and the ones who can afford it. Through sports, youth learn skills, values and life lessons that help them to live healthier and become more successful human beings. SBYD coaches believe that the intrinsic benefits of sports are far more important than the financial benefit that sports has become for professional leagues scouting talent and for sporting good manufacturers profiting by the latest trend in sneakers. SBYD coaches also believe that sports must remain accessible to all participants regardless of their ability to pay, and sports must be inclusive of race, ethnicity, gender and physical ability.

In a sense, the SBYD movement is an effort to regain the values and life lessons represented by youth sports of generations ago. Back then, participating in sports---whether in the backyard, on a street lined with orange cones, or at the school gym--- meant learning teamwork, leadership, discipline, grit, compromise, celebration, diversity, victory, loss, and determination. And that's just to name a few. Ask any senior business executives what the key influences in their lives were growing up, and they are likely to say "sports". In fact, there are few activities that pack such a character-building "punch" in one small package other than sports.

But things have changed since then, and the ability of sports to provide these powerful life lessons to the vast majority of American youth has been impaired by these recent developments. Parents, concerned about child safety, often do not permit their kids to play without any adult supervision. As a result, pick-up sports have declined. At the same time, virtual realities have drawn many of our youth away from sports and physical exertion and toward the mental satisfaction of mastering video games or playing in computer fantasy worlds. But perhaps the most egregious change in sports is the cost associated with maintaining them in public schools. Schools have been forced to cut budgets to address issues such as teacher salaries or reduced class size. As a result, many sports programs have either been eliminated or reinstituted with pay-to-play schemes that have created new barriers to participation. The situation is even worse for girls, as school athletic departments prioritize preserving the boy's basketball or boy's football team over the girl's teams^{vi}. Non-traditional sports, such as track and field and tennis have also hit the chopping block And intramural sports seemed to have followed record players and CDs as relics of the past.

Starting a movement at this stage aimed at once again making sports universally accessible for our youth might be an uphill climb, but what if it can be proven that youth sports are so essential that these trends are in fact costing us more money than they are saving?

The SBYD movement starts with re-equipping youth sports and youth sports coaches with tools and methodologies for making them the most effective solutions to the challenges facing youth in our nation. The SBYD movement is proving that sports, if done right, are essential to public education, to public health and to public safety.





THE CASE FOR SBYD

Advances in science, along with decades of learning from the field of youth development, are making an impressive case for SBYD. And the promise of SBYD could not come at a better moment in history as America is desperately seeking cost-effective solutions to the challenges facing its young people.

The challenges facing our youth are evident in our schools and communities and often capture our attention on the nightly news. We now know that more than a dozen years of educational reform has produced little success in our public schools in low-income urban neighborhoods. In some cities, drop out rates hover close to the fifty percent for minority youth^{vii}. At the same time, we have seen a steady rise in childhood obesity that is caused, in a large part, by the inactivity of youth. Added to all of this is the persistent issue of youth violence in America manifesting itself in senseless killings.

While all of these challenges disproportionately afflict low-income youth, all of these challenges impact all Americans. Consider the productivity of the American workforce if its education system fell behind most of Europe and Asia. It has.

Consider the economic fragility of the U.S. economy if more than a third of its population suffered from diabetes and relied on an already vulnerable healthcare system to cover the costs of its care. They are starting to.

Consider the impact on urban revitalization when youth violence spills into the public parks, libraries, areas of commerce and even popular tourist destinations. It is.

And consider the senseless loss of life, now and in

the future, of young people whose basic developmental needs were never addressed by their families, their schools and their communities.

SBYD is a solution and it is a cost-effective one. Every one of these negative social problems can be resolved by increasing the presence of positive adult role models and by fostering greater opportunities for our young people to form pro-social connections with positive peer groups. SBYD does both. By reviving sports not simply as an athletic tool but as a social policy tool, we can finally reverse the negative social behaviors that seem almost commonplace. But that's just the beginning.

We know now through science that regular physical activity counteracts trauma and increases development of key brain functioning. For children growing up in neighborhoods with violence and poverty, SBYD is a preventative approach to keep young people from making "bad choices". In fact, studies are revealing that kids in SBYD environments are less likely to participate in violence^{viii} and truancy^{ix}. Kids in these environments are more likely to stay in school^x, more likely to graduate, and more likely to attend college. Girls are more likely to have greater self-confidence^{xi} and avoid early sexual behavior^{xii} that leads to pregnancy. And kids who participate in SBYD programs are more likely to participate in regular physical activity and form exercise habits that persist beyond their childhood and throughout their lifetimes^{xiii}.

These are all huge financial benefits at what cost? The cost of providing our kids trained coaches, uniforms, equipment and places to play.

If ever there were an investment that makes sense, SBYD is one of them.



12 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INVESTING IN SBYD

For children growing up in neighborhoods with violence and poverty, sports-based youth development is a preventative approach to keep young people from making “bad choices”. Youth in sports-based youth development programs stay in school, are less likely to engage in violent behavior, and form exercise habits that lead to healthier lives. In the following pages you will find my 12 recommendations to change the way our kids play and improve their lives on and off the field.

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1

HIRE MORE SBYD COACHES

We need a national workforce of SBYD coaches who use sports to address health, education and pro-social behaviors among youth in all of our communities. We need them not only to increase the number of youth playing sports but to revitalize youth sports as a critical activity for character building, life skills enhancement, and healthy childhood development. But there are even more reasons that hiring more SBYD coaches makes sense:

■ REASON 1

Hiring SBYD Coaches Will Address Current Disparities in Youth Sports

There are several disparities in youth sports today that are worth calling out: between girls and boys participation; between opportunities to play traditional versus non traditional sports; between program availability in poor versus wealthier school districts^{xiv}; and between the funding for sports in middle schools ver-

sus high schools^{xv}.

This past decade has seen enormous cuts to youth sports programs that have particularly afflicted girls and non-traditional sports. Most of these cuts are aimed at reducing or eliminating salaries for coaches and physical education instructors, the only exception being the coach of the winning boys basketball or football team whose success contributes to the schools prestige. Middle schools have seen the greatest proportion of cuts as pay-to-play schemes have become routine for a majority of the public schools in the country^{xv}. The result is a peak in childhood obesity and the continued worsening of academic performance in many public schools where studies show that kids ability to stay on-task is impaired by their inability to participate in regular physical activity^{xvi}. Another unintended result is that kids who play sports must often “specialize” at an early age because there are only 1 or 2 sports “items” left on the school “menu” and because the costs of participating in multiple sports, if they are even available, is prohibitive. This specialization has contributed to a host of sports injuries^{xvii} that once only impacted professional athletes. A national workforce of SBYD coaches can reverse these trends.

■ REASON 2

Hiring SBYD Coaches is Workforce Development

What’s equally important is that

hiring coaches is workforce development. At a time in which this nation desperately needs to find new ways to employ young adults, minorities, and veterans—all of whom are experiencing double-digit unemployment^{xviii}—coaching represents an attractive entranceway into the workforce that can lead to competency building and further career development. After all, through coaching, you learn teamwork, leadership, planning, scheduling, conflict resolution, community engagement, mentoring, healthy behaviors, wellness and civic responsibility. These are the very same skills that distinguish the most successful employees in every office place in America. And think how much more appealing coaching is to unemployed young adults who played sports but currently see their only access to the workforce as fast food restaurants and retail stores?

■ REASON 3

Hiring SBYD Coaches Employs Returning Veterans

The field of coaching has a particular appeal to veterans. Tens of thousands of veterans are returning home with the hopeful disposition that having just put their lives on the line for this nation that they will quickly find their place in domestic life. Unfortunately, the welcome mat is not that easily discovered. Most existing job fairs assume that veterans have been taught to write resumes, participate in interviews, and fill out extensive

applications. As a result, many veterans who enlisted out of high school are lost at these events. This loss quickly turns into disillusionment, and this in turn leads to isolation, long-term unemployment, and a sense of personal defeat.

By hiring veterans as coaches, veterans are trained on how to translate the values they learned in our military into being role models for kids and leaders in their communities. In pilot programs that hired veterans as coaches, veterans reported overwhelming job satisfaction and increased levels of confidence when asked about their future careers. What's more, as the veteran coaches developed a sense of purpose in their coaching roles, they were more likely to take advantage of other career-building services like resume writing and developing interview skills. The result of these pilot programs was veterans entering the workforce with experience, skills, and a resume that make them highly qualified candidates to many potential employers.

■ **REASON 4**

Hiring SBYD Coaches Might Lead to Lifelong Careers

What's equally intriguing about investing in coaches is the fact that newly employed coaches might just remain coaches for the long term as well. A national volunteer organization that recruits SBYD coaches to work in local nonprofit organizations found that upon completion of

the program, a majority of the coaches received full-time jobs in the local nonprofits, embarked in careers related to health and exercise, and/or pursued higher education in a related discipline. With the nation needing new ways to cope with its obesity crisis and violence among its youth, the field of coaching is a growing solution. Educational institutions, nonprofits, parks, community centers, gyms and even health-care organizations are developing an increased awareness that coaching may also be the only way to reverse the grim trend in which nearly half of American youth do not even get an hour of exercise a day. The only solution to the inactivity facing our youth is an HR one: hire more adults to engage children in healthier lifestyles. Hire more SBYD coaches.

THE CHALLENGE:

Just How Do We Pay For It?

Hiring coaches will require a heavy financial investment because it is, by definition, an investment in human resources. That's never cheap. But, as we have pointed out, it is also a cost-effective investment that



will return savings to society in terms of reduced youth violence, increased academic participation and a healthier American population. In fact, quality coaches can save society up to \$29 for every \$1 invested in hiring a coach. There are several strategies for addressing the costs of hiring coaches:

■ **STRATEGY 1**

Federal and State Funding

Federal and state programs that subsidize volunteerism, like AmeriCorps, should make "coaches" an integral part of their funding portfolio. These programs enable organizations like Coach Across America, to en-

gage young adults in coaching, prepare them for the workforce and provide them a career path that ends the cycle of poverty into which many of these young adults are born. What's more, these programs provide savings to society by getting kids out of gangs and into teams. This benefits all taxpayers who bear the fiscal responsibility of paying the bill when our youth end up in prisons or in hospitals with substandard for no insurance.

■ **STRATEGY 2**

Private Sector Investment by Health-related Industries

Businesses focused on health

must step up to the plate. An industry-wide investment in coaching will reduce the economic costs that are draining the health-care system's effectiveness and profitability. The future of successful health outcomes relies on finding new and at times unconventional pathways for delivering health education and wellness programs. If childhood obesity is becoming the single greatest burden to the healthcare industry, then maybe supporting a workforce of SBYD coaches who are trained to increase physical activity among youth is one of the greatest solutions. Add to this that a good coach training program can prepare coaches to deliver important information



about nutrition, injury prevention and mental health, and this investment yields an even bigger return. The healthcare industry should invest in hiring SBYD coaches especially in pockets where childhood obesity is rampant.

■ STRATEGY 3

Investment by Professional Sports

Sports leagues and teams need to recognize their own “Achilles Heel”: a smaller percentage of American youth are playing sports than anytime in the last fifty years. And the U.S. talent pool for professional sports will soon start to dwindle. The result will be fewer fans, emptier stadiums, and diminished enthusiasm for the game...whatever that game may be.

Pro leagues can already feel the effects of having fewer fans^{xix}. With the exception of the NFL that has turned the Super Bowl into an entertainment spectacle, television ratings for the World Series and Stanley Cup are fractions of what they used to be. In fact, many Americans can no longer name what teams are in the World Series or what the Stanley Cup actually is. And, MLS still has a long way to go before the growing Hispanic population, some of whom do not even have youth soccer coaches in their own communities, becomes a profitable Hispanic fan base.

For professional sports, investing in coaches may have many as-

pects of self-interest, but it should be obvious from this paper that it has more aspects of good corporate citizenship. Just think if every team charged an extra dime per ticket that went to coaching, fans would see tens and thousands of adults engaging hundreds of thousands of additional youth in the health and wellness benefits of sports in every community in the nation. It would send a powerful marketing and philanthropic message from the stadium to the community to the school playground that the home teams care about their homes.

■ STRATEGY 4

Investment by Special Interest Groups

Certain special interest groups also have a stake in developing a coach workforce. As cited above, veterans groups needs to invest more urgently in effective programs that address the need for returning veterans to successfully reintegrate in society. The cost of not doing this is another lost generation of men and women who fought for this nation only to discover that they did not “fit in” with the culture they helped to preserve. Providing financial support to immediately engage veterans as SBYD coaches addresses the social and professional barriers that some veterans face by giving them leadership roles that build on their natural assets. Integrating coaching opportunities with larger career development translates confidence from coaching to future pursuits in the workforce.

The same can be said with special interest groups focusing on girls, minorities, and immigrants. Too many women in this country end up disproportionately in poverty. Yet, studies show that women who played sports are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college^{xi}. Surveys of C-suite female executives show an overwhelming proportion of them played sports in their earlier years^{xx}. Investing in a workforce of female coaches provides female role models that not only inspire girls to envision successful futures but also provide girls the self-confidence, life lessons and tools to continuously climb that ladder of success.

Organizations and initiatives focused on minorities, like President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper, should invest in coaching as viable means for immediately engaging men of color as role models in their communities. Hiring these young adults to be SBYD coaches helps them to use their love of sports to ad-

dress the problems of local youth who are more likely to trust them because they grew up in the same neighborhood, went to the same schools and experienced the same trauma of poverty and violence. Coaching also provides minority males in under-resourced communities the leadership tools to launch careers in coaching, youth development, health education and nonprofit management.

Immigrant groups should invest in coaching because sports play a critical role in addressing acculturation for children into American society. In addition, bilingual coaches can become valuable sources of information on health and social services to immigrant parents who may be more likely to attend their child’s soccer practice than their school’s Open House. Trained coaches also provide a pathway for addressing cultural conflict, especially in communities with multiple ethnicities.

RALLYING CRY:

The money is out there. The labor force is ready and able. The youth need it. The return on investment is great. Let’s hire a national workforce of SBYD coaches.

2

TRAIN ALL COACHES IN SBYD

There are an estimated 2.5 million coaches, including volunteers, working with children across America today. Only 10% of these coaches receive training on how to coach their particular sport^{xxi}. Practically none of these coaches receive training on how to work with children.

Consider it: is there any large adult workforce of this magnitude with little or no training on how to work with children to whom parents willingly entrust their children?

Plain and simple, as a result of this lack of training, children are dropping out of sports. I listed some of the complaints I've heard from parents and here's some common ones from children: "It's not fun anymore". "I don't think my coach likes me". "I can't handle the stress". "I never get to play". "I don't think anyone on the team likes me".

Every one of these complaints could be resolved by a trained coach. SBYD training provides

coaches the resources to make the entire sports experience a positive youth development experience as well as an exciting athletic one. SBYD training also help coaches be transformative in the lives of their players even in ways they haven't imagined. Just think how many kids tell their coach something very personal that they haven't shared with a teacher or even a parent: "I'm not good enough" "I feel ugly" "I don't think I'm that smart" "I hate school" "My boyfriend hits me" "I'm scared to go home" "I'm hungry". SBYD training helps coaches to respond to these statements rather than to ignore them. It gives the coach the tools to guide a young person to make better decisions and sometimes to seek further help if a situation is a desperate one.

SBYD training also helps coaches overcome their own anxieties when confronted by 10-20 youth who stare at them as living gods. Untrained coaches in these situations often turn to the only strategies they know to gain their sense of purpose: competition and winning. While these are both important characteristics of sports, focusing exclusively on them often leads to bad coaching: playing the very best players and benching the worst; using military like drills for punishment; shouting at players when they make mistakes; and using body language that may reduce the confidence and self-esteem of all participants on the team. Ironically, this focus on winning does not necessarily lead to a winning team. A winning team requires

teamwork, communication, discipline, focus, and strategy. These same skills also lead to every player's success off the field. SBYD training helps coaches to feel more confident in their leadership to proactively develop these qualities among their players.

THE CHALLENGE:

What Kind of Training is Needed?

Coaches need training in SBYD. Training coaches in SBYD is about providing each coach the tools to be the most transformative adult in the lives of the kids whom they serve. SBYD training helps coaches to manage their teams, conduct practices and plan game days with strategies that maximize the social, physical and mental health benefits of sports. These skills don't happen naturally just because a coach wants to coach. In fact, I would challenge you to think of any field where excellence just "comes about" without training. But for coaches, training is particularly important. Dozens of developing young minds are looking at their coaches to demonstrate for them the attitudes and skills that





they will carry with them on and off the field. Coaches can't afford to waste this opportunity by relying solely on their instincts. Coaches must learn to be intentional about their language, behavior and strategy. SBYD training shows them how. Here are three of the key developmental strategies that SBYD training encompasses:

■ STRATEGY 1

Fostering Social Skills

Most coaches don't think about how they pair players on their

teams or which player they ask to lead the team in drills. SBYD training emphasizes intentionality in fostering social skills among players. Coaches are trained how they can intentionally group players in combinations that make every player learn about every teammate. They are trained on using drills that incorporate social questions that encourage players to learn something new about one another. They are trained how to encourage less confident players to take leadership roles. And they are trained on how to develop team culture and team tradition through "team

chants" and "team rituals" developed by the players, themselves.

While these tricks seem simple, they can be life changing because they "supercharge" the athletic experience into one of confidence-building and positive social bonding. SBYD training helps coaches to redefine the sports setting into a welcoming and inclusive environment for all who participate; and, it enables the coach to turn the "team" into a protective social factor that can be critical for youth when confronted by challenges elsewhere in their lives.

■ STRATEGY 2

Improving Mental Health

SBYD training starts by providing all coaches with a basic understanding of brain functioning and the impact of stress and trauma. This is more important than a coach might at first realize. After all, science is now showing that kids who actively engage in sports actually have better functioning brains and are better able to cope with challenging situations. Wouldn't it be empowering if coaches learned why this is the case and what they can do to enhance it?

In a nutshell, the science says physical activity has an effect on the areas of the brain that control executive functions and top-down controlⁱ. Thus by training coaches how to plan practices that include all players in moderate to vigorous physical activity, SBYD training helps coaches become mini-"neuroscientists" who are developing healthy human minds.

But addressing mental health takes more than keeping kids in motion. SBYD training also teaches coaches how to foster conversations with youth on topics that don't often come up in the classroom or at home. By training coaches to confront issues like bullying, violence and substance abuse, they learn to impart critical life lessons on youth; and this is especially important as coaches may be the only adults that some teenagers listen to.

SBYD training also shows coaches how to be proactive in asking kids about the issues they face in school and their community. Discussing challenges like these on and off the field further reinforces a sense of belonging to the coach as a positive adult role model. And children who have consistent adult role models are far more likely to have positive self-images^{xxii}, stronger self-efficacy, and a greater sense of confidence in their own futures^{xxiii}.

Lastly, SBYD training helps coaches to redefine the athletic experience as one of "mastery" and one of "growth and development". This is also important from a mental health perspective. By emphasizing every athlete's progress, coaches encourage all players to feel greater personal satisfaction playing sports. This translates to more kids staying in the game---and you better believe this confidence-building translates to kids grit and determination next time they face difficult tasks in the classroom.

■ STRATEGY 3

Promoting Physical Health

At least one study showed that the majority of kids playing in organized sports get the same or less exercise than kids who don't participate in sports at all^{xxiv}. How can this be? It happens because coaches who are not trained and rely on their competitive instincts play only the talented players and wind up benching more than half their team. In terms of physical health, the benched half would





have been better off if they were just left to play on their own!

SBYD training provides coaches with the tools and methodology for making practices active for all players for nearly all of the time. This means training coaches on how to break down practices---from the warm ups to the scrimmages to the cool-downs---in order to establish unique and fun activities that keep those heart rates up.

Remember, some sports are more sedentary than others, which is why SBYD training uses every segment of a practice to keep kids physically active. For example, stretching exercises can teach golfers the relationship between muscles and a healthy swing. Running and calisthenics can teach young archers how important a strong body core is to flexing a bow. Cross training and weightlifting helps anglers control the muscles that direct their reel. And, circuit training in

baseball helps ensure that players can keep their swing strong even in the late innings of a summer double header. By training coaches on how to engage different youth to lead these dif-

ferent activities, SBYD training helps coaches keep all athletes engaged. After all, you can't sit this one out or afford to lose focus if you might be the next athlete on deck to lead the team.

RALLYING CRY:

Coaches must get trained in SBYD. Parents should seek out coaches with this training when selecting a sports program for their children.

3

ACCREDIT PROGRAMS IN SBYD

It's time we give consumers the choice to pick sports programs that embody positive youth development practices and ensure that their children get the most value and benefits from being part of the team. To accomplish this, sports programs must be accredited in SBYD.

Accrediting youth sports programs in SBYD is not intended to detract from the grassroots tradition of sports activities. However, with an increasing number of youth dropping out of sports, and with parents voicing frustration about the quality of youth sports programs, accreditation can fill a void by helping established SBYD programs highlight their emphasis on positive youth development, on strong management, and on adherence to safety.

Numerous precedents exist for credentialing organizations and nearly every youth serving institution (schools, hospitals, day-

care centers) are required to achieve minimum standards before they can begin operations. SBYD accreditation can draw on best practices from these existing procedures to include online reporting, feedback by parents and youth, and evidence of key operational principles and procedures.

SBYD accreditation will require defining SBYD standards, which should include the following:

- Evidence of a youth development mission
- Background Checks on Coaches
- Trained Coaches in SBYD
- Training on injury prevention and policies regarding medical emergencies
- Age and gender appropriate activities
- Safe and clean facilities
- Activities that are inclusive of all youth

- Policies against bullying
- Large % of youth who return to the program
- Presence of a staff who understand issues facing youth in the local community
- Methods to actively engage parents

SBYD accreditation will also necessitate practitioners working together through umbrella organizations to share training and best practices.

SBYD directories should also be established in communities to allow parents and caregivers the opportunity to explore program options and choose organizations that meet their children's needs. Program descriptions can be accompanied by icons that symbolize that program's adherence to safety standards, the presence of trained coaches, etc. In addition, parents can rate programs based on the experiences of their kids.

RALLYING CRY:

Youth sports programs should be accredited in SBYD to give parents a choice for their children and to delineate programs that are committed to youth development, safety, and inclusion.

4

RECLAIM PLACES TO PLAY

The most recent financial crisis has been devastating for youth sports not just by forcing schools to eliminate programs but also by devaluing the importance of safe places for our young people to play. Overcrowded schools have transformed gyms into classrooms. City Councils have allowed their parks departments to charge user fees that have effectively prevented many nearby residents from access. And reduced spending on urban infrastructure has allowed many play spaces to become neglected and/or centers for illicit activity. The social cost of losing so many play spaces in terms of children who cannot participate in sports is incalculable. It will take a concerted effort of community groups who are invested in the wellbeing of children to reverse these trends.

STRATEGY 1

Reclaiming Park Spaces

As a youth development advo-



cate, I long for the day when a mayor of a major city announces: "I commit to ensuring that our parks and athletic facilities remain open to our residents free of charge every day of the week". This message alone will demonstrate a political commitment to the wellbeing of children and to the quality of life of local communities. But until such a time, advocates for children must get organized to exert political pressure on the usage of parks and other tax-funded recreational spaces. Simply charging a fee that is prohibitive to low-income families and the nonprofits that serve them is not the only credible solution for financing

our parks. Local businesses can adopt parks like they currently do highways. A case can also be made that businesses should pay a small tax to maintain neighborhood parks because they are a significant contributor to quality of life issues that make a community appealing for business. In addition, parks can contract space to corporations for special events during low-usage times. This works because often businesses run on hours that do not conflict with youth sports programs. Parks can also provide businesses fee-based access to promote their products and services in the community. For example, a health care compa-

ny might contract with a park for a monthly night of screenings and plan enrollments. In cases in which parks must charge user fees, community residents should demand that a percentage of time be allocated to locally community-based organizations free of charge. Outside groups should pay a premium to make to these localized time periods free.

■ **STRATEGY 2**
Reclaiming School Spaces

Addressing space in schools may take even more effort. As long as schools in certain neighborhoods are overcrowded, principals will be forced to make due and that often means converting gyms to classrooms. As we have seen from studies linking sports to better grades^{xxv}, converting schools buildings to 100% academic space does not lead to 100% academic excellence. Yet, the situation for youth sports has become so bad that during the past twenty years, that I have even visited schools in which soccer teams practice in the hallways. And nothing makes a child feel more marginalized than when he or she arrives at a tournament at a neighboring school to discover lined fields and fully equipped gyms the do not exist at his/her own school.

Parents must demand that schools have a “Play Plan”. This means youth sports coaches, education advocates, PTAs, and school administrators should determine how to ensure that every child has access to safe and

supervised play spaces within a block of their school building before the next decision is made to convert the gym over to classrooms. Options to consider in a Play Plan may include: closing a street during after-school hours and purchasing mobile gym equipment; investing in mobile classroom furnishings to quickly convert academic spaces back into gyms; partnering with nearby private schools or parks to share space; designating nearby open spaces for conversion into play space; and adjusting the schedule for youth sports practices to better fit space needs (i.e., practice before school when some spaces may be more available).

Reclaiming play spaces cannot happen in a vacuum. There will

be tremendous pressure on community groups to demonstrate that these reclaimed spaces in schools and parks have a salubrious effect on youth and the community. That’s why a Play Plan should also ensure that SBYD trained coaches are involved in leading activities in these spaces and that nonprofits and other community partners are engaged to maximize the schedule of offerings to local youth. We know from the past that midnight basketball was very successful in giving youth an alternative to hanging out on the streets, but without midnight basketball coaches, these programs failed to provide youth the mentoring that leads to long term behavioral change.

RALLYING CRY:

Nonprofits, schools and community groups must organize parents as political voices to ensure parks are for neighborhood youth and schools have “Play Plans” that give their children regular access SBYD programs.



INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF YOUTH SPORTS

Children are diverse physically, psychologically, socially, and so too should be their sports. While some children are inspired by team sports, others prefer individual sports. Some excel at running, others swimming. Some gain confidence by mastering total control and others by exemplifying absolute agility. For SBYD to be a catalyst for the wellbeing of all children, we must provide our children with as many opportunities as possible to be exposed to sports so they can find the one that speaks to their passion, interest, discipline and mastery^{xxvi}.

But the landscape of youth sports today in some ways mirrors the professionalization of sports in general: basketball, football and baseball dominate and boys have far greater opportunity than girls. In many urban public schools, non-traditional sports are non-existent. In fact, I remember the first time that I carried a soccer ball into a class-



room filled with African-American girls in Washington D.C. None of them knew what it was. Other disparities, such as massive cuts to middle school programs, seem to send a clear message to our youth that the only ones who deserve a coach are the talented few who can make it on the high school basketball teams.

The tragedy of this myopic menu of sports programs for today’s youth is not just that it limits participation to the few players with those particular interests, but it also limits the impact of sports on all players. After all, sports are seasonal, and the best athletes are those who put down the basketball in the fall and pick up the baseball in the spring. Diversity in sports introduces youth to new challenges and skills. It encourages greater self-esteem. It prevents injury from the overuse of

certain muscles. And it requires year-round discipline that leaves no time for alternatively negative social behaviors.

■ **STRATEGY**
Nonprofit-School Partnerships

To bring back a diversity of sports to our youth, we must encourage schools and nonprofits to partner with each other in programming, recruitment, training and space. The nonprofit sector contains an emerging group of SBYD programs that should be viewed as assets to public education. These programs use more than sixty sports—from golf to tennis to squash to rugby—to foster character development among youth. These programs can provide the diversity of sports that schools cannot afford on their own. Working with SBYD non-

profits, schools can address issues like sharing space, exposing students to different sports opportunities, conducting on-site student registrations, and providing physical education credits to student who participate in a minimum set of SBYD programming. The latter is particularly important as many schools have reduced and even eliminated physical education. SBYD programs provide a viable platform for countering the impact of these cuts.

In addition to addressing the diversity of sports, SBYD partnerships provide schools administrators with a unique resource for enhancing the school environment. Schools can rally behind a greater diversity of athletes during game days, tournaments and year-end celebrations. They can recognize the girls’ soccer team and the boys football team. They can award the female athlete of the month. All of these send powerful messages to all students that their school cares about them.

SBYD partnerships also provide stronger mentorship for youth demonstrating problem behaviors. They blanket schools with coaches who are also mentors who can tackle issues such as school violence and bullying. In Chicago, I have seen school counselors refer youth to SBYD programs as a more effective alternative to detentions. In Philadelphia, the court system has even started to refer incarcerated youth to SBYD programs to reduce the rates of recidivism.



RALLYING CRY:

A menu of sports must be available for all youth so that every youth can discover his or her talents—partnerships between schools and SBYD organizations are an effective path for providing them.



ADVOCATE FOR SPORTS-FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

Youth sports provide young people opportunities to meet oth-

er young people from different communities. This kind of exposure not only instills a healthy sense of competition and pride during game days and tournaments, but it fosters a broader view of the world for athletes who may never have had the chance to travel otherwise. Yet, the crisis facing youth sports is a crisis of mobility too.

Not only are youth from an increasing number of communities unable to afford transportation to citywide and countywide competitions, but, in many communities, they cannot find safe or affordable means of transportation home from practices and tournaments in their own neighborhoods. This is because of budget cuts that have reduced the availability of safe public transportation routes and/or cut school busing for students staying late for extracurricular activities. In addition, because of the concurrent problem of limited access to facilities, some teams have been forced to practice in fields and facilities that are entirely inaccessible to public transportation.

STRATEGY 1
Local “Sports-Friendly” Transportation

Transportation policy must consider the critical development needs of young people in our communities. Schools should consider a “late bus” to allow students to participate in SBYD activities. Similarly, nonprofit leaders, parks departments,

school leaders and other child advocates should sit down with transportation leaders to examine existing bus routes to see if they maximize the potential of young people to take advantage of parks, recreational facilities and school playgrounds. Designating a SCHOOL DAY Route or WEEKEND PLAY Route in which certain buses are re-routed during certain hours to pass along parks and community centers can impact participation rates dramatically. This is especially the case if students have access to transportation vouchers that cover school and after-school activities as they do in most major cities. While the challenges of re-routing are largely logistical, the social benefit to communities whereby more young people are physically active and engaging in pro-social behavior will outweigh the costs.

STRATEGY 2
Long-Distance “Sports Friendly” Transportation

The challenge of transporting youth, especially low-income youth, to tournaments and games outside of their communities is even more formidable. I have seen students in cities like Los Angeles and Miami spend up to 3 hours each way on public transportation just to make it to a sporting event. Unfortunately, I have seen an even greater number of students give up entirely because these distances became insurmountable. The result is that a lack of longer-distance transportation solutions is

leading to more kids to drop out of sports entirely.

Potential solutions to long distance travel are:

Rescheduling Tournaments/ Games:

Programs have started to schedule all game days and tournaments on weekends so that they can draw on parent volunteers to pick up players at designated pick-up/drop-off points.

Bus/Van Sharing:

Programs have called on private schools and churches to lend them vehicles or rent them at very low cost.

Zip/Uber:

With the growing popularity of Zip Car and even Uber Vans, communities that provide zoning for these transportation alternatives should ask them to help their kids by making vans available at discounted rates and/or by incentivizing drivers to pick up youth for certain sporting events.

Shared Vehicle Ownership:

SBYD program leaders should also consider forming “collectives” around shared vehicle ownership. Some rent-a-car companies or car dealerships might consider donating a mini-van or selling it at cost in exchange for advertising (i.e., the “Avis Home Team Bus”). The vehicles can be

kept at local schools, parks, police stations and/or faith-based institutions. A cost structure levied on participating sports programs can cover maintenance and insurances. Issues like liability can be addressed through release forms and insurance vouchers.

RALLYING CRY:

Transportation is not an easy issue to solve but if we are serious about getting our youth to play again, we need to get them to the game. Local transportation leaders, nonprofit leaders, school administrators and corporations in the business of providing vehicles should be asked to jump in the driver’s seat to solve this issue as soon as possible.



7

**INCENTIVIZE
PRODUCT
AND APPAREL
COMPANIES TO
INVEST IN LOCAL
YOUTH**

I often think how quickly this nation responds with product donations during national emergencies. I can think of no greater national emergency than the rising diabetes rates among American youth that will lead to a myriad of diseases that end their lives prematurely.

Yet, despite my concern, I have seen football teams show up at tournaments without pads. I have seen soccer teams exchange sweaty jerseys between players during game days because there weren’t enough uniforms to go around. I have seen kids wear the wrong sized shoes and cleats. I have also witnessed programs closing their doors because there weren’t enough bicycles, skis, tennis rackets,

and baseball bats. And, perhaps most touching to me was hearing the story of one team of student-athletes who decided not to get out of the school bus because they were ashamed of their secondhand uniforms and rundown equipment when confronted by the opposing team.

Corporate sports apparel, retail and equipment manufacturers are waging a pricing strategy that trades off short-term profit for long-term decline. The typical mark-up of 100% for uniforms and even more for certain product and equipment is a death knell to youth sports in America. As fewer kids play sports, these corporations will continue to find themselves with a shrinking consumer base.

■ STRATEGY

Subsidize Product/Equipment Exchanges for Low Income Youth

Corporations must unite around strategies to make product/equipment available for free or reduced cost to organizations serving low-income youth. By providing these youth the proper uniforms and equipment to play, these businesses protect their future consumer base as these young people establish brand allegiance and become their future customers. Corporations do not necessarily have to “foot the bill” as online campaigns can encourage individual donors to purchase a jersey for team or baseball bats for a club in return for charitable tax-deductions. Establishing these product/exchange systems should take into account the following:

Outreach:

Product/Equipment exchanges must be set up equitably to reach the full gamut of grassroots nonprofits, schools, churches and parks departments if they are to have the greatest impact on engaging kids. Schools are still largest providers of sports activities but they are no longer the only providers. And large national nonprofit organizations that once had facilities in many poor neighborhoods do not always reach the poorest urban and rural communities as some grassroots sports programs do.

Qualifications:

Sports programs can qualify for

these subsidies by registering themselves by zip code and reporting on the percentage of their youth who are eligible for free or reduced lunches (the most widely used indicator for poverty levels).

Product Distribution and Storage:

Distribution and storage of subsidized product/equipment can be managed through nonprofit intermediaries using similar online systems that are employed to oversee collections for disasters and emergencies.

Oversight:

Intermediaries that run these

product/equipment exchanges can be governed by boards of directors that include corporate executives of participating corporations.

Individual Donor Campaigns

Businesses and professional sports teams can help intermediaries develop campaigns during season openers that challenge their fans and consumers to purchase an item for a deserving team in much the same that organizations like Donors Choose make possible supplies for under-served public school classrooms.

RALLYING CRY:

Corporations should lead the way in working with nonprofit intermediaries to establish systems for getting product and equipment into the hands of kids. Not only is this good for their long-term bottom line, but it will also address an impending healthcare emergency of lack of physical activity that can potentially implode our healthcare system.



8

ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL SPORTS TO GIVE BACK TO SPORTS THROUGH SBYD

The disconnect between one of the largest and most profitable entertainment industries in America—professional sports—and one of the greatest potential solutions to the challenges facing our youth—SBYD—is incomprehensible. Sports leagues, teams, owners, manufacturers, advertisers, stadiums, broadcasters and players have a fundamental interest in maintaining the enthusiasm for and relevance of their game. While the investment by sports in sports has been increasing during the past decade, it is still a small percentage of the overall charitable giving of owners, leagues, teams and players. This is partly the fault of the youth sports community for not organizing themselves to make a cogent argument that their work merits investment. But I hope this report makes it clear that the time for rethinking sports philanthropy is now. Investment by

sports in sports through SBYD is an effective means of addressing community issues like violence, poor health, and academic failure.

■ STRATEGY 1

Grants

Owners, leagues, teams and players should make direct investments in local programs by allocating a significant portion of their philanthropic budgets to grants for local programs that focus on growing their respective sports among low-income youth. Grants can pay for coach salaries, uniforms/equipment, facility fees, administration and transportation.

■ STRATEGY 2

Ticket Sales

Simply adding a 5-cent Youth Sport Surcharge (YSS) to every ticket sold for professional sports events could provide funding for expansion of SBYD programs in low-income communities and pay for an entire generation of trained coaches. A “YSS” can be marketed to local fans as an investment in the future of the sport they love. Fans could follow up on the impact of the YSS through stories on team programs, Jumbotron videos and stadium PSAs. Stories can show firsthand how the fund provided coaches to local schools, kept local parks open, and resulted in the construction of new youth athletic facilities.

■ STRATEGY 3

New Stadiums

New stadium construction should require a commitment from investors to youth sports. Municipal contractors at the state, county and city levels should demand a percentage of financing be allocated to youth sports in return for the many incentives given to investors. This is good politics for all involved as it generates goodwill among the local community whose neighborhoods will be impacted by the stadium, and it positions the stadium as a means of improving the quality of life of area youth through guaranteed support of their youth programs.

■ STRATEGY 4

Athlete Engagement

Coaches and players can commit to attending a half dozen youth sports events a year in order to generate donations to local programs. Teams can make signed athlete memorabilia available to SBYD programs for auctions. Leagues and teams can actively encourage athletes to sit on the board or “adopt” local SBYD programs as alternatives to establishing their own foundations, many of which have not lived up to the philanthropic standards^{xxviii}. And athletes can create “challenges” where their foundation or a sponsoring corporation agrees to donate a set amount to youth sports if they hit 3 homeruns, score a hat trick, or make a hole in one during a tournament or game.



RALLYING CRY:

The next decade must see leadership on the part of the professional sports industry in recognizing SBYD as an investment in the health and safety of the neighborhoods surrounding their teams and stadiums...the same neighborhoods that raise many of their greatest athletes and fans.



REVITALIZE ADVOCACY AROUND TITLE IX AND EQUAL ACCESS

In most age groups, sports and geographies, the situation for girls playing sports is far worse than for boys^{xxix}. And children with disabilities are routinely sent messages that sports activities do not accommodate them even though the law prohibits this.

This past year, I have seen urban public schools where boys have a choice between five or six sports activities, but girls have only one choice, cheerleading, and that is if they are lucky to make the team. I have also seen schools where coaches are not trained to encourage children with mental and physical disabilities to participate. The result is not only that these children are routinely ignored but this failure of leadership by the coach inadvertently leads to these kids being bullied because of their disabilities.

Nearly fifty years after Title IX leg-

islation promised equal access by gender to activities in public education, girls sports teams find themselves fighting an uphill battle. Communities routinely rally around “saving” the boys football team or basketball team when their future is threatened but little is done to salvage the few girls teams in low-income public schools facing the same economic hardships. The situation is particularly bad in middle schools, which have seen greater cuts to girls teams than boys team. And schools often fail to train coaches on accessibility issues that foster participation among those youth with mental and physical disabilities. Not addressing these inequalities is tantamount to “setting some children back” in public education and this should not be tolerated.

While this paper outlines the social costs of this ignorance, it is worth pointing out that the social costs may be even higher for girls. A single teen mom in a poor community will cost taxpayers tens and thousands of dollars in subsidized poverty relief programs^{xxx}. And the child of that teenage mother is more likely to grow up in the cycle of poverty that (s)he was born into. SBYD can end this cycle once and for all. Girls who play sports and have positive adult female role models as coaches are much more likely to have the confidence and esteem to set goals for themselves that lead to better life choices^{xxxi xxxii}. As pointed out in this paper before, a vast majority of female C-suite executives today attribute sports as

one the most important character-building activities that contributed to their success^{xxii}. The cost of maintaining girls basketball, track and field, and hockey should be weighed against the reality that sports will contribute a young girl’s success and protect her from making poorer choices like dropping out of school.

For children with disabilities, sports not only represent inclusion but an instrument for competency-building skills that is critical to their physical and mental development. Sports provide these children with opportunities that test their motor skills, increase mental focus and develop their sense of self-efficacy.

SBYD is proven to help children cope with the daily stresses of their schools, communities and social situations. The fact that SBYD is built around “fun” is another significant factor that must be addressed when considering present day inequities around sports. This is because it compels us to ask why boys are, quite simply, “entitled to more fun”? Anyone who watches the joy experienced by a daughter who wins her first soccer game understands that her sense of elation and accomplishment can be a major impetus for her success everywhere in life. Why should twice as many boys know the joy of victory (not to mention benefit from the life lessons of the agony of defeat?)

■ STRATEGY 1

Advocacy

Parent groups, nonprofit organizations, school systems and child rights advocates should demand that Title IX be enforced and that every community provides equal access to SBYD programs for girls and youth with disabilities.

■ STRATEGY 2

Better Trained Coaches

Communities should develop plans to hire and train coaches on how to engage populations other than boys.

■ STRATEGY 3

More SBYD Partnerships

Schools should partner with

SBYD Programs that focus on sports for females and youth with disabilities to provide more immediate opportunities for engaging these populations.

■ STRATEGY 4

Higher Visibility of Females Athletes and Athletes with Disabilities

School leadership should make it part of their culture to honor their female athletes and their athletes with disabilities on PA announcements, at assemblies and at other special events. By giving these populations of athletes the limelight, the message is delivered to all youth that all athletes matter.

RALLYING CRY:

Title IX is the law. The law also states that children with disabilities should not be subject to discrimination. As such, the continued violation of provisions for equal access will eventually open itself up to a new round of litigation around discrimination. Parents who are tired of seeing their girls denied opportunities to play sports might consider organizing a class action lawsuit...but better yet, they might work with educators and child rights advocates to develop plans to ensure equal access to SBYD programs and avoid litigation altogether.



REFORM PUBLIC EDUCATION REFORM

After years of using essentially the same approaches to education reform and getting the same poor results for youth in our urban public schools, it’s time we all take a serious look at changing course.

All of us want our kids to perform well on the “test”. In fact, we’d all benefit if the U.S. regained its position at the top of the every list for student academic performance. The problem with three decades of education reform is not that it’s focused on “test scores” rather than that it’s limited the definition of what “teaching” means in order

to get them. Teaching is not just dumping facts, figures and definitions into developing young minds. Teaching is providing these young minds with the qualities and skills to absorb this information, use it, and exhibit curiosity to want more.

We now know through neuroscience that regular physical activity stimulates cellular development at exactly the brain centers responsible for discipline, focus, self-control, goal setting, grit and determination^{xxxiii xxxiv}. These are the skills that encourage students to learn more, to try harder,



to stay in school and to envision a future where short term sacrifices, like studying, leads to long-term successes. These are also the skills that promote creativity and self-confidence.

■ STRATEGY

10 Hours of Character Development

The new “public education reform” should require schools to provide youth ten hours per week of character development through proven methodologies, like SBYD, that help them become the creative, well-rounded and entrepreneurial beings who have distinguished this nation’s intellectual prowess since it’s founding. To achieve this reform of educational reform, stakeholders in child development must put pressure on state and local school districts to enable schools

the resources to prioritize character development in school curricula. Keep in mind, I am not advocating for “character development classes”. Character development is not something children glean through a curriculum. Rather, I am advocating that

the school day should include 10 hours per week of SBYD, arts and service learning activities led by trained adults who see their mission as enhancing life skills development. This is how young people learn character.

RALLYING CRY:

The U.S. can regain its position at the top in educational achievement by teaching for the test. We simply must redefine “teaching” as addressing the whole child’s development and not just the rote memorization that has weakened the pedagogy of so many of our public schools in so many of our communities.



PROVE IMPACT

Investment in SBYD will be predicated on the fact that SBYD positively impacts the lives of young people in measurable ways. As an emerging field, practitioners must participate in studies that compare the health and behavioral outcomes of youth who participate in SBYD programs versus youth who do not participate in these programs.

Early evidence suggests that \$1 spent on a trained coach can yield a \$29 social return on investment to society in terms of dollars saved from costs associated with poor health outcomes, increased youth violence and school dropouts. These studies must be extended to include control groups and to measure the impact of SBYD not just on violence prevention and childhood obesity prevention but also on academic engagement, retention and matriculation.

■ STRATEGY

Foundation Investment

Foundations that previously dismissed sports categorically as

RALLYING CRY:

Anyone who spends time with youth in a well-run SBYD program understands firsthand the impact of SBYD and a caring coach. For SBYD to achieve sufficient funding to ensure that all children have access to these coaches as caring role models, it’s time that SBYD programs step up to the plate and subject their work to the further scrutiny that will prove that SBYD is a critical foundation for child development.

an inviable methodology for addressing childhood and adolescent development must rethink this position. Foundation support is critical for financing the type of studies that will provide SBYD the credibility that was essential to the success of the

earlier mentoring movement and the present-day focus on STEM teaching. SBYD practitioners must work in collaboration with one another to develop and present logic models and theories of change that are worthy of evaluation by major foundations.

12

HAVE FUN!

SBYD may not be the panacea for all youth, but sports do cast the widest net over the greatest number of youth. So that's as good a reason as any to focus our efforts on enacting the recommendations above to ensure that SBYD becomes a national rallying cry for youth development as well as a tool for addressing educational achievement, childhood health and violence prevention. But there's another reason—SBYD is fun. In fact, youth participate in SBYD programs because it's fun and not because it will teach them cognitive skills that lead to their success in their

futures. When most adults think back on their sports experiences, they usually talk about the fun they had, the teammates they still keep in touch with, and the coach who was like a parent figure to them. Then, they go on to say how many life lessons they learned from sports that they now use in at their workplace.

I am a strong believer that you need to be the change that you seek to create. The kind of energy you put out there is the conduit by which those around you step up to the plate and partic-

ipate in your agenda for social change. So I end with this additional recommendation—have fun. Stand up for SBYD, but smile when you do it. Let parents, educators, researchers, professional teams, corporate America and the kids around you know that you are the fun that SBYD can be for all youth. Invite these audiences to enact these recommendations while having fun doing it. And then let's see SBYD, I mean fun, become the greatest tool for enticing our youth into becoming their own stories of success.

RALLYING CRY:

We need our children to play again.

WE NEED OUR CHILDREN TO PLAY AGAIN



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