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COACHING EDUCATION

Positive Youth Development and Citizenship Behaviors in Young Athletes: U.S. and Canadian Coaches' Perspectives

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Abstract

It has been argued that sport is a way for youth to develop psychosocial skills that lead to holistic development. However, participation itself in sport does not lead to this growth; mechanisms for growth must be intentional, often conducted by coaches. Thus, the purpose of this descriptive study was to understand the integration of positive youth development concepts of citizenship into youth sport organizations. One hundred five coaches from the United States and Canada completed an online survey created by the researchers and comprising preexisting measures and newly devised questions. The coaches most heavily emphasized a mastery climate focusing on effort and having fun and emphasized winning the least. Additionally, coaches perceived their youth athletes to learn respect for others, teamwork, and respect for self at the highest rates through participation in their program. Regarding specific techniques for developing citizenship, participants provided many concrete examples in open responses: creating leadership development opportunities for girls in their organization, having

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league homework programs, and running food drives. Research has identified time as a major barrier to the implementation of opportunities for the explicit transfer of citizenship skills, and the participants provided several methods of growth that are not time intensive. The practical implications and limitations of the results are discussed.

It has been argued that in addition to gaining physical benefits through sport, youth should experience psychosocial growth (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). However, for these benefits to occur, coaches must deliberately integrate opportunities for citizenship and life skill building (e.g., Bean & Forneris, 2016; Kidd, 2011; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005). Citizenship skills, according to Boon and Gilbert (2010), include behaviors such as "cooperation, ethics, empathy, and conflict resolution" (p. 38) and help people to develop an understanding and appreciation for their responsibility within a community. The Applied Sport-Programming Model (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005) offers a structure for recreational youth sport programs to incorporate positive youth development opportunities, including building citizenship skills, into their sport-specific training. The Applied Sport-Programming Model integrates three components of positive youth development: (a) Benson's (1997) 40 developmental assets, (b) Côté's Developmental Model of Sport Participation (e.g., Côté, 1999), and (c) the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine's (2002) features of settings that foster youth development (for a full description, see Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). If sport organizations design and implement youth sport programs based on the best practices from these three frameworks, positive outcomes of enhanced competence, confidence, connection, and character will likely occur for youth. Contrarily, if the design or implementation is not structured to enhance positive outcomes, youth sport programs often result in diminished skills and characteristics in youth (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). In fact, one study found that sport programs that intentionally incorporated life skill building into its program had higher levels of psychosocial outcomes, compared to sport programs in which this was not intentional (Bean & Forneris, 2016). To be deliberate with the development of positive outcomes and life skills, organizations can implement programs such as Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (Hellison, 2003), Sports United to Promote Education

and Recreation (Brunelle, Danish, & Forneris, 2007), or Values Through Sport (Blom, Akpan, & Newnam, 2014). Although these programs have been shown to help youth develop assets and life skills, they typically involve significant training, planning, and support for sport organizations to implement and sustain them (Jensen, Hoagwood, & Trickett, 1999; Turnnidge, Côté, & Hancock, 2014); thus, it is crucial to examine options that are less resource-heavy but still lead to positive benefits.

For youth to achieve these benefits, regardless of the program, administrators, coaches, and volunteers must have the ability and commitment necessary to assist youth in developing through sport (Kidd, 2011). Specifically, coaches can have a major influence on the experience of youth athletes (Prichard & Deutsch, 2015). An environment that is task oriented, is focused on skill development, and uses mistakes as learning opportunities is conducive for positive youth development (e.g., MacDonald, Côté, Eys, & Deakin, 2011; Prichard & Deutsch, 2015; Weiss, Stuntz, Bhalla, Bolter, & Price, 2013). Of particular importance here is the creation of a mastery climate in which effort is rewarded and winning de-emphasized (Prichard & Deutsch, 2015). In this climate, athletes are praised predominantly for their effort toward mastering a task and rewarded for challenging themselves, encouraging their teammates, and focusing on improvement rather than perfection (Smith, Smoll, & Cumming, 2007). Other key components include supportive relationships that coaches can develop with their athletes (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005) and an emphasis on athletes' holistic development. In a sample of U.S. high school coaches, Gould and his colleagues (e.g., Gould, Chung, Smith, & White, 2006; Gould, Collins, Lauer, & Chung, 2007) found evidence to support the importance of developing youth in these areas, with teamwork, work ethic, time management, goal setting, and citizenship rated as most important. However, as Bean and Forneris (2017) also pointed out, one limitation in this area of research is that most studies have examined coaches who deliberately try to incorporate citizenship building into their coaching. Much less is known about other coaches and their beliefs about and integration of citizenship and life skill development. In a qualitative study of 23 "typical" youth sport coaches, Bean and Forneris (2017) identified four major themes related to life skill transfer: (1) It is a natural by-product of sport participation; (2) when intentionally

addressed, it is reactive; (3) intentionality is important; and (4) there are barriers to deliberately teaching life skills. Thus, it appears that at some level many youth sport coaches believe that youth naturally learn the necessary psychosocial skills, but coaches do use teachable moments when appropriate.

However, despite the interest in developing citizenship in their athletes, coaches have struggled to provide tangible examples of how they teach positive life skills to their youth athletes (Lacroix, Camiré, & Trudel, 2008; McCallister, Blinde, & Weiss, 2000). Research using model Canadian coaches found the method they most commonly utilized was to hold general discussions to explicitly teach desired skills (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). This technique is similar to the reactive approach that many coaches use (Bean & Forneris, 2017). These findings are encouraging, because research indicates that less experienced coaches might not implement explicit strategies (McCallister et al., 2000) and holding a general discussion to take advantage of a teachable moment is a feasible way to foster positive youth development that does not require much extra time or training. Since time has been cited as a barrier to the implementation of explicit transfer strategies (Bean & Forneris, 2017), this method could be particularly valuable for coaches.

This study explored global life skills of citizenship and civic engagement that relate to Benson's (1997) internal assets that center on positive values (i.e., caring, equality and social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and restraint) and social competencies (i.e., planning and decision making, interpersonal competence, cultural competence, resistance skills, and peaceful conflict resolution) in the youth sport environment. Gambone, Yu, Lewis-Charp, Sipe, and Lacoe (2006) stated that youth development programs are ideally suited for the facilitation of civic engagement because they provide the combination of support and opportunities required for overall healthy growth. The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), formerly Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), are a possible framework for the implementation of citizenship concepts into community sport-based organizations. The MDGs were eight targeted areas of development: poverty and hunger, child mortality and disease, combating HIV/AIDS, promotion of education, maternal health, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and global partnerships, with the ultimate goal to

eradicate worldwide poverty and bring an overall collective global unity (UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2003). In 2016, the UN developed a new set of goals, now 17 SDGs. Few coaches worldwide are aware of the MDGs, or the SDGs (Blom, Van Zee, Hilliard, & Judge, 2014; Boon & Gilbert, 2010), but that is to be expected because the MDGs/SDGs are not focused on Western nations such as the United States or Canada. However, a majority of the targeted areas are still relevant citizenship behaviors that can be developed in Western youth, and thus could provide a basic framework for positive youth development.

Thus, due to the lack of research on typical coaches in youth sport organizations, this mixed-method descriptive study explored the ideology of North American youth sport coaches regarding their beliefs about the psychosocial benefits of sport participation and their facilitation of the growth of citizenship behaviors in their youth. The research was guided by two research questions: (1) What are youth sport coaches' perceptions of the psychosocial benefits that children receive by participating in sport? and (2) Using the MDGs/SDGs as a framework, what strategies are coaches using to develop citizenship?

Method

Participants

A convenience sample of 116 youth sport coaches completed the survey. However, because of severely incomplete questionnaires, only 105 were retained in the final analysis. The final sample consisted of 78 men and 27 women ranging in age from 19 to 67 years (M = 41.45, SD = 11.10). The sample was predominantly Caucasian (87.6%), followed by Latino (4.8%), African American and Asian (1.9% each), and Native American (1.0%), primarily from the United States (89.5%), with the remainder from Canada, and represented a variety of sports, with soccer, baseball, football, and lacrosse as the most prevalent. Participants had between 1 and 36 years of coaching experience in any sport (M = 10.28, SD = 7.88), and out of 99 responses, 72 indicated they were currently coaching in a community or local club. Others were coaching in private clubs, elementary schools, and community centers (churches, YMCA), and some were also coaching high school. Additionally, 72 (68.6%) indicated they had received some type of training in coaching, with responses

ranging from courses offered through the club to having a higher education degree in coaching.

Instruments

We developed a descriptive survey from a combination of preexisting measures and newly developed items to gather demographic information, explore coaching ideology related to the creation of a mastery climate, perceived psychosocial benefits of sport participation in their program, and strategies for facilitating citizenship building. After the initial round of survey development, an expert in the field of using sport for youth development reviewed the survey and provided feedback. In the second stage of development, we edited the survey with the feedback and then piloted it with individuals with experience coaching youth athletes. After the pilot studies were complete, we made minor revisions to create the final survey. The final survey consisted of 64 items and contained nine open-ended questions. This section lists the sections of the questionnaire.

Coaching ideology related to mastery climate. To assess ideology regarding the creation of mastery climate, coaches responded to six items that were created by the researchers, which included questions about coaches' views on mistakes made during practice or training and during competition, as well as what values coaches emphasized throughout the season. For this latter aspect, participants responded about how much they emphasized each objective on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not a focus at all*) to 4 (*my only focus*) for four objectives (i.e., winning, mastering skills, effort, and having fun).

Perceived psychosocial benefits. We measured perceived psychosocial benefits (e.g., teamwork/working together, respect for others, and ability to lead teammates) of participating in sport by using the role of character in sport development subscale from the Positive Youth Development Through Sports Survey (Gould et al., 2006). Using the literature as a guide, we added to the scale an additional four questions that further encapsulated citizenship behaviors that could be learned through sport (e.g., ability to deal with negative and adverse situations; ability to communicate). Table 1 lists these additional items. We did not conduct a psychometric evaluation on the original scale, because the instrument does not seek to measure one theoretical construct, but rather addresses views on multiple

items related to character development. Because no psychometric properties were established for the original scale, we believed this addition of questions to fit our purpose was acceptable. Participants responded to items based on the prompt "Children are deliberately taught [value] through participation in my program" on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*).

Table 1
Scores of Perceived Psychosocial Benefits for Participating in Youth Sport

	Score	
Category	***M***	***SD***
Respect for others	3.75	0.45
Teamwork/working together	3.74	0.44
Respect for self	3.70	0.52
Value of hard work	3.69	0.51
How to compete cleanly and fairly	3.62	0.53
Self-control	3.59	0.51
Motivation to be physically active	3.56	0.55
Winning gracefully	3.53	0.56
Ability to deal with negative and adverse situations[a]	3.52	0.63
Ability to communicate[a]	3.51	0.61
Accept defeat gracefully	3.51	0.54
Not holding grudges after the competition	3.46	0.61
Ability to lead teammates[a]	3.42	0.65
Goal setting	3.41	0.60
Taking accountability for mistakes[a]	3.40	0.63
Fairness	3.31	0.60
Citizenship/abiding by the rules of society	3.31	0.76
Time management	2.90	0.72

[a]Item added to original scale.

Strategies for the facilitation of citizenship building. Using each of the MDGs as a framework, the participants responded to eight open-ended questions that allowed them to share examples of the application of these target goals in their practice. Based on research

(e.g., Blom et al., 2014; Boon & Gilbert, 2010), we expected that the participants would have very little familiarity with the MDGs. Thus, we provided a description of the MDG with each question to help participants think about how they apply that object. Participants were allowed to provide examples of how they directly or indirectly incorporate each of the eight MDGs into their coaching. We slightly altered one of the MDGs to make it more applicable to the organizations. Rather than inferring about reducing child mortality, the survey asked the participants to respond to ways that they promote child health. However, although the survey asked questions about all eight MDGs, we report on only six. Maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS are not foci that are targeted for Western nations, and as expected, no themes emerged for these two MDGs.

Procedure

We obtained approval from the university's institutional ethics board prior to beginning the study. Following approval, we created a database of North American youth sport organizations through an Internet search, personal contacts, and word of mouth. These organizations had to be ones that did not specifically mention the use of sport as a tool for development. From this list, we contacted coaches within the organization for participation in the study. In cases in which the only available e-mail address was a general organization e-mail address, we sent a cover letter that informed the organization of the purpose of the study, provided the link to the survey, and asked the person receiving the e-mail to forward the link to eligible coaches who met the inclusion criteria for the study. If specific coaches' e-mail addresses were available, we directly e-mailed the coach and provided the same information. Potential participants received a follow-up e-mail 3 weeks after the initial e-mail. To be included in the study, individuals must have been in a coaching position within their current youth sport organization for a minimum of 1 year and coached athletes 14 years of age or younger. We set the cutoff at 14 because we wanted to focus on young athletes who were mostly involved in youth leagues that were not associated with high school or secondary school. Overall, we sent 935 e-mails to coaches involved with youth sport organizations. Participants gave informed consent before beginning the online survey that took approximately 15 to 20 min to complete.

Data Analysis

We used a mixed-methods approach to analyze the data. We ran all quantitative analyses in SPSS 21 and calculated descriptive statistics and frequencies to explore coaching philosophy and perceived psychosocial benefits of sport participation. For the qualitative responses, we used a thematic inductive analysis approach to examine the responses for each question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, three researchers independently coded the qualitative responses by creating meaningful units of text (Hruschka et al., 2004). Following the initial analysis, the three researchers met to discuss the individual subthemes until a consensus was reached (Mays & Pope, 1995; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). We took several steps to enhance trustworthiness of the data (Shenton, 2004). The first was a thorough reading and rereading of the responses so that we gained a deep familiarity with the content. Next, three independent researchers ensured investigator triangulation of the data. These researchers coded independently and ultimately reached a consensus with little disagreement. Finally, we used literature and theory (e.g., Benson, 1997; Petitpas et al., 2005) as a guide throughout the process, which Shenton (2004) states is important for the evaluation of qualitative work.

Results

Descriptive Data

We calculated descriptive data and frequencies for the youth sport coaches. Regarding ideology, youth sport coaches indicated that coaches equally put the most emphasis on stressing effort (M = 3.19, SD = 0.50) and having fun (M = 3.19, SD = 0.52) and the least stress on winning (M = 2.17, SD = 0.74). We also evaluated the coaches' views of youth mistakes (Table 2). Although a majority of participants (57.1%) still believed that mistakes during competition were learning tools, the respondents tended to indicate a higher degree of coaching responsibility for mistakes during competition compared to practice.

Table 2
Youth Sport Coaches' View on Mistakes

	Situation			
	During practice		During competition	
View of mistake	*n*	%	*n*	%
A lack of appropriate training	10	9.5	15	14.3
A lack of effort	10	9.5	7	6.7
Unavoidable	10	9.5	13	12.4
Learning tools	71	67.6	60	57.1
A coaching issue	3	2.9	9	8.6

Additionally, Table 1 reports the scores for perceived psychosocial benefits. The top three skills deemed to be learned were respect for others, teamwork, and respect for self. Participants rated time management as the least commonly learned skill. However, there was only a 0.85 difference between the highest and lowest score, suggesting that coaches believed that athletes learned many skills about equally.

Qualitative Data

Participants also provided 144 examples of how they directly or indirectly incorporated the various UN MDGs when coaching. Figure 1 presents a full list of the themes with frequencies.

Poverty and hunger. The MDG of poverty contained 21 responses that resulted in four subthemes: (a) food drives, (b) discuss nutrition/healthy eating, (c) collecting and donating used sports equipment, and (d) community service. Food drives were the most common application of fighting poverty, with coaches stating that they "do a food drive during football season," "[have] food drives on a quarterly basis," and host an annual camp for which the "entry fee is canned food." In the nutrition subtheme, participants said "[they] encourage proper nutrition and hydration for our players," "[they] help develop good nutritional habits," and "players are given nutrition advice." The third subtheme of collecting and donating used sports equipment included responses such as "used sports equipment donations" and "used equipment collection and donation," and one coach "just donated sports equipment for all major sports to an impoverished community." Finally, for community service, one coach

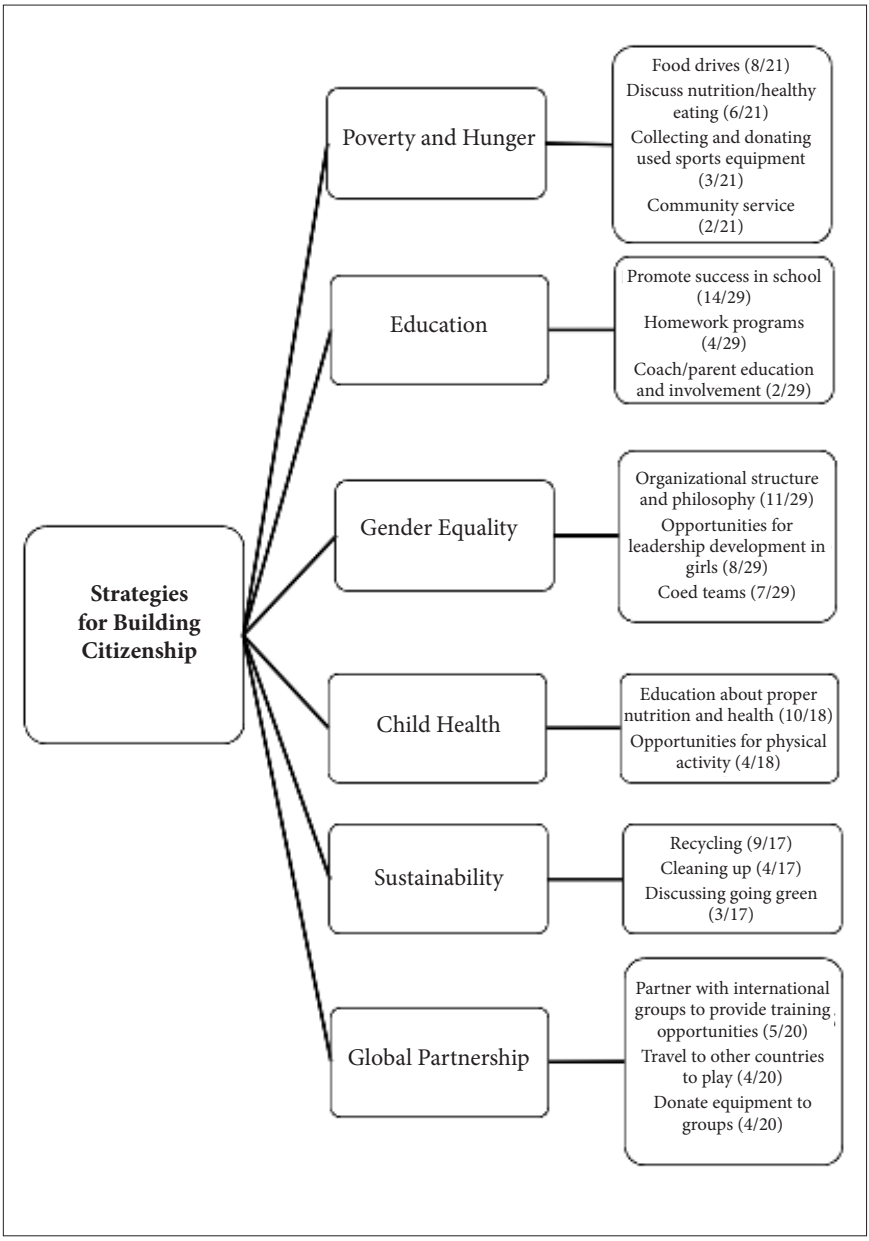

Figure 1. Youth sport coaches' strategies for building citizenship. Numbers next to the theme represent the frequency of that theme divided by the total number of responses for that MDG.

strives "to perform X amount of hours of community service based on age group," whereas another coach "hosts international teaching trips exposing USA students to impoverished areas of the world."

Education. The MDG of education contained 29 responses that resulted in three subthemes: (a) promote success in school, (b) homework programs, and (c) parent/coach education and involvement. Promoting success in school was the most common subtheme, as participants shared they "promote success in school in correlation with success in rugby," they "offer athletes scholar-athlete awards to emphasize the importance of education," and "players who do not keep up with their school work will not be allowed to participate in competitions with the team." Participants also reported ideas related to homework programs. They mentioned they "provide after-school homework programs," "[provide] after-school study time," and have "daily homework help sessions." For the parent/coach education subtheme, comments included that participants are "educating coaches and parents through the Positive Coaching Alliance" and "students on the teams must be doing well in school (based on parents' assessment) in order to participate."

Several participants mentioned offering free sports clinics. However, it is unclear if these clinics were for the public or simply people involved within the coach's organization. Further, the superficial content indicated that clinics were sport focused (e.g., "we hold free/open to the public basketball and flag football clinics" and "town offers clinics to athletes that would like to improve their skills") and therefore were not included as a subtheme promoting education.

Gender equality. The MDG of gender equality contained 29 responses that resulted in three subthemes: (a) organizational structure and philosophy, (b) opportunities for leadership development in girls, and (c) co-ed teams. Organizational structure and philosophy was the most common subtheme, as participants expressed they "encourage and recruit girls to become a part of our organization" and "personally promote leadership opportunities for girls," and one coach stated that his organization has "two female directors out of eight board members. Half of the coaches of our girls teams are women." Opportunities for leadership development was another subtheme, as participants said they "provide opportunities for young women and would encourage them equally as young men

to reach their full potential," host "clinics in women empowerment," and "promote opportunities for girls within our program." Finally, many participants shared that teams were coed, and one participant specifically mentioned, "We allow younger kids to play together in a coed format, in part, to help demonstrate that there is no gender bias and to promote equality among genders."

Child health. The MDG of child health contained 18 responses that resulted in two subthemes: (a) education about proper nutrition and health and (b) opportunities for physical activity. Education about nutrition was the most common subtheme and is similar to the subtheme of discussing nutrition and healthy eating under the poverty MDG. Participants shared they "discuss proper eating habits," "encourage the choice of healthy snacks versus candy," and "train the athletes and parents on proper nutrition." Participants also shared they provide opportunities for physical fitness "via our practices," as well as involvement with "President's Physical Fitness Initiative," and one coach shared that he helps his organization in "putting on a run for obesity race competition."

Sustainability. The MDG of sustainability contained 17 responses that resulted in three subthemes: (a) recycling, (b) cleaning up, and (c) discussing going green. Recycling was the most common application, as participants explained they "have recycling in our building," the "club has had several recycling events for used equipment. Facilities all have recycling bins for plastics and aluminum, which are encouraged for use by all [coaches]," and they "are always promoting recycling and awareness." The cleaning up subtheme included responses related to "[cleaning] up after practices," "keeping our parks clean . . . Parks are typically meant to be ballparks and playgrounds that have diamonds; but the general message applies to all public places," and making "trash runs to pick up debris on the field." For discussing going green, participants said they "discuss gardening and going green," "plan to make one of our events environmentally sustainable," and "work indirectly to decrease their carbon footprint."

Global partnership. The MDG of global partnership contained 20 responses and resulted in three subthemes: (a) partner with international groups to provide training opportunities, (b) travel to other countries to play, and (c) donate equipment to other groups.

Partnering with international groups was the most common subtheme, as participants stated they "work with other organizations and cities to provide training opportunities" and "do organized practices with clubs in other states and countries," and one coach is a member of an organization that is a "proud member of the global rugby initiative." Participants also mentioned traveling to other countries to play. For example, they reported they "collaborate with some clubs in Canada, where some of our teams travel to Canada or they travel to the USA," "have two to three teams travel to compete across the US or outside the country," and "host athletes from PAGU nations to come and train in the United States." The third subtheme of donating equipment to groups consisted of responses such as "we donate gently used supplies," "we provide football boots and gear to children in Liberia," and "we collect used equipment for kids in other countries."

Negative views. Not all participants had positive views about incorporating the UN MDGs in their programs. One participant stated, "I reject anything having to do with the UN" and another participant said, "We're a volunteer organization; not a quasi-political entity." The participant continued,

> The idea of working in all of the things above will destroy any volunteer organization . . . This isn't the purpose of the association. The purpose is to provide a safe healthy atmosphere where the children can learn and apply the skills of the sports they are playing.

Discussion

The apparent interest in promoting a mastery climate and promoting personal growth in the context of citizenship skill building suggested by participants in this study is consistent with that in other research on youth sport coaches (e.g., Boon & Gilbert, 2010; Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2012; Gould et al., 2006; Gould et al., 2007; Lacroix et al., 2008; Strachan, Côté, & Deakin, 2011; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). The coaches in our study reported putting the most emphasis on effort and having fun, followed by mastering skills, with winning as the least emphasized. This task-oriented, mastery climate is crucial in the development of citizenship, and in one study

examining parents' perceptions of the benefits of their children's (5–8 years) sport participation, parents believed a mastery-focused climate that de-emphasized winning helped their children to receive positive benefits from sport (Neely & Holt, 2014). Of the various psychosocial benefits surveyed, youth sport coaches reported that they believed youth were learning those skills about equally, similar to Gould et al. (2006), and that athletes most commonly learned respect for others, teamwork, and respect for self through participation in sport. Gould et al. (2006) also used this portion of the Youth Development Through Sport Scale and found teamwork, value of hard work, and time management to be the most commonly learned skills in their sample. In our study, participants rated time management the lowest. One reason for this discrepancy may be that Gould et al. (2006) surveyed varsity high school coaches, whereas this sample focused on coaches who coach youth under the age of 14. Time management skills may not be deemed as important a skill to teach to youth of that age as it is to high school athletes, and thus the youth sport coaches may not have been encouraging time management skills. However, the consistency with athletes learning teamwork and respect corroborates the belief that if sport is deliberately crafted into a positive environment, then it can be an avenue to help youth develop some of Benson's (1997) assets.

Furthermore, sport itself will not help an athlete learn teamwork or other positive life skills (e.g., Bean & Forneris, 2016), and research has documented the potential negative effects of sport participation (Fraser-Thomas & Côté, 2009). Instead, coaches must make a conscious effort to teach the desired skill and reinforce it to achieve positive outcomes (e.g., Camiré et al., 2012; Kidd, 2011; Strachan, Côté, & Deakin, 2008, 2011); the MDGs may be a possible framework. One study focused on strategies that coaches can use to teach and reinforce these positive skills to facilitate youth development (Camiré, Forneris, Trudel, & Bernard, 2011). Although the study focused on mostly high school athletes, several recommendations could be applied to working with younger athletes. One of these, which corroborates methods used by coaches in our sample, is organizing throughout the season team activities that allow the athletes to spend time together outside of sport. For example, coaches in this study mentioned using homework programs to emphasize

the importance of education. By attending these sessions, the youth spend additional time with each other in a positive setting. Finally, it is important for coaches to understand not only the necessity of teaching positive life skills in sport but also how to facilitate development in their athletes. Camiré et al. (2011) suggested that to achieve this, coaches not only explain what a life skill is and how it can be transferred outside of sport but also provide athletes with opportunities to practice life skills. In the current study, coaches stated they had their athletes participate in food drives and community service. Participation in community service is a great way for athletes to utilize and transfer some of the positive life skills that they might learn through sport (Camiré et al., 2011; Petitpas et al., 2005), as well as to understand the effect of civic engagement (Gambone et al., 2006).

Despite the promise of the previous suggestions, researchers have described many challenges for future coaches to consider when developing programs and philosophies to facilitate the development of citizenship skills (Bean & Forneris, 2017; Camiré, 2014; Camiré et al., 2011). Most of these challenges were described by high school coaches, and the challenges may be even more difficult for coaches who coach youth under the age of 14. For example, coaches found it difficult to organize activities and opportunities outside of sport (Camiré et al., 2011; Camiré & Trudel, 2014). This may be more challenging with youth who must rely on their parents to get them to these team activities. Similarly, coaches have stated that time limitations affect their ability to explicitly teach citizenship skills (Bean & Forneris, 2017). The coaches in our sample provided several examples of ways to build citizenship that are not time intensive, including having discussions about healthy eating, having food drives or collecting used sports equipment, and promoting success in school. Of the examples listed, they can be easily integrated into stretching periods of practice or the equipment can be collected before practice begins, thus eliminating the need for extra time. Thus, it is important for coach educators and organizational administrators to help coaches identify simple but deliberate ways to incorporate citizenship skill development into the daily sport environment.

There are also several developmental considerations for building citizenship skills in this age group. For example, athletes who are too young may not be able to fully understand how to develop and

transfer these life skills. For coaches who are struggling to facilitate positive youth development, researchers recommend integrating family and school efforts and establishing supportive relationships between coaches and their athletes (Camiré, 2014).

Another interesting finding from this study was that youth sport coaches viewed the role of mistakes differently during practice than during competition. During practice, when athletes were learning the skills, coaches very strongly viewed mistakes as learning tools. Although this belief remained the majority view during competition, the participants indicated higher responses for a lack of appropriate training and a coaching issue, suggesting that when mistakes occurred during the game, coaches accepted responsibility. One way that coaches increase the potential for life skills to be transferred outside of sport is by taking advantage of teachable moments (Camiré et al., 2011; Camiré et al., 2012; Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Mistakes often provide one type of spontaneous, unplanned opportunity for coaches to have a discussion to teach positive life skills (Trottier & Robitaille, 2014). Additionally, athletes have reported that after making a mistake in practice, they would most like to receive technical feedback and instruction (Sagar & Jowett, 2012). Therefore, coaches should use these moments to provide technical feedback while using them as teachable moments, or a "learning tool," as in our study. Future research should investigate coaches' beliefs about the role of mistakes in the development of youth athletes. To this extent, qualitative research would be useful.

The negative views expressed by some participants are also noteworthy. Although their comments implied they did not believe in implementing principles from the UN, the mission of the organization to which the participant belonged aligns with the tenets of using sport to build citizenship. Therefore, researchers and practitioners should clarify the tenets of positive youth development and the integral role of coaches in promoting these practices.

This study has limitations that must be acknowledged. First, we designed the survey to be completed from the perspective of the coaches, so the results are subject to social desirability. Second, there was a low response rate of approximately 12%. It is possible that not all websites were updated with accurate information and therefore some participants were not reached or were no longer involved with

the organization as a coach. The invited participants who did not respond could have been inherently different from the participants who did respond, which biased our results. Finally, the sample was predominantly male and Caucasian, and future research should attempt to recruit a more diverse population. However, female coaches represented 26% of the sample, which is consistent with research that has found female coaches make up approximately 25–30% of coaches (Forneris, Camiré, & Trudel, 2012; Lacroix et al., 2008). Therefore, this percentage may accurately represent the reality of the gender distribution of coaches in youth sports. Despite these limitations, the study contributes to the literature in several ways. Coaches in the study provided practical ways to implement activities that could help foster growth and development in youth. Second, the results suggest that coaches may view differently mistakes made in competition than in practice. There is scant empirical information on mistakes in the literature, and these results provide a potential starting point for further investigation.

Conclusion

Sports have the potential to promote psychosocial growth; however, coaches should deliberately incorporate techniques from this study and past studies to create an environment in which they can teach these skills and give athletes opportunities to practice these skills. The best way for coaches to create a mastery climate through which development can occur is to focus primarily on effort, deemphasize winning, and use mistakes as learning opportunities. The coaches in this study primarily emphasized having fun, effort, and mastering skills; winning was least emphasized. Through these practices, they are working toward creating a mastery climate that is conducive for psychosocial development.

These data provided many interesting examples of practical ways that programs can integrate the teaching of citizenship and life skills, which coincide with theoretical explanations for positive youth development. For example, participants stated they provided community service opportunities and offered free clinics to the public, and community service projects have been identified as one way to promote growth in youth (Petitpas et al., 2005).

In this sample, many strategies for implementing citizenship and life skills relied on education and verbal persuasion. Therefore, coaches could deliberately relay these types of peace and development ideas in short discussions at the beginning or end of practice. This is a practical application, because time has been identified as one of the main obstacles to implementing citizenship and life skills. Research needs to continue to be conducted on ways to best facilitate the creation of a safe environment that allows for the holistic development of youth athletes.

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