

Your Program and the Multi-Sport Athlete

The Benefits of Playing Multiple Sports

There are several benefits of your athletes participating in more than one sport throughout the year including:

Avoiding Burnout

Playing the same sport every day for extended periods of time, like over the course of a year, can quickly lead to burnout. Burnout in a sport is when the athlete is mental fatigued from playing one sport too often. Burnout can be avoided by playing several sports over the course of the year.

Reducing the Risk of Overuse Related Injuries

Overuse injuries go hand-in-hand with burnouts. If athletes play one sport year-round, they are constantly using their growing bones and muscles in the same way. The repetitive motion of doing the same skills and drills year-round often leads to overuse injuries such as stress fractures, strains and sprains, and even tears in muscles, tendons, and ligaments. By playing a variety of sports, especially during the critical development years, athletes are better able to develop all of their muscle groups instead of just specific muscles for one sport.

Developing Better Skills as an All-Around Athlete

The more sports and activities that kids are involved in early on in their lives, the more opportunity they have to develop themselves as an athlete. Many skills and techniques transfer from one sport to another and complement each other while continuing to further develop and build upon preexisting skill sets. When athletes develop their skills across different sports and activities, they are likely to find that their performance in other sports will increase.

Enhancing the Development of Mental and Life Skills

Playing multiple sports can help kids build important life skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, communication, and responsibility. While playing one sport also teaches valuable life lessons, playing a variety of sports allows for lessons to be taught and learned in different environments, which helps teach *adaptability and openness to change*.

Building Confidence

Sport is a great vehicle for building self-confidence in youth. With each different sport, there are different levels of success that athletes can achieve, both big and small. Whether it is making a free-throw or hitting a single, each step of the way in sports holds a new chance for success. As athletes succeed in sports, their self-confidence increases because they start to understand they can overcome any obstacles that may stand in their way, both in sport and in life.