



Youth Sports of Americas is committed to the holistic development of youth through and in sport, by focusing on the meaningful relationships, activities and settings that enrich the personal assets of each young athlete across the entire individualized athletic development pathway. Through collaborative research, education and distinctive services and programs, our evidence-informed and person-centered focus will help each youth athlete to develop character, competencies in sport and life, confidence and meaningful connections with adults and peers, while establishing a foundation for personal development and long-term enjoyable participation and achievement in sport.

We encourage all youth sports organizations, programs, parents and other stakeholders to embrace and promote the following best practices for fostering inclusive, sustainable, healthy, safe and enjoyable youth sports participation and optimal athletic performance and achievement.

- Youth athlete development – readiness, timing, trajectory and achievement – must be considered individually and holistically while being centered on the growth of the whole person.
- Each youth athlete should be encouraged and provided opportunities to participate in a variety of unstructured and structured age- and readiness-appropriate sport-related activities and settings, while developing a wide range of athletic and social skills and attributes that are fundamental in becoming physically and psychologically resilient and adaptable in and beyond sport.
- Prioritize, demonstrate and clearly promote safety, health and respect for the rules, other athletes and the sport consistently during training, practice and competition.
- Youth athlete development takes time. Excessive practice and competition and other attempts to hasten athletic proficiency at the expense of health, well-being and safety increase the risk of injury and drop-out and interfere with long-term sustainable athletic success and achievement.
- Coaches should provide a challenging and enjoyable learning climate that focuses on and nurtures each athlete’s personal assets and is aligned with individual athletic readiness and goals.
- Youth athletes should be well-rested, hydrated and nourished each day. Providing appropriate rest and recovery during and in scheduling practice and competition is imperative in minimizing injury risk and optimizing athletic development and performance.
- Appropriate accommodations for health and fitness status and environmental conditions are essential, and a written emergency action plan and effective response protocols should be in place and practiced ahead of time.
- All youth sports stakeholders should seek relevant and current best practices information and education and maintain informed, realistic perspectives and expectations for all youth athletes.

YouthSportsOfTheAmericas.org

Youth Sports of the Americas is dedicated to provide an unparalleled platform for promoting inclusive, sustainable, healthy, safe and enjoyable youth sports participation.