

Kids who play sports can truly score!

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With spring here, your kids may be playing team sports like soccer or baseball. Or perhaps they're taking part in individual sports like tennis or golf. In either case, they're getting a lot more than a workout!

What do children gain from playing sports?

First, let's remember the good time they're having. After all, that's the primary reason for "playing" anything: to have fun!

Beyond the fun, they're also gaining:¹

- **Self-confidence.** Playing sports gives kids the chance to build and improve many skills. Each achievement — big or small — helps kids feel good about themselves. This confidence usually spills over into other aspects of their lives with very positive results.
- **Social skills.** Team spirit, working together toward a goal and getting along with others are all essential social skills. And they're not just important for kids — they extend into positive personal and workplace habits for adults, too.
- **Communication.** Kids learn to receive instruction and take direction in sports. They also learn to share their ideas in acceptable ways. Like social skills, communication plays a critical role in all aspects of youth and later life.
- **Respect for others.** Learning from coaches and other mentors helps teach respect for adults. Dealing with teammates and opponents helps teach respect for other kids — regardless of which team they're on!

- **Self-discipline.** Sports teach kids how to lead and how to follow. Each requires them to rein in their impulses and focus their energies on a goal.
- **Healthy habits.** We've all heard the concerns today about childhood obesity. Playing sports helps children burn calories and stay fit. The President's Council on Fitness and Sports recommends 60 minutes of physical activity each day for children. If kids get into this habit and carry it over to adulthood, there could be a decrease in weight issues, diabetes and even heart disease.

Get your kids out there — and join them if you like!

Encourage your kids to get involved with sports. And consider coaching if you think you'd enjoy it. Sports are a healthy habit for everyone.

¹livestrong.com