Youth Athletics & Finances Survey
COVID-19 impact on youth sports

April 2020
Introduction & Methodology

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Methodology

These surveys were conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade from February 20 - March 4, 2020, among 2,002 Young Americans ages 15-29, including 1,381 athletes, and April 10-16, 2020, among 691 Young Americans ages 15-29, including 211 athletes. The second survey also included 200 Sports Parents.

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In an (over)achievement culture, extracurriculars are a way of life for youth today

Seven in 10 Young Americans participate in extracurriculars (71%), while nearly two-thirds consider themselves overachievers (63%)

Do you currently or did you ever participate in any of the following extracurricular activities for more than 5 hours on an average week?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletics / sports</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring / tutoring</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir / Show Choir</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic clubs dedicated to subject</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater / drama productions or club</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Honor Society</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech or debate club / team</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper or yearbook</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student government</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Congress</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feel burned out by their extracurricular activities (of those who participate), including 1 in 4 who feel that way "always" or "often" (25%).

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); All respondents (n=2,002)
2 in 3 Young Americans play sports at a highly competitive level

High school sports are the most common, but over 1 in 10 play at the college or elite club level

Do you currently or did you ever participate in high school, college, club, or elite competitive sports?

- **Yes**: 69%
- **No**: 31%

**Types of sports played**

- High school sports: 54%
- College sports: 8%
- Club or elite youth sports: 7%

While male and female athletes have similar likelihood of competing in high school sports (77% men vs. 79% women), men are more likely to play in college (14% men vs. 9% women) and women are more likely to play club (12% women, vs. 9% men).

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February–March); All respondents (n=2,002)
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**Most begin competing at age 9, encouraged by their parents**

Though athletes who are self-motivated to start are also more likely to have Olympic dreams and hopes of playing professionally.

**Who most motivated you to start playing your sport?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My parents</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Famous athletes</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches or talent scouts</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Does self motivation lead to the big leagues?**

- "I hope to play my sport professionally." 50% self-motivated, 40% parents motivated
- "I hope to go to the Olympics one day." 34% self-motivated, 26% parents motivated

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); Competitive Athletes (n=1,341)
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Sports provide a source of identity, with traditional teams remaining most common

Nearly half of competitive athletes say they “don’t know what they would do without their sport” (49%)

What sport do or did you play at a competitive/elite level?

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); Competitive Athletes (n=1,341)
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Many find themselves unmoored with cancellations due to Covid-19

Nearly two thirds of competitive athletes say they feel like they’ve lost a piece of their identity with their sport being cancelled during this time (61%) and that they can’t remember the last time they went this long without playing their sport (64%)

Has your sports involvement for your prior and/or current season’s sport been impacted in any of the following ways due to social distancing or COVID-19?

- Entire season cancelled or delayed: 51%
- Practice cancelled or delayed: 49%
- Games or tournaments cancelled or delayed: 43%
- Limited ability to workout / access equipment to maintain skills: 41%
- Championship/ final games cancelled for season already in progress: 32%
- Delay or cancellation of scholarships: 19%
- College recruiting stalled: 15%
- N/A - My sports involvement hasn’t been impacted: 9%

Covid-19 cancellation implications go beyond this season

- 56% are worried losing a season of their sport or time away from their team will have irreparable damage on their future.
- 47% believe cancelling sports this season could put their college scholarships at risk.

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (April); Competitive Athletes (n=211)
3 in 4 rely on exercise or training for their sport to stay sane during this time (73%)

The majority are using the extra time to stay in shape, with many also connecting with their teams virtually and watching game film to stay up to speed.

To help fill the time and/or stay up to speed on your sport during this time, have you done or are you doing any of the following?

- 63% Working out at home more
- 47% Playing more videogames / watching eSports
- 41% Having virtual team events
- 40% Focusing more on academics
- 39% Watching game films or previous professional games
- 35% Connecting with other competitive athletes virtually
- 22% Fully recovering from an injury

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (April); Competitive Athletes (n=211)
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**During regular season, sports come second only to sleep**
Athletes are also dedicating more time than non-athletes to work and studying off the field

In an average week where you are/were playing your sport, how much time do you dedicate to the following? (hours)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>8.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in a paid job</td>
<td>7.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time with family and friends</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching streaming / TV</td>
<td>5.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using social media</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying / doing homework</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing chores</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 hours female athletes
7.75 hours male athletes
5.64 hours non-athletes

**Participate in extracurriculars (outside of sports)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competitive athletes</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-athletes</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Competitive athletes are more likely to outsource or consider outsourcing tasks so they can focus on what’s important (55% vs. 42% non-athletes).

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); Competitive Athletes (n=1,341)
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Nearly half say they have “sacrificed academics to focus on athletics” (45%)
A similar number say that they feel more pressure to perform well in their sport than in school (45%)

Has participating in sports / extra-curriculars ever caused you to do any of the following?

- Be excused from class
- Skip studying or doing homework
- Miss a social event at school
- Fall asleep in class
- Miss an important event with family or friends
- Go to the hospital / emergency room
- Perform poorly on a test or exam
- Miss a test or exam
- Be featured on local news
- Earn a scholarship
- Meet college admins
- Earn a full ride scholarship
- Become internet famous

48% have a hard time focusing in school on days when they have big games or tournaments
46% have performed poorly on a test or presentation after a game or tournament where they didn't play their best

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); All respondents (n=2,002)
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At the same time, athletes recognize the importance of down time

They are willing to invest in wellness and recovery when needed, and see the benefits of recharging more than non-athletes

Competitive athletes are more likely to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competitive Athletes</th>
<th>Non-Athletes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider taking or take a personal day</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider taking or take a digital detox</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider taking a gap year before college</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); All respondents (n=2,002)
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Athletes are also more likely to seek financial independence and knowledge

Most rely less on outside sources of financial support, and they are more likely to classify themselves as “completely financially independent” (40% athletes, vs. 22% non-athletes)

Can meet financial obligations without support from parents, grandparents, or others

62%  43%
Competitive athletes  Non-competitive athletes

Can meet financial obligations without credit cards, student loans, or personal loans

59%  43%
Competitive athletes  Non-competitive athletes

Competitive athletes are more likely to have...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competitive Athletes</th>
<th>Non-Athlete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worked over the summer while in school</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked during college</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived at home during college</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken a personal finance course in high school/ college</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); All respondents (n=2,002)
But elite sports can be costly, with financial implications for the whole family

Four in 10 competitive athletes say their parents talk about how much they spend on their sport (41%), and more than half say they feel guilty about how much their parents pay (55%).

Half of competitive athletes pay for at least a portion of their own sports expenses with their own money (49%), including 62% who live in big cities.

Believe top-tier high school and college athletes should be allowed to get brand sponsorships and endorsements without consequences from school committees.

Which of the following do/did you or your parents pay for in order for you to participate in your sport?

- Gear to play: 55%
- Enrollment or participation fees: 43%
- Travel for games and tournaments: 42%
- Special food/drinks, supplements, vitamins: 30%
- Gear to recover: 27%
- Private lessons / training: 23%
- Specialized camps: 22%
- Donations to my team: 22%
- Medical / hospital / surgery bills: 21%
- Physical therapy / chiropractic / acupuncture fees: 21%
- National travel for games and tournaments: 14%
- Additional school tutoring w sport taking time: 9%

39% of competitive athletes say their family is counting on them to get a sports scholarship to cover at least some of their college costs, including 55% of those who live in big cities.

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); Competitive Athletes (n=1,341)
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Covid-19 has caused the majority of families to lose money this season

Many also worry that they will no longer be able to foot the bill for elite sports if a recession hits; athletes (60%) and parents (72%) agree the government should subsidize youth sports if there is a recession.

Say their family has lost money on my sport due to social distancing / Covid-19:

- **Competitive athletes**: 53%
- **Competitive athlete parents**: 74%

Average amount lost

- **Competitive athletes**: $945
- **Competitive athlete parents**: $677

Over half of sports parents say, “My family may not be able to afford my sport in the future if there is a recession” (78%), as do nearly half of competitive athletes (46%).

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (April); Competitive Athletes (n=211) and Sports Parents (n=200)
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Athletes say they have lost money on private lessons/training (29%), enrollment or participation fees (28%), and gear to play (28%) due to Covid-19

Has your family lost money on any of the following sports related items due to COVID-19 stay-at-home orders?

- Private lessons / training: 29% (Athletes), 25% (Parents)
- Enrollment or participation fees: 28% (Athletes), 27% (Parents)
- Gear to play: 28% (Athletes), 23% (Parents)
- Gear to recover: 26% (Athletes), 29% (Parents)
- Additional school tutoring: 25% (Athletes), 23% (Parents)
- National travel for games: 23% (Athletes), 21% (Parents)
- Specialized camps: 23% (Athletes), 24% (Parents)
- Local travel for games: 19% (Athletes), 27% (Parents)

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (April); Competitive Athletes (n=211) and Sports Parents (n=200)
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However, many families have also saved money as a result of sports cancellations.
Two-thirds of parents hope to re-invest their savings for next season, saying they will likely have more than usual to spend.

Say their family has saved money on sports due to social distancing / Covid-19:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Average Amount Saved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competitive athletes</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>$1,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive athlete parents</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>$992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of competitive athletes (52%) and parents (88%) are optimistic that, “after saving money this season, my family will likely have more to spend on my sport next year.”

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (April); Competitive Athletes (n=211) and Sports Parents (n=200)
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Athletes chalk these savings up to travel and fees
While parents are more likely to attribute savings to gear and dietary supplements

Has your family saved money on any of the following sports related items due to COVID-19 stay-at-home orders?

- Local travel for games
- Enrollment or participation fees
- Gear to play
- National travel for games
- Special food/drinks, vitamins, etc.
- Donations to the team
- Specialized camps
- Medical/hospital/surgery bills
- Private lessons/training
- Additional school tutoring
- Physical therapy/chiropractic/acupuncture
- Gear to recover

61% 53% 55% 49% 51% 57% 48% 42% 48% 54% 47% 45% 45% 42% 43% 44% 41% 46% 39% 37% 39% 39% 38% 41%

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (April); Competitive Athletes (n=211) and Sports Parents (n=200)
Despite financial implications, most are counting on sports for a brighter future

Two-thirds of competitive athletes say, “I know my parents' financial sacrifice for sports will be worth it, as it will make me a more successful adult” (65%)

**Field of (big) dreams**

- **81%** Believe sports teaches young people how to be leaders on and off the field.
- **59%** Hope to play their sport in college
- **45%** Hope to play their sport professionally
- **32%** Hope to go to the Olympics one day

**Community Activists**: Competitive athletes are twice as likely to plan to volunteer for 2020 elections (11% vs 6% non-athletes).

**70%** Want their kids to have the same commitment to sports in the future that they have today.

Source: The Harris Poll on behalf of TD Ameritrade (February-March); Competitive Athletes (n=1,341)