

Youth Athletics & Finances Survey

COVID-19 impact on youth sports

April 2020



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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%)

67%

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

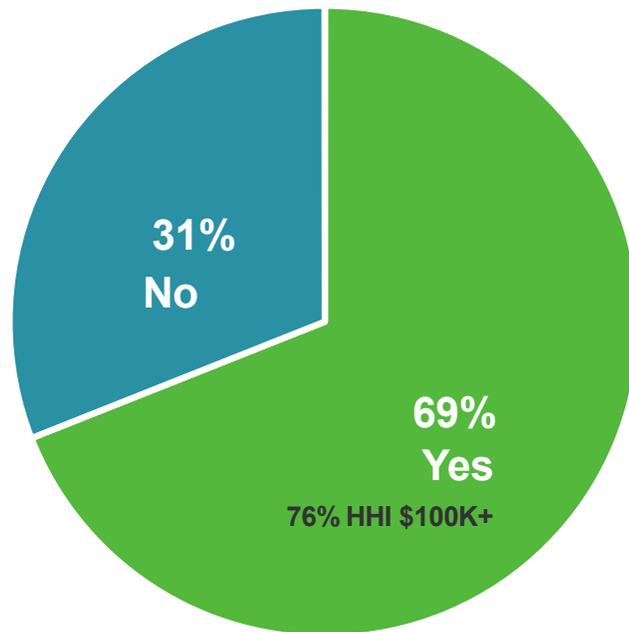
Do you currently or did you ever participate in any of the following extracurricular activities for more than 5 hours on an average week?

 Athletics / sports	45%	 National Honor Society	11%
 Band	14%	 Speech or debate club / team	8%
 Mentoring / tutoring	14%	 Newspaper or yearbook	8%
 Choir / Show Choir	14%	 Student government	7%
 Academic clubs dedicated to subject	13%	 Model Congress	5%
 Theater / drama productions or club	13%		

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?



Types of sports played

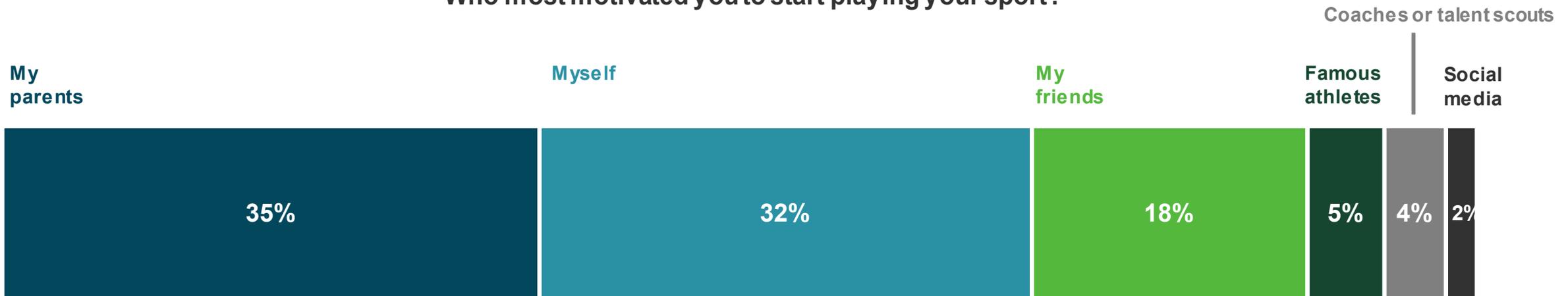
High school sports	54%
College sports	8%
Club or elite youth sports	7%

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).

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?



Does self motivation lead to the big leagues?

“I hope to play my sport professionally.”

50% self-motivated
40% parents motivated

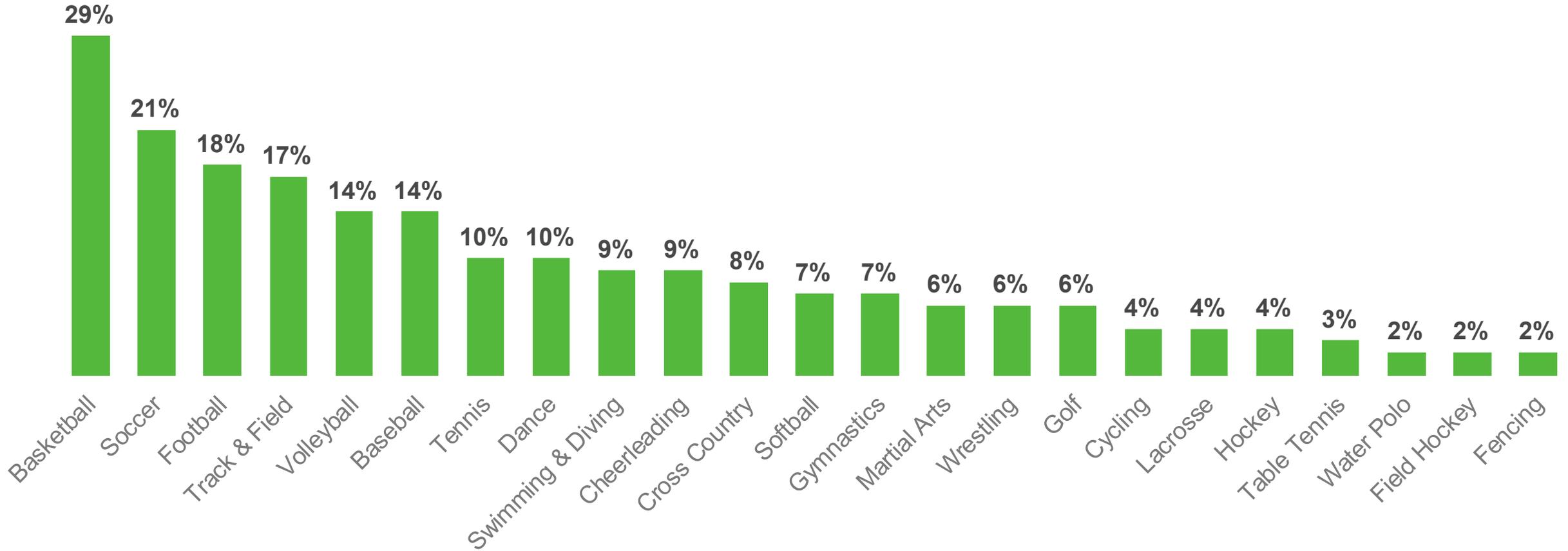
“I hope to go to the Olympics one day.”

34% self-motivated
26% parents motivated

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)

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?



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.

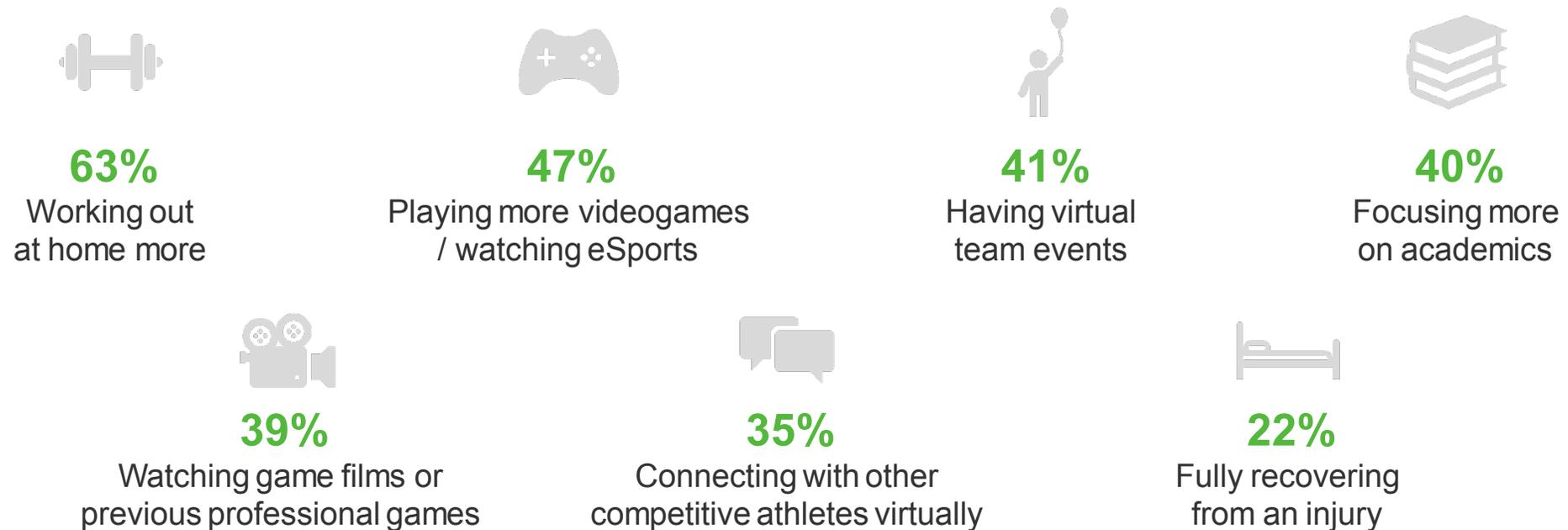
47%

Believe cancelling sports this season could put their college scholarships at risk.

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?



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)

	Sports	8.31	9 hours female athletes 7.75 hours male athletes
	Working in a paid job	7.65	5.64 non-athletes
	Spending time with family and friends	5.71	
	Watching streaming / TV	5.55	
	Using social media	5.38	
	Studying / doing homework	4.39	3.23 non-athletes
	Doing chores	3.09	

Participate in extracurriculars (outside of sports)

83%
Competitive athletes

44%
Non-athletes

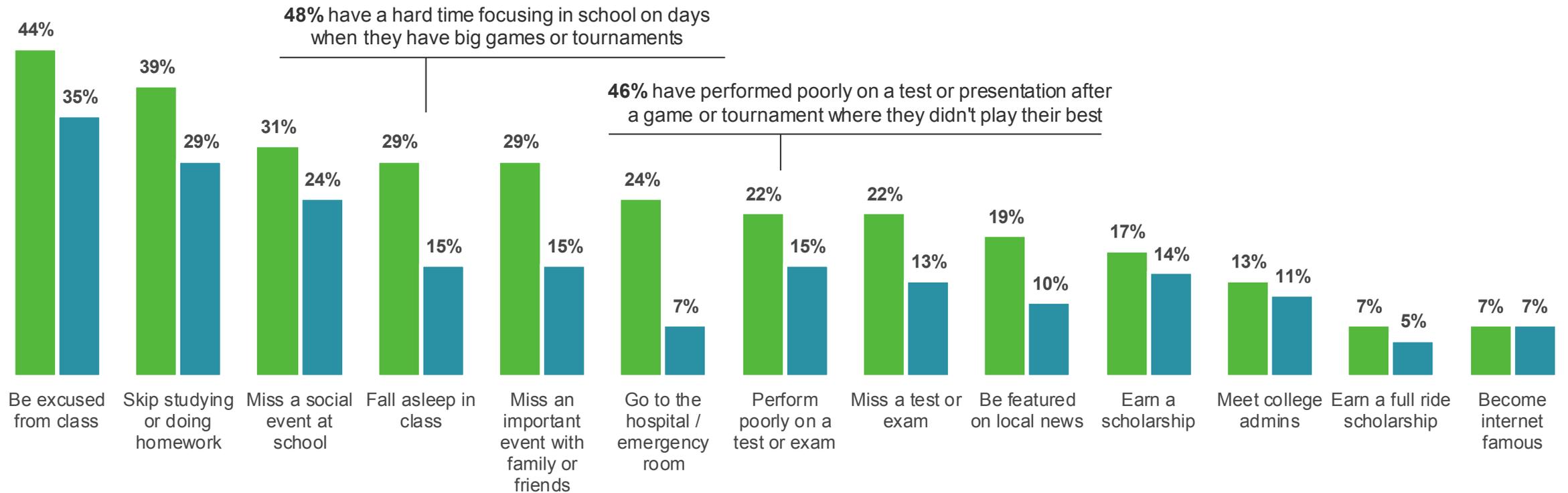
Competitive athletes are more likely to **outsource** or consider outsourcing tasks so they can focus on what's important (55% vs. 42% non-athletes).

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?

Competitive athletes Non-athletes



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...

	Competitive Athletes	Non-Athletes
Consider taking or take a personal day	83%	68%
Consider taking or take a digital detox	63%	46%
Consider taking a gap year before college	43%	31%

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...

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

But elite sports can be costly, with financial implications for the whole family

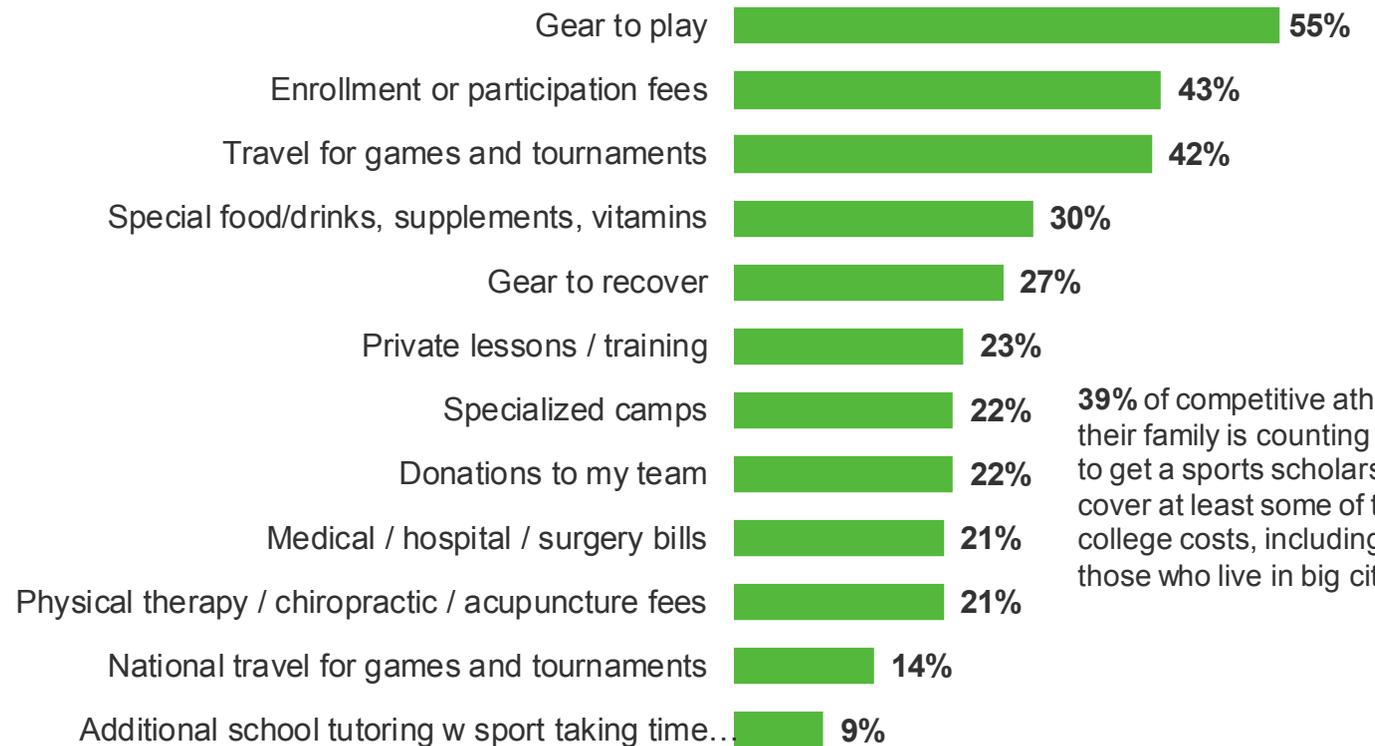
Four in 10 competitive athletes say their parents talk about how much they spend on their sport (41%), and more than half say they feel guilty about how much their parents pay (55%)

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.

67%

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?



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.

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:

53%

Competitive athletes

74%

Competitive athlete parents

Average amount lost

\$945

Competitive athletes

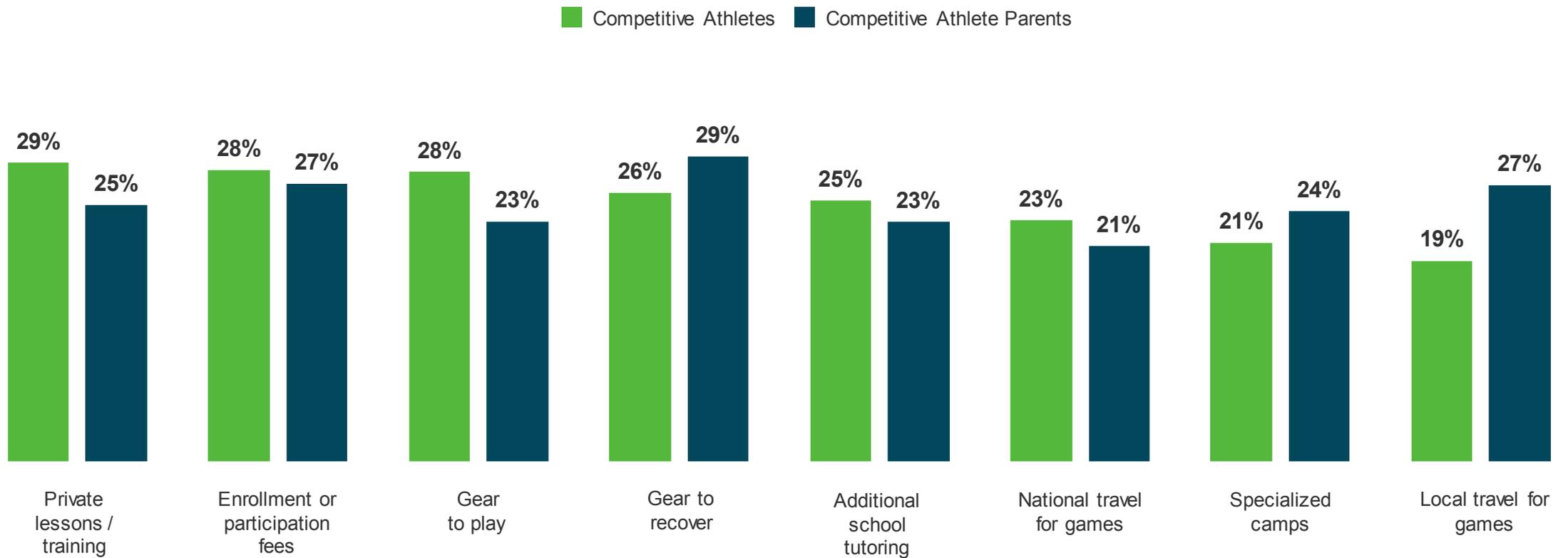
\$677

Competitive athlete parents

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%).

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?



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:

66%

Competitive athletes

84%

Competitive athlete parents

Average amount saved

\$1,241

Competitive athletes

\$992

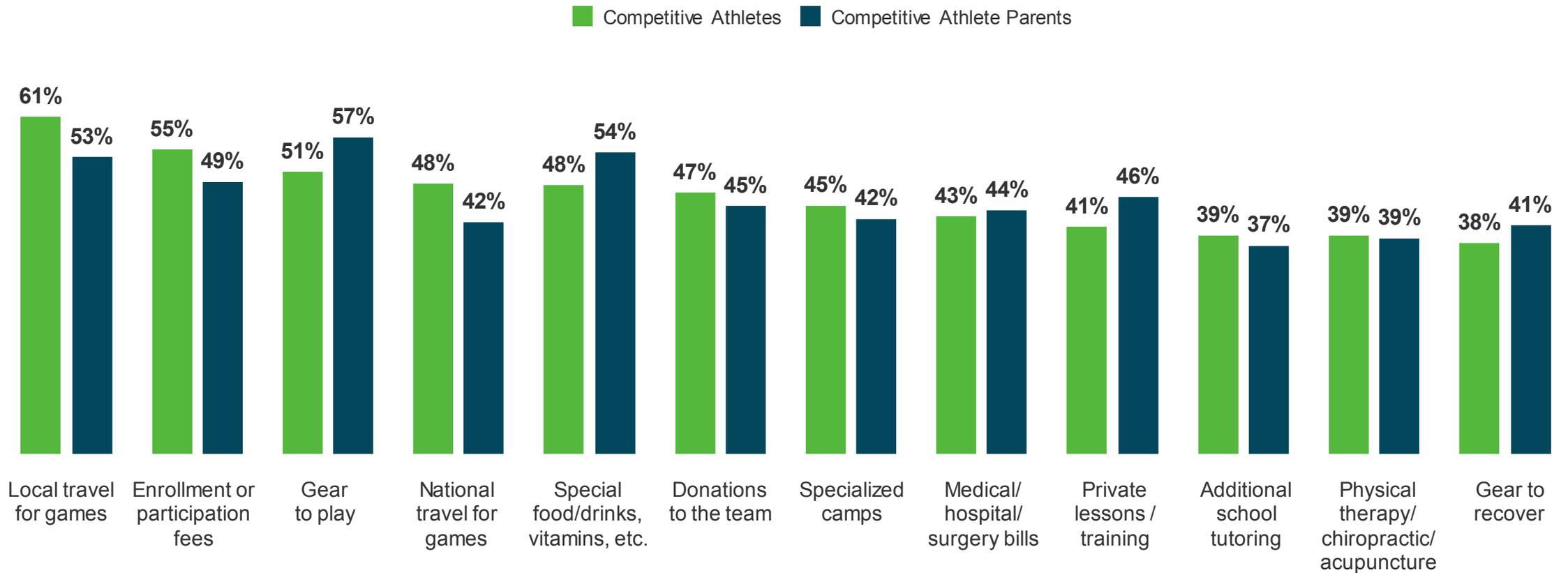
Competitive athlete parents

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.”

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?



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%)

81%

Believe sports teaches young people how to be leaders on and off the field.

70%

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

Field of (big) dreams

59% Hope to play their sport in college

45% Hope to play their sport professionally

32% Hope to go to the Olympics one day

51% Young Americans who live in big cities

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