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KIN 857 TERM PAPER

Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League

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Introduction

For many years the researchers (Larson, Hansen, Weiss, Gould, and many others) on positive youth development have been finding and presenting a strong evidence of positive benefits of sport and physical activities on youth development. Sports and physical activities enable youth to experience and achieve positive goals, positive self-image, make healthy lifestyle choices, teach them respect, commitment, teamwork, leadership.

“Organized sports are an important context for young people to build competence and successfully negotiate salient development task”. (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles & Lord, 2005)

Study by Dworkin, Larson and Hansen (2003) on 55 high school students found that:

1. Sport and other extracurricular activities were important personal growth experience arenas where psychological skills such as goal setting, time management and emotional control were learned.
2. New peer relationships were acquired, participants developed valuable connections to adults, learned how to take responsibility, and learned how to function as a team
3. These young people described themselves as agents, or active producers of their own development.

In another study by the same researchers in 2003 on 450 high school students:

1. Participants reported greater rates of learning experiences (e.g., identity development, initiative, physical skills, teamwork/social skills, interpersonal relationships, adult networks) in extracurricular activities versus comparison activities (academic classes and socializing with friends).
2. Sport participation was associated with higher rates for some learning experiences such as self-knowledge (e.g., learned what I am good at), emotional regulation (e.g., control temper or stress), and physical skills development.

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3. However, participation in sport was also associated with “negative” experiences like peer pressure and inappropriate adult behavior.

“While sport can be a powerful force for social intervention, its impacts are not automatically or inevitably positive.... Thus, sport is better understood as a tool for social outreach, a hook or instrument whose impact depends upon the ends toward which it is directed, how it is implanted, and the context in which it is deployed” (Hartmann, 2003).

“Life skills are taught, not caught from mere participation” (Hodge, 1988).

In order for young people involved in sport to gain the benefits of the participation we have to create environment that will support teaching of positive youth development. With this in mind I want to design and start youth volleyball league in Bullhead City, AZ, to promote positive youth development. The mission of Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League is to provide every child a chance to learn and play volleyball in a fun, safe and supervised environment. The emphasis will be on learning and participation and every child will be allowed to progress at his/her own pace. They will be encouraged to do their best within their abilities. With the emphasis on positive reinforcement, the program seeks to build confidence and self-esteem in each child.

I actually had this idea of starting a youth volleyball league since I moved to AZ three years ago from MI, and with the insight I gained from this course, help from the park and recreation department, schools, parents and other coaches in the area, I strongly believe, it can be done.



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Methods

Bullhead City is a city located on the Colorado River in Mohave County, Arizona, roughly 100 miles south of Las Vegas, Nevada. According to 2006 Census Bureau estimates, the population of the city is 40,225. The nearby communities of Laughlin, Needles, Fort Mohave, and Mohave Valley brings the Bullhead area's total population to about 75,000(Wikipedia). In older days it was mostly "snow-birds" place or retirement town, as starting in the fall tourist and retirees from colder states flock by thousands in their motor homes because of mild winters. As the place has grown in popularity as tourist destinations, so has the population as families with young kids have relocated to work and live year-around. However, this is still retirement place and the town doesn't offer too many activities for youths.

Schools. Bullhead City's Elementary schools and Junior High schools are operated by the Bullhead City Elementary School District. These schools include Sunrise Elementary School, Mountain View Elementary School, Coyote Canyon Elementary School, Desert Valley Elementary School, Diamondback Elementary School, Bullhead City Junior High School, and Fox Creek Junior High School. Bullhead City's high school Mohave High School and River Valley High School, are operated by the Colorado River Union High School District.

Additionally, Mohave Accelerated Elementary School and Mohave Accelerated Learning Center are public charter schools serving K-12 students in Bullhead City and the surrounding area.

Other schools in nearby communities include Young Scholars Academy, Mohave Valley Junior High, Camp Mohave Elementary, Fort Mohave Elementary, and Mohave Valley Elementary.

Students. There are 11 elementary schools in Bullhead City area with an average of about 300 students, and 3 junior high schools with an average of about 600 students. Junior high schools offer volleyball programs in the fall, while elementary schools do not offer any after school

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activities or programs.

Last spring I volunteered and ran volleyball clinic at Sunrise Elementary School where my kids go to school. The clinic was once a week for about three months and was just for 4th and 5th graders. The gym was packed with little volleyball players who wanted to learn the fundamentals of the sport and I had to ask a couple of teachers to help me due to so many students coming to the clinic.

Parks and Recreation Department. Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League will be organized with the help from the Park and Recreation Department. Like the rest of the community, due to the high number of retirees, they mostly organize activities for older folks.. Except softball, they do not offer any other leagues for youth sports and they are more than happy to help me in designing and running youth volleyball league. Last spring they ran adult's co-ed volleyball league for the first time and it was huge success and they think that youth volleyball league would be success too. They also believe that more youth leagues should be offered through park and recreation department as the community has changed with younger families moving in and youth volleyball league could be a good start.

Coaching staff and volunteers. Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League will be entirely fueled by volunteers. Even for those who never touched volleyball in their life, there are ways they can help. **Site Director** manages practice and game facilities and heads the site commission to insure proper organization and operation of the league within the framework of the Bullhead City Park and Recreation Department bylaws, guidelines and policies. Responsible for communicating with the main office and keeping them updated about the status of facilities. **Clinician** is responsible for teaching the proper fundamentals of volleyball and making sure the volunteer coaches working with each team are running the drills correctly. Previous volleyball experience is required for this position. **Head Coach** will run practice and games under the direction of the site clinician. He/she will be responsible for teaching technical skills and life skills. Coaching

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experience preferred but not necessary as coaching clinics and manuals will be provided.

Assistant Coach will help head coach with running practices and games under the direction of the site clinician. No experience needed as coaching clinics and manuals will be provided.

First-aid Administrator attends to injuries and any unsafe conditions on the playing area. This position requires current certification in basic first-aid training including CPR. **Registration**

assistant will assist site director with registration and check-in. Assists site director with distribution of player uniform t-shirts and volunteer shirts. **Scheduling administrator** will be responsible for coordinating the league, scheduling practices and games. **Team parent/parents** will help with the duties like chaperoning for better supervision or transportation coordination.

Each team will have at least one team parent.

Leagues and Teams. Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League will be offered to boys and girls ages 7-15. The teams will be arranged by ages: 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-15. Ages are defined according how old they are on February 1st of the present season. Most teams will consist of 8-10 players with 8 being minimum and 10 maximum of players per a team. Teams are randomly selected. There are no prior volleyball experiences necessary, however player may be moved up an age division. Depending on the numbers of boys and girls that sign-up the teams may be co-ed or girls/boys team only. Volleyball season is 8 weeks in length. The league starts on the week of February 6th and ends on the week of April 6th. Teams meet twice per week. One day is for practice while other day is for games. The first two weeks of the program, participants will practice on both of the days they meet. Practice days are during week, Monday through Thursday, from 5-8 pm. Practices will be one and ½ hour in length with younger divisions going from 5-6:30pm and older divisions from 6:30-7 pm. Game days will be on Saturday morning, early afternoon. All the practices and games will take place at Mohave High School new gym and depending on the numbers of the teams we might have to use old gym too. Each team will be guaranteed 6 games per season. Each player on the team receives a volleyball and jersey.

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Exact time of practices and games for each team will be determined after the sign-up period and two weeks before the start of the season. The coaches will be responsible for contacting the players and their parents for the first practice. The practices and games schedule for the rest of the season will be handed out at the first practice.

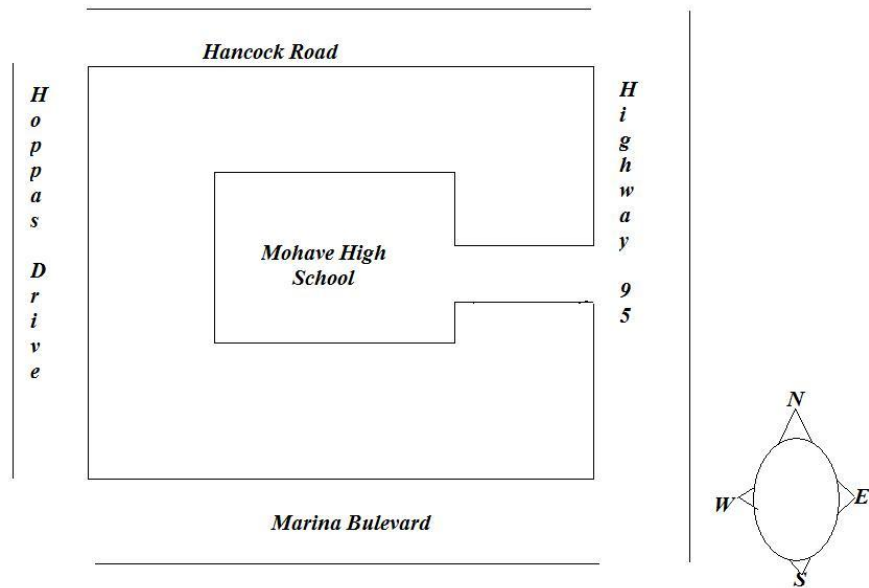
Site location. All the practices and games will take place at Mohave High School (see the map). The school is centrally located in the town and can accommodate more people than any other school. Coming from Fort Mohave head north on Highway 95 and Mohave High school is on the left. Coming from Kingman head south on Highway 95 and the school is on the right. There is a plenty of parking lots next to the gyms. There are two gyms, “new gym” with four volleyball courts available and bleachers to accommodate up to 2000 people. Next to the new gym is “old gym” with two volleyball courts available and bleachers to accommodate up to 1000 people. There are no conflicts with the availability of the gyms as high school spring sports are all outdoor-softball, baseball, and track and field.

Registration fee. Registration fee will be \$50. 00 for the first child, and \$40. 00 for the second child from the same family. The registration fee can be paid by cash or checks written to Bullhead City Park and Recreation Department. It will cover uniform tee, practice and games, site location use permit, volunteer uniforms, age-appropriate volleyball for each kid, referee’s fees, shipping and administrative costs.



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Map to Site



Mohave High School
2251 Highway 95
Bullhead City, AZ, 86442

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Estimated costs. Estimated cost for site location rent will be \$20.00 per hour with estimate cost for a season of \$2,720.00. Referee's fee per hour is \$15.00 with estimate cost for a season of \$1,800.00 for three referees. Costs for the volleyballs and uniforms may be about \$15.00 per a player and the estimate cost for the season depends on the number of players signed-up for the league. Miscellaneous expenses like shipping and administrative costs may be about \$1,500.00 per season. Estimated costs for entire season would be anywhere from 8-10 thousand dollars (Table 1.1).

Equipments and uniforms. Some of the equipments (nets, antennas, tables, and chairs) will be provided by the Mohave High School and will be included in the site rent. Volleyballs, flip-charts, score books, volunteer T-shirts, players' game shirts, and first-aid kits will be provided from the league organization. All the players have to provide their own tennis shoes, shorts and practice T-shirts. Knee-pads are recommended but not necessary.



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Table 1.1 Estimated Costs

Unit	Item	Price	Total
1	Site Rental	\$20/Hour	2,720.00
3	Referee's Fee	\$15/Hour	1,800.00
200	Volleyballs	\$7.50	1,500.00
200	Jerseys	\$7.50	1,500.00
1	Miscellaneous Expenses		1,500.00
1	Total Costs for Season		9,020.00

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Sign-ups. First week of spring semester, January 3-7, the flyers with information about the Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League, sign-up dates and forms will be distributed to the administrative offices at all schools. The school administration at each school agreed to hand them out to all kids at their school. First sign-up date will be on Saturday, January 8th, in the new gym at Mohave High School from 10am to 3pm. Second sign-up date will be on Saturday, January 15th, and will take place at the same site and time. If the players are interested in signing-up but not able to make it those two dates, they can go to the Bullhead City Park and Recreation Department on 2355 Trane Road, anytime during their regular business hours (8-4). There will be possibility of signing-up first week of practice based on the availability and the number of the players on each team. Parents and kids will receive different forms on the sign-up dates. Some of them will be filled out, signed and returned immediately and some of them will be for parents and kids to keep. Sign-up form with the personal information (address, phone number, and emergency contact), player medical registration, and code of conduct form will be returned. Each player/parent will also receive Parents/Players Handbook with information about the program, discipline and practice rules, travel rules, financial obligation, how to be supportive teammate/parent and etc.

Practices. The **FUN**damentals of volleyball will be taught at the practice. Serving, passing, setting, spiking and blocking drills will be practiced in a fun, safe, positive and supportive environment. Equally important, teaching of values, ethics, and sportsmanship will be incorporated in practices as well.

Volleyball Rules. The standard volleyball rules for the junior and high school leagues will be used with slight modification. We will use a ball that is regulation size, but lighter to allow kids more success. We use lower nets for lower divisions so kids can learn how to spike correctly. All divisions will use a continuous rotation of all players entering at the service position. This will be in place for the full length of the match and will give each player the same amount of playing

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time. Lower divisions will serve underhand and will be allowed to serve at a line 6-foot in from the regular service line. Older divisions may serve either underhand or overhand from the regular service line only. The games will be also modified and all divisions will play two 25-minutes games. To win at all cost may be the primary goal for professionals, but it is contrary to basic philosophy of positive youth development of Bullhead City Youth Volleyball Program. With this in mind, no individual or team record is kept. The league coordinator has the authority to institute new rules or change old rules to maintain continuity of the youth volleyball program. The league coordinator interpretation of the rules shall be final.

Meetings. Various meeting will be held prior, during and at the end of the season.

On December 17, at 12pm there will be organizational meeting at the Park and Recreation Department office to discuss the league. Following people will be at the meeting: David Heath-Recreational Manager, Ryan Fruhwirt-Recreational Supervisor, Coach Crabtree-Head Volleyball Coach at River Valley High School, Coach Buss-Head Volleyball Coach at Mohave High School, and myself, Zdenko Radic-Head Soccer Coach at Mohave High School, Head Volleyball Coach at Bullhead Junior High.

After two sign-up dates there will be meetings with volunteer coaches and another meeting with the volunteers who will help out with the other tasks. Coaches will receive coaches packet that will include all the relevant information and forms for the success of the league. They will receive the youth volleyball coaching manual that contains the philosophy of the Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League, coaches' code of ethics pledge (Table 2.1), modified volleyball rules for the league, volleyball practice drills and tips for running practices, first-aid guidelines, how to deal with parents, and behavior management policy. They will receive the roster and are responsible for calling each child/parent on the roster and inform them of the practice days and times and date and the time of Parent meeting. They also get volleyball for each child on the roster and T-shirts for themselves, their assistant coaches and team parents.

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Table 2.1

Coaches Code of Ethics

1. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of any personal desire to win.
2. I will remember to treat each player as an individual, remembering the large spread of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
3. I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
4. I promise to review and practice the necessary first-aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
5. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
6. I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.
7. I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
8. I will remember that I am a youth coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.

Signature

Date



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Parents meeting with the coaches will be held prior to the beginning of the season. Coaches will be in the charge of holding and running the meeting with a help of side instructors. During the meeting they will go over the Parents/Players Manual, practice rules, expectations from the coaches, safety issues and go over any other issues that coach, parent or player might have.

Half way through the season there will be scheduled meeting with the coaches and volunteers to address and talk about any issues we might have so far. However, any time during the season anybody can request a meeting if there is an issue that should be dealt with right away.

At the end of the season we will hold the separate meetings with coaches, volunteers, parents and kids, talk about the experience, what we liked and didn't like and suggestions to improve and make everybody's experience even better.

Coaches' clinic. Two weeks before the first practice there will be coaches' clinic at Mohave High School gym. Although, we will go over many issues related to the league, the main focus will be on teaching the fundamental skills of the game. Volleyball practice ideas and the key points for teaching each of the basic skills will be explained and demonstrated. The clinic will be conducted by the volleyball coaches from the high schools and me.

Evaluation. There will be two separate evaluation processes. First evaluation process will be conducted by coaches at the beginning and the end of the season. This evaluation process will compare the progress players made in learning fundamental skills. For example, how many good serves out of 10 attempts they can make at the beginning and at the end of the season. Second evaluation will be a survey (Table 3.1) handed out to the players and parents. Keeping in mind fun and participation as the primary goals of the league, the key questions to be asked will be:

1. Are kids having fun?
2. Is everyone getting to play?
3. Will they come back to play again?

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Table 3.1 Evaluation Survey

Question	Always	Most of time	Some-times	Never
Did you have fun?				
Did you have opportunities to learn volleyball skills?				
Did you ever feel the pressure from coach to win a game?				
Did you feel safe at practices and games?				
Were you respected and treated fairly?				
Did you feel challenged at practices and games?				
Was the playing time divided fairly?				
Did you feel good about yourself?				
Did you have a positive experience with league?				
Are you coming back next season? (circle one)	yes	no		

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Discussion

Bullhead City's population is rapidly changing from the retirement town to the place to move in and live all year around. In last 10 years 5 new elementary schools and one junior high school were built to accommodate the students that moved in from other parts of USA. However, the schools and community itself did not keep up with after school activities and sports as not so many sports are offered to the youth. This is my third year here as PE Teacher and Soccer/Volleyball Coach and have been actively involved in youth sports from very first day. From my experience and talking to the kids I strongly believe that more youth leagues should be organized for community youth. Last spring for the volleyball clinic at Sunrise Elementary School I had about 50 kids showing up, and there are 11 elementary schools and 3 junior high schools in the community.

Delinquent behavior is a big problem in this area. Research supports the claim that youth who play sports are less likely than the youth who don't play any sports, to engage in delinquent behavior. Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League gives those kids an opportunity to play organized sport and stay out of trouble.

High schools have excellent volleyball coaches and teachers who are willing to help with the program as it will benefit them too. Last spring during the adult co-ed volleyball league I met the manager and supervisors from the park and recreation who realized that more youth leagues are needed here. I also met some excellent volleyball players who work as the teachers in the school districts and expressed interest in helping with the program.

Mohave High School is the best site for the league as it is located in the middle of the town and it takes only short drive (15 minutes) from any side of the town to the school. In the spring the gyms are not being used for any high school sports and there will not be any conflicts. Also, in the spring there are no other sports except AYSO travel teams for the small group of children.

I put estimated costs around 10 thousand dollars and registration fee 50 dollars. With more than

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3 thousand students in schools I think it is realistic to expect at least 200 kids to sign up.

“Most of the motivations children have for participating in sport (i.e. having fun, learning new skills, doing something one is good at, being with friends, making new friends, fitness, exercise, and to experience success) are intrinsic in nature. Winning clearly is neither the only nor the most common reason for participation” (Weinberg, Gould). Children love to compete and love challenges, but their motivations are intrinsic. Practices will be organized with the emphasis on fun and participation. There will not be records kept for the games and emphasis will be again on fun, participation, teamwork and sportsmanship. “Teach young athletes to view success as exceeding their own goals, not merely as winning contest” (Weinberg, Gould, pg. 459).

To assure that every child gets equal amount of playing time, continuous rotation at the server’s position will take place. Coaches often “forgot” that they are youth coaches and that the game is for children and not adults. They might keep their best team on the court in order to win some more games. This emphasizes outcome over participation and hinders player’s individual skills and self-esteem. With the continuous rotation we will avoid that situation.

Site instructors will be at every practice and game to assure that a positive approach to coaching takes place. Practice will be structured to meet the needs (fun, learn new skills, exercise and fitness) of young athletes.

I believe that successful season shouldn’t be measured with win-loss record but should be measured by comparing the beginning with the end of the season. Did the children improve their skills and achieved their goals is more important than beating others. Another way to evaluate successful season is answering key questions about fun, playing time and coming back next season. If the answer on these questions is yes, and kids’ needs have been met, I believe that we are having successful season.

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Conclusion

“Fifty year from now it will not matter what kind of car you drove, what kind of house you lived in, how much you had in your bank account, or what your clothes looked like. But the world may be a little bit better because you were important in the life of a child” (Anonymous).

This saying summarizes my goal with the Bullhead City Youth Volleyball League. I believe that the program can be carried out and can make a difference in child’s life. Sport participation can have a positive and negative experience as well. For positive experience to take place we have to create environment that will support teaching of positive youth development. In designing the volleyball youth league I put emphasis on fun, participation and intrinsic rewards to achieve the goal of making a difference in child’s life. There is definitely a need in this area for the youth sport programs and I believe that we adults have means to fulfill that need.



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