



## **Perspectives from Parents of Former Participants in a Sport-Based Positive Youth Development Program: Long-Term Life Skills Transfer**

**Travis R. Scheadler**

*The Ohio State University*

**Samantha Bates**

*The Ohio State University*

**Dawn Anderson-Butcher**

*The Ohio State University*

---

*There is growing evidence to support the value of sport-based positive youth development (PYD) programs in promoting holistic health and development of youth (Anderson-Butcher, 2019). However, few studies expand beyond participant self-report to examine whether life skills learned in sport-based PYD programs transfer beyond adolescence into adulthood. This qualitative study examined life skill transfer from the lens of 19 parents and caregivers by exploring perceptions of how former participants (e.g., their once adolescent and now adult children) applied and transferred a subset of specific life skills into other areas of their lives. Semi-structured interviews and thematic content analyses were conducted to identify emergent themes regarding examples and facilitators of life skill transfer. Parents described multiple ways their children applied life skills that were learned and/or reinforced while participating in a sport-based PYD program to work, school, and church, as well as when developing relationships, volunteering, and engaging in advocacy. Facilitators of life skill transfer also included exposure to new and diverse peers, opportunities to try new things, relationships with program staff, program incentives/reinforcements, opportunities for long-term engagement and retention, and parental involvement. Findings support the role of sport-based PYD in promoting long-term outcomes among youth as they grow and develop into adulthood.*

*Keywords: life skills development, life skills transfer, sport-based positive youth development*

Positive youth development (PYD) involves a variety of youth-centered strategies (e.g., engaging in skill-building, fostering positive relationships, promoting youth voice and choice) to boost protective factors and minimize risk factors and problem behaviors among youth (e.g., Eccles & Gootman, 2002). PYD programs aim to promote the successful transfer of life skills and key social competencies (e.g., referred to as life skills transfer) from the program to other contexts outside the program (e.g., home, school, relationships) (e.g., Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Importantly, the goal of life skills transfer, defined as the process where a youth “internalizes a personal asset in [one context] and then experiences personal change through the application of the asset in one or more life domains” (Pierce et al., 2017, p. 194) is to achieve sustainable outcomes. The goal of these PYD programs is to teach life skills that can be transferred to other contexts and sustained throughout the lifespan.

One context well-suited to foster PYD and contribute to successful life skills transfer is sport (e.g., Newman, 2020). Among socially vulnerable and historically marginalized populations, sport can serve as a protective factor for strengthening moral development, solidifying one’s personal values and goals, teaching life skills, and supporting long-term health and development (Hermens et al., 2017). When intentionally leveraged within a sport-based PYD program framework, sport can act as an intervention to enhance young people’s assets and skills, counteract multiple systems of oppression affecting youth and their families, and enhance empowerment strategies they use, in tandem with skills learned in programming, to address inequities in their communities (Anderson-Butcher, 2019; Bates & O’Quinn, 2023). Further, from a critical PYD perspective, life skills can be used to support social justice (Camiré et al., 2022). For example, advocacy and activism efforts are considered important life skills that promote social justice and can be taught through sport-based critical PYD (Camiré et al., 2022).

Scholars have documented evidence of successful life skills transfer from sport-based PYD into schools, homes, church, video games, and other sports (Newman, 2020; Newman & Anderson-Butcher, 2021). Pierce et al. (2022) found youth practice self-control at school by remaining calm to focus on academic success and by avoiding problematic confrontations (e.g., potential fights). Moreover, access to sport-based PYD programs and long-term retention also can address structural inequities and promote social justice, especially for youth in underserved and historically marginalized communities (Bates & O’Quinn, 2023).

However, few studies capture the perspectives of parents or caregivers when assessing to what extent youth learn, apply, and transfer life skills learned through sport-based PYD programs into their adult lives. Parents/caregivers, hereafter referred to as *parents*, are uniquely situated to act as observers of life skills transfer after their children participate in sport-based PYD programming. Parents can witness their child’s development before, during, and after participation in sport-based PYD programs and can, therefore, act as unique sources of data.

McSweeney (2021) and Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) examined parent perspectives of youth associated with participation in two different PYD programs. These two

programs were effective at enhancing life skills among youth and that children's participation influenced parents. However, the authors focused on short-term outcomes (e.g., several months post-participation) rather than long-term outcomes related to life skills transfer into adulthood.

Notably, Kendellen and Camiré (2019) also interviewed parents, partners, and work colleagues of athletes. Results showed that decision-making, appraisal, and adaptation of a new context are important for life skills transfer. However, this study focused on university intramural athletes. As a result, more research is needed to contextualize investments in sport-based PYD programs. More research also is needed to develop a stronger understanding of life skills transfer into adulthood and to identify the factors that influence life skills transfer. The present study sought to examine the influence of a sport-based PYD program in promoting life skills transfer from the perspective of parents whose children participated in a program during adolescence and are now in young adulthood.

### **Life Skills Transfer**

In the last decade, scholars in sport-based PYD have examined life skills transfer using a model postulated by Pierce and colleagues (2017). The model of life skills transfer emphasizes the roles of the individual learner as well as the learning and transfer contexts. Generally, the model states the individual learner (i.e., youth camper in the PYD program) develops life skills in the learning context (i.e., sport-based PYD program) and applies these life skills to the transfer context (e.g., school, work).

Personal factors, such as previous knowledge and motivation, and contextual factors, such as lived experiences, parents, and program staff, interact to affect the likelihood that a given skill (e.g., emotional regulation) is successfully applied to various transfer contexts (Pierce et al., 2017). To successfully transfer skills, scholars state the learner must recognize the importance of life skills and have the capabilities and interests to integrate them as new personal factors (Pierce et al., 2017). Meanwhile, learners also must be able to identify similarities between the learning and transfer contexts so they may successfully apply learned skills (Pierce et al., 2017).

Several studies document evidence of the life skills transfer model and successful strategies and factors that promote life skills transfer. Newman (2020) and McDonough et al. (2017) interviewed youth who described numerous ways they transferred life skills from a sport-based PYD program to other social settings. Youth mentioned transferring self-control, effort, grit, personal responsibility, communication, teamwork, respect, and social responsibility to school, home, other sport settings, video games, church, with friends, and out in public (Newman, 2020). Pierce et al. (2022) also found youth successfully transferred self-control from *LiFEsports* to school to avoid problems (e.g., abstain from engaging in fights with peers) and achieve success (e.g., maintain focus and stay quiet during tests). In relation to strategies and factors that promote skill transfer, scholars found conscious reflection, autonomy, confidence to use the skill, and perceived importance of the skill can promote life skills transfer (Kendellen & Camiré, 2019; Pierce et al., 2022). Further, strategies such as intentionally emphasizing life skills

transfer in curriculum and implementation efforts (Newman et al., 2021), providing a safe space to practice life skills (McSweeney, 2021; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012), role modeling the skills, and providing constructive feedback are influential as well (Anderson-Butcher, 2019; Bean et al., 2022; McDonough et al., 2013; Newman et al., 2018).

Caring relationships also play a role in facilitating successful life skills transfer. Positive relationships with staff and peers, as well as a sense of belongingness, were shown to improve life skills development and transfer (McDonough et al., 2013; Newman et al., 2020; Riley et al., 2017). Program staff can promote life skills transfer by building relationships with youth, engaging them in meaningful experiences, and facilitating a sense of belongingness within a mastery climate (Riley et al., 2017). Bean et al. (2018) similarly argued adults can promote life skills transfer by fostering a positive environment and by discussing and practicing life skills in various contexts with youth. Beyond staff, support from peers, friends, and siblings also can enhance life skills development and transfer (Newman & Anderson-Butcher, 2021). Considered together, internal and external programmatic factors influence life skills transfer in the short-term. However, missing from these studies is an examination of life skills development and transfer from the lens of parents and perspectives captured after youth participate in the program and transition into adulthood. Indeed, a primary aim of PYD programs is to promote long-term healthy social development (Eccles & Gootman, 2002), yet most research has been situated within a narrow timeframe post-participation (e.g., Newman, 2020; McDonough et al., 2017; Pierce et al., 2022). Researchers must examine the application of life skills beyond youth and into young adulthood to learn more about how sport-based PYD programs can result in sustainable long-term changes. Such knowledge can provide insight into how participation in sport-based PYD programs influences the healthy social development of young people. Parents can provide unique perspectives on the influence of sport-based PYD programs.

### **Parent Roles and Benefits**

Parents can be sources of support to facilitate life skills transfer through sport (Kendellen & Camiré, 2019). Parents who provide warmth and clear and consistent expectations, are actively involved in youth's lives, and emphasize effort and personal growth, promote life skills development and transfer among their children (Dorsch et al., 2015; Knight et al., 2016). For instance, during car rides and meals, parents can promote life skills development and transfer by having conversations with their children about the lessons learned in school, sport, or PYD programs (Dorsch et al., 2015; Newman & Anderson-Butcher, 2021).

The need for life skills to combat environmental stressors is especially important for families experiencing the effects of poverty (Hermens et al., 201&). Parents can benefit from their children learning these skills in PYD programs. For example, Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) found sport-based PYD programs improved parent-child communication and parent affect, and in some cases, socially vulnerable parents adopted the prosocial norms and behaviors learned by their children.

Existing studies on life skills transfer using parent perspectives primarily explore parent roles and experiences during the time periods directly after their children participate in sport-based PYD programming and not those beyond adolescence and into adulthood (McSweeney, 2021; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Therein, the scope of existing research supports the role of sport-based PYD in promoting life skills transfer up to one-year post participation (i.e., Pierce et al., 2022; Newman & Anderson-Butcher, 2021). Nevertheless, understanding the role of sport-based PYD programs and associated long-term (i.e., more than one year later) life skills transfer remains an emerging research priority to advance this body of work (Newman, 2020; Pierce et al., 2017). Indeed, an examination of long-term life skill transfer will provide insight into the possible roles of sport-based PYD programs on the sustainability of healthy social development, an important goal of PYD programs (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). In addition, interviewing parents of young adults who formerly participated in a sport-based PYD program can be helpful toward providing a unique perspective of life skills transfer. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore parent perspectives of life skills transfer and factors that influence life skills transfer among former sport-based PYD program participants. (i.e., their former adolescent children who are now in early adulthood).

## Methods

### Positionality

The present study is grounded in ontological relativity. Specifically, ontological relativists believe reality and truth are subjective and multiple realities coexist simultaneously (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Indeed, cultural, historical, and other factors unique to individuals and communities should be considered when examining their experiences and truths (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Epistemologically, this study is guided by subjectivism, which suggests one reality is not possible (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). As such, the goal of this study was to develop a stronger understanding of the experiences of life skills transfer as well as the factors that promote healthy social development.

Moreover, a constructivist paradigm was adopted in the present study. We understand each parent and child have their own unique experiences and we play important roles in co-constructing knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Both parents and their children who formerly participated in *LiFEsports*, a sport-based PYD program described below, can provide different insights into how life skills have been transferred from *LiFEsports* to other contexts as young adults. In addition, the researchers directly impacted the study. The first author previously held an internship with *LiFEsports* where they worked with youth in learning and practicing life skills. The second and third authors continue to work with youth, parents, and staff in *LiFEsports* in multiple ways (e.g., leading staff training, teaching youth life skills).

The research team also has shared training and background in social work, holding values related to social justice and empowerment. Our direct experience in and knowledge of *LiFEsports* and social work directly informed our study questions, design, and analysis. These

shared backgrounds likely influenced what questions we asked of participants and how we interpreted the data. Other researchers may have asked different questions or may have emphasized examining certain factors of *LiFEsports* and/or other life skills that are implicit in the *LiFEsports* curriculum. Even though our positionality more than likely biased our study, our shared backgrounds in *LiFEsports* promoted rapport with participants. The interviewer easily connected with participants through their similar backgrounds in *LiFEsports*. Training in social work also allowed the researchers to be patient with participants, encourage discussion, and foster safety and inclusivity during the interviews.

## Context

The present study focused on parents of young adults who formerly participated in *LiFEsports* a sport-based PYD program for youth from socially vulnerable circumstances aged 9-14 years of age ([www.lifesports.osu.edu](http://www.lifesports.osu.edu)). The program integrates life skills and sport throughout a free 4-week summer camp, focusing intentionally on four key skills, including Self-Control, Effort, Teamwork, and Social Responsibility (S.E.T.S.). Youth attend the summer camp Monday through Friday from approximately 8 am to 3 pm each day. At *LiFEsports*, youth engage in a play-based, experiential social skill curriculum (called *Chalk Talk*) that focuses on learning and transferring S.E.T.S. to other settings beyond sport.

Youth participants also receive direct technical and tactical instruction in eight sports (e.g., soccer, football, lacrosse, volleyball). Throughout their engagement in the program, youth have opportunities to reflect on their S.E.T.S. learning and application, as well as are encouraged to apply their newly learned social skills in other social settings (i.e., home, school, recess). Additionally, youth receive positive behavioral incentives in the form of S.E.T.S. pins. Through this token economy system, coaches reward youth with pins when they observe them demonstrating S.E.T.S. at the program.

Youth also have opportunities to compete in the *LiFEsports* Games, a culminating event where they have opportunities to showcase their newly learned sport and life skills. Once the 4-week program ends, youth participate in follow-up sports clinics or “booster sessions,” where they continue to refine and apply their sport and social skills. Approximately one booster session is offered per month between September and April. However, data related to who attends these sessions and how often they attend these sessions were not collected for this study.

Parents are invited to attend the *LiFEsports* Games and the booster sessions to cheer on their children as they demonstrate life skills and participate in sports. Parents are also provided with information about *LiFEsports* during parent orientations sessions prior to the start of the summer camp. Administrative staff are also available throughout the duration of the camp to address questions and concerns from parents, as applicable.

To date, approximately 800 youth from socially vulnerable circumstances participate in *LiFEsports* annually. Importantly, approximately 30-40% of youth return to the program each

year, so participants may attend the program for multiple years. After participating in *LiFEsports* and transitioning to high school, youth also become eligible for the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA), another PYD program focused on developing further life skills and getting past *LiFEsports'* participants prepared for college and career. Although YLA is not sport-based, YLA does include sport components. For example, youth leaders in YLA serve as mentors for youth during the *LiFEsports* summer camp. Please note youth are only eligible to participate in YLA if they have previously participated in the *LiFEsports* summer camp. Notably, though, the focus of the present study was on *LiFEsports* and not YLA, yet experiences within YLA could not be ignored. Indeed, many of the participants in the present study had children who were members of YLA. The participants recognized YLA as an extension of *LiFEsports* and, therefore, discussed the influence of both *LiFEsports* and YLA on their children throughout the interviews.

## Participants

For the current study, parents with at least one child who was 18 years of age or older and previously participated in the *LiFEsports* summer camp for at least one year between 2010 and 2017 were eligible to participate in this study. Parents of former or current *LiFEsports* summer campers below the age of 18 were excluded as this study aimed to explore life skills transfer among young adults who previously participated in *LiFEsports*. Participants ( $N = 19$ ) included 17 cisgender women and two cisgender men (e.g., pseudonyms Scott and Brandon) who were parents of children who previously participated in *LiFEsports*. All participants identified as Black/African American; one participant (Annalise) self-identified as Black/African American, Asian/Asian American, Latina/Hispanic American, and White. All parents were between 37 and 60 years old ( $M_{age} = 47.2$ ). In addition, 11 of the parents in the present study had at least one child who also participated in YLA whereas eight parents did not have at least one child who also participated in YLA. Further, at the time of the interviews, the participants' children were between 4 and 10 years removed from *LiFEsports* ( $M = 7.89$  years).

## Procedures

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval for the present study, parents and caregivers of child(ren) who were in the *LiFEsports* summer camp between 2010 and 2017 were invited to participate in the study. Specifically, a list of 2,102 former campers included parents' contact information. Among these former campers, 1,393 either did not have a valid email address for their parent(s) listed or included the same email address as another former camper. The remaining 709 contacts were sent an email with information about the study and were told to contact the lead researcher if they had interest in participating. After expressing interest in participating, parents completed an online consent form and a brief demographic questionnaire.

Participants then completed semi-structured interviews via Zoom between March 2021 and March 2022. The interview guide was developed based on the curriculum and goals of *LiFEsports*. Additionally, two staff members in *LiFEsports* were consulted for feedback throughout the development of the interview guide. To start the interviews, participants were

asked to generally share what they remember about *LiFEsports* and then were asked what they remember about the life skills that *LiFEsports* teaches and reinforces. After participants shared what they remember about *LiFEsports*, the interviewer then highlighted the four key life skills *LiFEsports* focused on and provided definitions and additional information upon request. Reminding participants about S.E.T.S. was important to improve memory recall, especially given their children participated in *LiFEsports* approximately 4-10 years prior to the interviews.

Then, participants were asked about each life skill within S.E.T.S. More specifically, participants were asked about how their child(ren) used that skill shortly after participating in *LiFEsports* (e.g., “How did (name of child) use self-control shortly after participating in *LiFEsports*?”), how they have used that skill more recently (e.g., “How have they used effort more recently?”), how they believe *LiFEsports* influenced their current use of that skill (e.g., “What about *LiFEsports* do you think affected their teamwork today?”), and what else they believe impacted their child’s use of that skill (e.g., “What else or who else do you think has affected their social responsibility?”). Following the series of questions about S.E.T.S., participants were asked about other ways *LiFEsports* may have influenced them and their child(ren) (e.g., “How do you think *LiFEsports* has impacted you and your family?”). Notably, participants were not asked explicitly about life skills transfer; rather they were asked about the concept of life skills transfer (examples of applying S.E.T.S. to other contexts and how *LiFEsports* influenced the application of S.E.T.S. to other contexts). This was done in effort to simplify language and foster relatedness during the interview process.

On average, interviews lasted 53 minutes and 14 seconds with a range of between 37 minutes and 14 seconds to 1 hour, 17 minutes, and 9 seconds. Participants received a \$25 e-gift card to thank them for their time. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and imported into NVivo 12 for data analysis. Data were collected until thematic saturation was reached at 17 interviews. Specifically, data were collected until no new information or discrepancies were uncovered and when interviewees began repeating similar experiences to the point of redundancy. An additional two interviews were conducted and confirmed saturation had been met.

## Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used as a guide to data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved six steps. In the first step, the coder became familiar with the raw data by reading and re-reading the transcripts. Afterward, data were coded both deductively and inductively. More specifically, codes were first placed into a priori categories (e.g., self-control, effort, teamwork, social responsibility, facilitators, parental benefits) corresponding with the study's aims, the curriculum of *LiFEsports*, and the interview guide that was developed in conjunction with the research team and staff from *LiFEsports*. Data were then coded inductively within these theme areas, allowing the researcher to maintain an open mind when interpreting participants’ experiences related to each category. After coding was completed, each theme was reviewed by returning to the data to ensure the themes accurately represented the participants’ voices. Once

themes were reviewed, they were assigned names and defined. Finally, themes were organized, and exemplary quotes were selected to reflect the findings.

### **Trustworthiness**

Several strategies were employed to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study. First, the research team, which consisted of an intern with LiFEsports and two lead researchers with LiFEsports, reviewed the literature in sport-based PYD and consulted with staff in LiFEsports to conceptualize the study and ensure the aims were appropriate. Staff were also consulted throughout the development of the interview guide, as mentioned previously. In addition, the authors recorded their reflections in memos after each interview, which were used to help understand the data throughout the analysis. For instance, memoing helped the researchers identify similarities between participants' experiences and relationships between codes prior to conducting the data analysis. The process of memoing also facilitated communication between researchers and ensured consistency throughout the data collection and analysis processes. That is, writing memos served as reminders to discuss interesting quotes and early findings. Memos also were referred to ensuring the coding and themeing of the data corresponded to what was written in the memos.

Peer feedback was obtained through scheduled consultations with the research team, which consisted of three individuals trained and licensed in social work (Padgett, 2016). The research team met biweekly to examine the codes, themes, and quotes to check for misinterpretations and/or gaps in the data. To check for misinterpretations, the research team would discuss the plausibility of alternative explanations for the quotes from the participants. The research team also raised questions amongst each other about areas that need further exploration with additional interviews. The interviewer utilized these discussions to carefully identify follow-up questions to achieve a more in-depth understanding during the interviews with participants.

All participants were then invited to engage in member reflections as an attempt to address possible misconceptions and provide additional insight into the experiences of the participants (Smith & McGannon, 2018). Three participants agreed to meet with the research team to engage in member reflections. They agreed with the researchers' interpretations of their experiences and stated they have no additional information to share (Padgett, 2016; Smith & McGannon, 2018). Combined, these strategies helped to strengthen interpretations of the data.

### **Results**

Three primary themes emerged through our inductive data analysis strategy, including (a) *Protective Factors Associated with Program Participation*, (b) *Facilitators of Life Skills Transfer*, and (c) *Examples of Life Skills Transfer*. These themes and their respective subthemes, along with exemplar quotes from the parent participants, are shared below.

### Protective Factors Associated with Program Participation

Parents mentioned several protective factors associated with their child's participation during the interviews that are important to note within the literature on sport-based PYD programs. These protective factors are particularly important to mention in the context of the present study because parents believed they created a safe, inclusive, and accessible environment conducive to developing and practicing life skills, an important precursor to life skills transfer.

Parents described the benefit of financial relief, especially given the program was free and provided breakfast, supervision, and transportation. Unique, for example, shared:

The fact that *LiFEsports* is free and it has all of these other elements kind of added into it. What it did for us is allow us to save money and use that and reinvest it into our kids, so whether that was, hey, this one needs a tutor or that one needs braces, or we have to pay for these unexpected medical costs, or it's even something as simple as my kid wants to play football and our school district is pay to play... [*LiFEsports*] allows parents who are raising kids to save money for other things, whether it's putting food on the table and electric bill, getting medicine, or paying fees for band, football equipment, or college applications. It's expensive raising children. It's a blessing to have [*LiFEsports*] in our city.

Parents also mentioned how the program gave them a sense of relief, as they didn't worry so much about their children. They described how *LiFEsports* gave their children something to do over the summer, kept them "out of the streets," and served to connect their child with peers in prosocial ways. Faith, for instance, explained *LiFEsports* afforded her child the opportunity to develop positive relationships with peers around the city, allowing them to safely navigate different neighborhoods when they were in high school and now as a young adult. She said:

I don't worry about my children becoming statistics of gun violence because somebody recognizes them. "Hey, you can't hurt that kid. That's my friend from *LiFEsports*." You know, I think that it gives a greater sense of belonging to the community.

She continued, recalling a time when another former camper recognized her son from when they participated in *LiFEsports* as campers together. She suggested experiences like this help give her peace of mind and ensure that her children will not be involved in gun violence. Faith said:

It was just like, oh my God. The kid remembered [my son] from *LiFEsports*... When my kids are out on the north side or the south side, I don't fear for them because I know somebody knows them being able to draw these children from all four corners of the city and them to interact with each other. Well you don't kill your friend. You know, you don't kill your teammate, and kids today they don't call each other brother or they don't call each other friends. They're bro... Well, you don't kill your brother, and so having a sense of community, it's going to take our young people to change that.

© 2025 Schedler et al.. Distributed under [CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 license](#).

SSWJ 7(1). Find Issues at [OpenJournals.bsu.edu/SportSocialWorkJournal](https://openjournals.bsu.edu/SportSocialWorkJournal) and [SSWJ.org](https://sswj.org).  
<https://doi.org/10.33043/56gf885dd>

That is, participants believed LiFEsports created a safe environment and provided youth with a community, allowing them to focus on life skills development and transfer rather than on other risks they might be exposed to throughout society such as gun violence, substance abuse, and lack of food.

### **Facilitators of Life Skills Transfer**

Parents reported on important facilitators of their child's life skills transfer post-program participation while reflecting on their children's behaviors in adulthood, including exposure to new and diverse peers, opportunities to try new things, relationships with program staff, receipt of program incentives/reinforcements, opportunities for long-term engagement and retention, and parental involvement.

#### ***Exposure to New and Diverse Peers***

Facilitators often referenced specific strategies used within the LiFEsports program. For instance, 18 participants mentioned the focus on belonging and engagement of youth from different socioeconomic and racial backgrounds living in different parts of the city allowed campers to meet new people and develop life-long relationships. Parents said putting their kids in teams with diverse groups of peers and staff taught their children how to engage in teamwork and act more socially responsible. Domino, for example, said:

She didn't have that much diversity in the schools that she was going through and things like that. And so, she wasn't exposed to a diverse group of people until LiFEsports, and I think having that exposure to that diverse group of people and their interaction with her being positive gave her the foundation to just basically understand that people are people.

Ebony expanded upon this, tying exposure to diversity from LiFEsports to S.E.T.S. She said:

I think just being around different people from different sides of town and see it just made you look at people's situations different and I realized that, even though this person may act a certain way doesn't mean that they're a bad person. You know, when I grew up, if you are gay, that meant that you were weak, and she could see them in LiFEsports for like a week or so. I think those different areas and meeting different people allowed her to be more socially responsible about how she acts.

In addition, inclusion within a diverse group of people helped boost S.E.T.S. by making campers feel more welcomed. Specifically, Black youth were no longer outliers to others when they were at camp. Ava shared:

A lot of times in the camps that they went to they were the only Black kids most of the time, and so, if [my daughter's] hair was braided, it would be like this big thing and not a

bad thing. I mean the kids never had any problems with any of the kids at the camps they went to...It was like a big deal to come to camp with their hair braided and, if [my son] came, he has these little sponge things, so his hair's funny, like not dreads or locks but just kind of different and that they stand out in other camps and they go to LiFEsports camp, and that's nothing. It's like they might get a compliment actually on their hair as opposed to "Ew, what did you do?" or "You should comb that out."

### ***Opportunities to Try New Things***

Sixteen parents also described the importance of exposure to new experiences. For example, being exposed to college encouraged campers to start considering college and improved attitudes toward The Ohio State University. Additionally, playing lacrosse was new for many youths. For Ebony's daughter, learning lacrosse at LiFEsports led to other opportunities. That is, her daughter enjoyed the exposure to lacrosse so much that she continued playing the sport, which led to increased opportunities to receive a college education. She said, "She ended up getting a partial scholarship to go play lacrosse...She went to [a different school], which that's where she truly wanted to go and play lacrosse." Also, when asked how LiFEsports influenced her child, Faith shared:

[Through LiFEsports], he learned that I can try things that I don't necessarily think I like and find out that I'm actually good at them, so it made him really open to try foreign things or being willing to say, "okay I'm not familiar with that, but at least I'll try it." He's really not uncomfortable with anything. There's nothing that he won't try.

These new experiences provided their children with new transfer contexts and promoted greater effort, facilitating the ease of life skills transfer from the learning context to other contexts.

### ***Relationships with Program Staff***

Other factors that promoted life skills transfer, according to the participants, included positive and authentic support from staff. Thirteen participants highlighted the importance of staff support toward life skills transfer. Not only did staff provide encouragement and mentorship toward youth, but staff also maintained their relationships with campers as they developed into young adults. Staff members often served as mentors for former campers even as they aged out of LiFEsports. More specifically, staff members continued to stay in contact with former campers via text messages, informal meetings, and other programming opportunities (e.g., YLA). When asked how LiFEsports has influenced his son's use of S.E.T.S., Scott described some of the ways staff engaged with his son:

They were still reaching out to the kids during this pandemic...They were still wanting to interact with these kids because this pandemic was kind of hard and my kids kind of missed, like last year, not being able to go to be around each...Seeing those email messages and text messages coming from their coaches like, okay, people still believe in

me. That I think is great for the community, knowing that there's someone that's still there, regardless, that someone's still looking out for you and wants the best [for you].

That is, Scott implied that support from staff encouraged former campers to continue to use S.E.T.S. Indeed, staff checked in with former campers and explicitly reminded them about the importance of S.E.T.S. throughout life.

### ***Program Incentives/Reinforcements***

S.E.T.S. pins, which are tangible incentives for successfully applying one of the four key life skills taught in the program, also encouraged youth to practice social skills, and helped youth and parents remember the skills. Most parents talked about these program design features relative to when their child was in the program. However, the pins also sparked conversations between youth and their parents which in turn facilitated transfer at home and over years. Unique explained:

I remember the kids being really excited and proud when they had earned one and then, for me as a parent, even though I couldn't remember them now, I would look at whichever one they had earned for that particular day and, to me, it means that they did something well and that there was some sort of excitement around them earning those particular buttons and then I also remember it as a reminder to kind of give them kudos like "oh, look you did that. That's good and you worked really hard," and it helps spur conversation about their day and what they did during the day. "What did you do to earn that?" And so, it helped kind of us strengthen our bond between our sons and us as parents and gave them an opportunity to brag a little bit about themselves and be proud about something that they have worked hard on.

In addition, some parents tried making their expectations clear by discussing S.E.T.S.

with their children and hanging up LiFEsports memorabilia around the house. Annalise, for example, still has a LiFEsports lanyard with S.E.T.S. hanging up at home. The parents' buy-in to the program goals and reinforcing S.E.T.S. learning and application outside of the program were important transfer facilitators and were initiated by providing program memorabilia and other incentives. According to these participants, providing more opportunities for parents may help children experience more benefits from engaging in LiFEsports. They also might further engage parents as facilitators of life skills transfer at home and post-program participation.

### ***Opportunities for Long-Term Engagement and Retention***

Participation in YLA further boosted life skills transfer by providing young people with additional opportunities to refine and practice social skills in safe settings. Participants saw YLA as an extension of LiFEsports, which is understandable given youth must have participated in LiFEsports to be eligible for participation in YLA, as described above. Even when not prompted to discuss YLA, parents chose to describe the influence of the leadership program on their

children. In other words, parents in this study argued YLA is a useful component of LiFEsports that promotes life skills transfer.

According to the participants, retention through long-term participation in the YLA was especially helpful with transferring social responsibility. In fact, Jennifer stated that she gives YLA “90% of the credit for the social responsibility part.” Annalise then provided more details:

I do remember they did service projects with LiFEsports, and I know that she had to be a part of something bigger than herself. So, having those opportunities, working with a group, and putting forth effort, and the caliber of kids that did not just LiFEsports, but YLA. That’s when it really started changing [my daughter]. The YLA. So that was really where, to me, she saw her effort pay off. I mean, that has a special soft spot in my heart.

### **Applications of Life Skills**

Parents shared stories of how former campers have used life skills throughout young adulthood. This theme was divided into four subthemes emerging due to the intentional program focused on S.E.T.S. (i.e., self-control, effort, teamwork, and social responsibility).

#### *Self-Control*

According to the parents in this study, children who were former participants displayed self-control in adulthood while working, attending school, managing relationships, addressing discrimination, and navigating social justice conversations. For example, five participants described how their children used self-control at work to maintain strong customer service at work. Specifically, Ivy shared:

My daughter works with a leasing agent, and so you get irate callers because of the situation they're in during their apartment, and so people irate in their calling, so instead of her reciprocating that madness back at them, she's learned over the years, gradually and through the help of LiFEsports, cannot lash back out.

Brittney shared how her child used self-control when faced with discrimination at work:

There was a little girl who was white and she kept saying the word, “you're a [explicit]. You're a [explicit],” and so kids they hear it, they see it, they repeat it, right? So [my daughter] said, “that word is not nice,” and so she talked to her...She's such a loving and caring person, and so, once she talked to the little girl, then I think she understood that wasn't a good word, and so I think that was a very good example of self-control.

Similarly, parents shared examples of how their children remained calm and focused during school and in relationships with friends, roommates, and family members. Charlotte, for example, shared:

With him being in school I know he dealt with the situation where we did have a loss in the family and it affected him pretty bad...He went to his professors and he reached out. He said, "hey, I'm struggling. This is what's going on. What steps do I take...because I know that my grades are going to be impacted?" And so, when he came to me, he told me what he did and then one of his professors didn't respond back the way that you think that people should and he was really upset about that. He said, "instead of me lashing out, sending a derogatory email or kind of counteracting back that energy," he said, "I just wrote her back. I simply asked if there's a grace period. What else can I do?" He was like, "I still just was positive about everything."

Seven parents also believed their children displayed self-control because they had no criminal records and/or had not been involved in fights. Brandon said, "I haven't seen him in a fight. So, to me, I feel like they're well versed in trying to minimize their involvement in altercations." Myah also stated, "They don't have a criminal history. No drug use, no alcohol abuse. You know, good neighbors."

### *Effort*

Parents shared many ways their children showed strong effort as young adults. Most commonly, they reported their children showing effort in school, work, and other sports. Fifteen parents provided examples of effort in school. For instance, Domino shared:

She's taking Spanish now and, I say her effort is like top notch. The girl is like a regular student making her flash cards, but really wanting to put the effort out to get not just a good grade, but the best grade that she can get.

Eleven participants shared examples of effort at work. Annalise reported:

[She] definitely gives a very good effort. In fact, her manager...the post office she just started there. He did her 30-day [evaluation] and she got satisfactory all across the board and the manager told her, "I never give those satisfactories to somebody in their first 30 days."

In addition, when asked about how their children have used effort recently, eight participants described ways their children put effort into other sports and exercise as young adults. Ava, for example, said her children became more proactive about exercising after they participated in *LiFEsports*. She said, "they just might be a little bit more self-motivated like, 'mom let's go run a mile or two.' So, you know, they might be proactive about it." Others shared their children currently play or recently played various team sports (e.g., basketball, lacrosse), which require effort and persistence.

### *Teamwork*

Participants explained that former campers demonstrate strong teamwork at home and in relationships, work, other sports, school, and church. Indeed, 14 participants described how families resemble teams and require teamwork. Many of these participants talked about household chores and helping take care of each other. Brittney recalled when everyone in the house except Deja (her daughter) tested positive for COVID-19. She said Deja was “around the house helping me out and making sure that I was getting my medicine and eating and things like that.” Domino talked about opening a business that allowed her daughter, Ashley, to demonstrate teamwork:

I started a business in the last year and she definitely, even though I felt like the mom that was like forcing her to jump into this business that I decided to start, she definitely knew that it was going to take a team for me to reach my goals and...she can do like social media. She definitely understood that her part to play was important...[It] wasn't her favorite thing to do...She definitely knew that she had a responsibility on the team and knew that if she didn't do her part, then the team as a whole and the business wouldn't move forward, so she jumped in.

Eight participants also mentioned their adult children now use skills related to teamwork they learned at LiFE*sports* in their jobs. For example, Vanessa reflected by stating:

My daughter works for Raisin' Canes. Man, she felt like a team lead, so she's been able to open up several stores and train people to open up the stores, on how to run the cash register, and learn the drive thru...They take the initiative of 'okay we're going to learn this skill and then I'm going to show others and bring them along.'

Relatedly, two parents mentioned that their children have used teamwork to create and maintain non-profit organizations. Charlotte said her child was in the process of collaborating with others to create his own non-profit to provide support for communities lacking resources. Dorothy also shared her son founded a theater company with a group of friends. She said, “That core group started their own production company once they graduated. So, they have a production company where they put on plays like every summer, usually children's plays, and they do it at the performing arts center downtown.”

According to the parents, former campers also transferred teamwork to other sports. Eight participants, for example, said their children now use teamwork in other sports like basketball. Ava said, “even if she was on the bench, she would root her teammates on.” When asked about when her son uses teamwork, if at all, Jennifer said, “he's on a recreational team and that comes straight from people he's met from LiFE*sports*.” That is, according to Jennifer, teamwork is required to play a team sport with other people.

### ***Social Responsibility***

Parents described a few ways their children have recently demonstrated social responsibility. Most notably, eight parents said their children engage in advocacy-related behaviors such as posting on social media, holding conversations, public speaking, and voting. They credited these actions to their children's LiFEsports' involvement. Scott said:

[My son] is like a person that has a very high speaking platform, so when there was a lot of the things going on with the Black Lives Matter, [he] was one of the people that was there. You know, helping with the peaceful protest, was able to speak up, and he wanted to be in the forefront...He's not afraid to back off and speak his mind.

Six others also shared details about their children's volunteering and philanthropy efforts.

Ivy, for instance, shared, "We volunteer at a homeless shelter. We serve food, we cook the food here, and we go, and we serve the food to the homeless individuals." She said her children also volunteer on their own at different camps, schools, and shelters. In addition, her son also started a scholarship fund for low-income youth from single-parent households. Conversely, five participants mentioned how their children actually lacked social responsibility. These parents highlighted situations where their children displayed poor interpersonal skills at work, refused to follow rules, and engaged in arguments and physical fights. Brittney recalled a time when her daughter called her while she was at work:

She called us and said, "mom, I'm about to get in a fight." I'm like, "you're at work. What are you talking about?" "This kid's trying to fight me." I'm like, "now, you are at work and you cannot put your hands on anybody."

That is, despite learning about S.E.T.S. at LiFEsports, some parents described how their adult children struggled to engage in socially responsible behaviors during conflicts with others due to environmental risks and forces that impacted their ability to self-regulate. Notably, in these situations, former campers seemed to lack both social responsibility and self-control.

### **Discussion**

Sport-based PYD programs function with the hope of creating sustainable changes in youth as they transition through adolescence into adulthood (Anderson-Butcher, 2019). The purpose of the present study was to explore life skills transfer and factors that influence life skills transfer among former campers of one sport-based PYD program from the perspective of parents. The present study contributes to a growing body of research related to life skills transfer in numerous ways, which are described below.

The present study expands upon previous studies that have investigated short-term life skill transfer (Bean et al., 2022; McDonough et al., 2017; Newman, 2020; Newman & Anderson-Butcher, 2021; Pierce et al., 2022) by highlighting ways in which former LiFEsports campers

apply S.E.T.S. into their lives as young adults, 4-10 years post-participation. Results demonstrate specific examples shared by parents and caregivers about how their adult children continue to display self-control, effort, and teamwork at work, school, home, church, and in the community. Parents noted the numerous ways transfer occurred, including addressing discrimination, managing relationships with peers and co-workers, helping with chores and family responsibilities, or simply remaining calm to avoid trouble. More specifically, they reported that their now adult children continued to demonstrate effort, work hard, overcome challenges, take initiative, and demonstrate social responsibility through their volunteer work, advocacy, continued sport involvement, volunteerism, and, in some cases, non-profit work. Findings align with prior research denoting the transfer of life skills beyond sport and into life (Bean et al., 2015; Newman, 2020); however, our results expand our understanding of the timeframe in which transfer continues beyond adolescence.

Also, the present study corroborated research on protective factors related to and facilitators of life skills transfer. Specifically, prior research noted conscious reflection, autonomy, confidence, perceived importance of the skill, a safe space to practice life skills, role modeling of the skills, constructive feedback and support, positive relationships with staff and diverse peers, and a sense of belongingness each promote life skills transfer (Kendellen & Camiré, 2019; McSweeney, 2021; Newman et al., 2018; Pierce et al., 2017; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012).

The present study produced comparable results. Findings provide further support that feelings of safety, support, positive relationships with staff and diverse peers, and a sense of belongingness all promote life skills transfer. For instance, parents mentioned how life skills transfer occurred because their children felt a sense of belonging and connection with staff at the program, as well as adopted prosocial behaviors and norms through incentives (cf. Anderson-Butcher et al., 2021; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Interestingly, the parents also mentioned how they personally learned S.E.T.S. from their children and, in turn, modeled these behaviors for their children, which furthered transfer. They also gave specific examples of setting expectations for their children to demonstrate S.E.T.S. at home, and they reinforced application beyond sport. These strategies mirror effective design strategies shown to promote life skills development in sport-based PYD programs (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2021) and point toward ways parents can truly maximize and reinforce learning to ensure skills extend beyond participation, become familial norms, and are applied in adulthood.

Interviews with parents also suggest opportunities for continued engagement in PYD programming throughout adolescence is important. YLA was noted as an important extension of *LiFEsports* which allowed their children to continue learning and getting support for life skills transfer. Participants believed YLA was particularly important for promoting the transfer of social responsibility. More research is needed to better understand the factors of *LiFEsports* and YLA that differentially influence life skills transfer, especially related to social responsibility.

Moreover, most research in life skills transfer from sport-based PYD programs centers the perspectives of the campers. For example, Newman (2020) and Newman and Anderson-Butcher (2021) paired semi-structured interviews with photo-elicitation methods to explore life skills transfer of thirteen youth who participated in *LiFEsports*. Although providing space for individuals to share their own perspectives is important, there is also value in interviewing parents about their perspectives on how their children have (or have not) successfully transferred life skills from sport-based PYD to other settings. Few studies, though, have previously explored the perspectives of parents to understand the benefits of sport-based PYD (e.g., McSweeney, 2021; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). As such, the present study contributes to the larger body of life skills transfer by centering the perspectives of parents of former campers in *LiFEsports*.

Another important finding of the present study relates to the complex roles and experiences of parents. Prior research has found poverty can increase parental stress, limit access to resources, and inhibit parents' abilities to provide warmth and affection (Duncan et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2016). Youth participation in sport-based PYD programs, though, can provide parents with peace of mind that their children are safe and not involved in criminal activity and can promote parent-child communication (McSweeney, 2021; Riley & Anderson-Butcher, 2012). Other scholars have argued parents can play roles in promoting life skills transfer by holding conversations with children and role-playing life skills (Dorsch et al., 2015; Newman & Anderson-Butcher, 2021). Participants in our study described how greater capital built through relationships with diverse peers in *LiFEsports* resulted in parents feeling a "sense of relief" during and after their child(ren) participated, giving them peace of mind and a sense of broader social support. Given *LiFEsports* serves youth who are socially vulnerable, safety and stronger relationships among peers in the community are likely assets that help youth and families navigate interpersonal and structural risks (e.g., violence, bullying, etc.). Thus, beyond relational and programmatic factors facilitating life skills transfer reported by parents found in Riley and Anderson-Butcher's study (2012), bringing together diverse youth from across the community can serve as a protective factor that supports PYD beyond participation in programming.

Beyond existing facilitators of transfer, our study also points toward opportunities to improve sport-based PYD programs to further facilitate life skills transfer. Some parents mentioned how their children use S.E.T.S. to address discrimination and promote social justice while others shared how their children fail to apply S.E.T.S.—especially social responsibility—to new contexts as young adults. In addition, while parents mentioned their children felt safe at *LiFEsports* and the staff were "authentic," many felt programs could do more to address social conditions their children face daily in their neighborhoods. Indeed, parents described worries of their children becoming involved in gun violence. As such, more work is needed to promote life skills transfer of social responsibility and to promote social justice actions among *LiFEsports* campers. Also, more work is needed to help youth learn conflict resolution strategies to better navigate the growing violence in their neighborhoods while also continuing to invest in programs like *LiFEsports* that allow youth to build relationships with diverse peers, access safe

environments during out-of-school-time, and relieve the financial burden of camps and sports on socially vulnerable and historically marginalized families.

### **Limitations**

Although rich information was gleaned from the parents in this study, the study findings should be interpreted with caution. Foremost, the study only examined the perspective of parents. Understanding the experiences from the past participants' perspectives would also provide key insights. Further, selection effects exist. The parents in this study were positive about their child's involvement in the sport-based PYD program, as well as on their child's life skills transfer. Other parents of perhaps children who did not have such good experiences are missing from this analysis. Relatedly, little information was collected on the actual children of the parents who participated in the study, outside of just the fact they participated in the program for at least one year. Better understanding of their involvement in relation to dosage would help better inform facilitators and outcomes. Additionally, the study only explored one sport-based PYD program. *LiFEsports* has a very intentional focus and program design. As such, findings are not necessarily generalized to other programs. The present study also explored facilitators of life skills transfer without giving attention to barriers of life skills transfer. In fact, barriers to life skills transfer are often not explored. More research is needed to develop a stronger understanding of barriers to life skills transfer. Lastly, due to the nature of this study, we cannot determine direct causation. The involvement in this sport-based PYD program may be just one of the many factors that encouraged the application of life skills post-program participation. There is a high likelihood that the children of the participants learned and refined S.E.T.S. and other social skills in many contexts. Longitudinal studies would need to further explore these direct impacts, as well as the influence of other social settings on life skills development and transfer over the course of development.

### **Conclusion**

Parent perspectives gleaned through this study on the long-term transfer of life skills among their children provide additional support for the value of sport-based PYD programs. Insights from parents of past participants shed light on various facilitators of long-term application and call for programs to address the various social conditions youth intentionally from socially vulnerable circumstances are exposed to on a regular basis (especially in urban communities). Ultimately, this study furthers our understanding of how parents perceive the benefits of participation and how access to community sport programs can increase protective factors for youth long-term, especially socially vulnerable and historically marginalized youth.

*Funding Details: The present study was funded by a PhD Seed Grant from the authors' home institution.*

## References

- Anderson-Butcher, D. (2019). Youth sport as a vehicle for social development. *Kinesiology Review*, 8(30), 180-187. <https://doi.org/10.1123/kr.2019-0029>
- Anderson-Butcher, D., Bates, S., Amorose, A., Wade-Mdivanian, R., & Lower-Hoppe, L. (2021). Social-emotional learning interventions in youth sport: What matters in design? *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 38, 367-379. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-021-00773-w>
- Bates, S., & O'Quinn, L. (2023). Addressing access and equity for Latine youth through sport-based positive youth development. *Children & Schools*, 46(1), 37-47. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdad025>
- Bean, C., Forneris, T., & Fortier, M. (2015). Girls just wanna have fun: Understanding perceptions of effective strategies and outcomes in a female youth-driven physical activity-based life skills programme. *Journal of Sport for Development*, 3, 28-40.
- Bean, C., Kramers, S., Forneris, T., & Camiré, M. (2018). The implicit/explicit continuum of life skills development and transfer. *Quest*, 70(4), 456-470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2018.1451348>
- Bean, C., Kramers, S., & Harlow, M. (2022). Exploring life skills transfer processes in youth hockey and volleyball. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 20(1), 263-282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2020.1819369>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Camiré, M., Newman, T. J., Bean, C., & Strachan, L. (2022). Reimagining positive youth development and life skills in sport through a social justice lens. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 34(6), 1058-1076. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2021.1958954>
- Denzin, N. K., Lincoln Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin N., Lincoln Y. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 1-32). Sage.
- Dorsch, T., Smith, A., & McDonough, M. (2015). Early socialization of parents through organized youth sport. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*, 4(1), 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000021>
- Duncan, G. J., Magnuson, K., & Murnane, R. J. (2016). Reforming preschools and schools. *Academic Pediatrics*, 16(3), S121-S127. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acap.2015.12.003>
- Eccles, J., & Gootman, J. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. National Academy Press.
- Guba E. E., Lincoln Y. S. (2005). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In Denzin N., Lincoln Y. (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 191-216). Sage.
- Hermens, N., Super, S., Verkooijen, K. T., & Koelen, M. A. (2017). A systematic review of life skill development through sports programs serving socially vulnerable youth. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 88(4), 408-424. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2017.1355527>

- Johnson, S. B., Riis, J. L., & Noble, K. G. (2016). State of the art review: Poverty and the developing brain. *Pediatrics*, *137*(4), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-3075>
- Kendellen, K., & Camiré, M. (2019). Applying in life the skills learned in sport: A grounded theory. *Psychology of Sport & Exercise*, *40*, 23-32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2018.09.002>
- Knight, C. J., Dorsch, T. E., Osai, K. V., Haderlie, K. L., & Sellars, P. A. (2016). Influences on parental involvement in youth sport. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*, *5*(2), 161-178. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000053>
- McDonough, M., Ullrich-French, S., Anderson-Butcher, D., Amorose, A.J., & Riley, A. (2013). Social responsibility among low-income youth in physical activity-based positive youth development programs: scale development and associations with social relationships. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *25*(4), 431-447. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2012.751563>
- McDonough, M., Ullrich-French, S., & McDavid, M. L. (2017). Helping kids connect: Participant and staff perspectives on facilitating social relationships in a physical activity-based positive youth development program for youth from low-income families. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*, *7*(1), 13-29. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000109>
- McSweeney, M. (2021). Looking beyond the “intended beneficiary”: Parent experiences and perspectives of child participation in sport-for-development programs at an inner-city Toronto sport facility. *Managing Sport and Leisure*, *26*(6), 524-540. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23750472.2020.1772857>
- Newman, T. J. (2020). Life skill development and transfer: “They’re not just meant for playing sports”. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *30*(6), 643-657. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731520903427>
- Newman, T. J., & Anderson-Butcher, D. (2021). Mechanisms of life skill development and life skill transfer: Interconnections and distinctions. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, *12*(3), 489-519. <https://doi.org/10.1086/715890>
- Newman, T. J., Anderson-Butcher, D., & Amorose, A. J. (2020). Examining the influence of sport program staff and parent/caregiver support on youth outcomes. *Applied Developmental Science*, *24*(3), 263-278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1467762>
- Newman, T.J., Kim, M., Antonio, M., Alvarez, G., & Tucker, A.R. (2018). Facilitative coaching: a guide for youth sport leaders, *Leisure/Loisir*, *42*(2), 129-148. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2017.1415165>
- Padgett, D. K. (2016). *Qualitative methods in social work research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Sage.
- Pierce, S., Gould, D., & Camiré, M. (2017). Definition and model of life skills transfer. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *10*(1), 186-211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2016.1199727>
- Pierce, S., Sheadler, T. R., Anderson-Butcher, D., Amorose, A., & Wade-Mdivanian, R. (2022). Social skill transfer from a sport-based positive youth development program to the school setting. *Sport Social Work Journal*, *1*(1), 78-95.
- Riley, A., Anderson-Butcher, D., Logan, J., Newman, T., & Davis, J. (2017). Staff practices and social skill outcomes in a sport-based youth program. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *29*(1), 59-74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2016.1179700>

Smith, B., & McGannon, K. R. (2018). Developing rigor in qualitative research: Problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *11*(1), 101-121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2017.1317357>