

VOICES OF THE NATION

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Is it important to play multiple sports? Why?



BARB SKINNER

Former Girls Basketball Coach, Assistant Director of Admissions
Park Tudor School, Indianapolis, Indiana

Absolutely yes!

What are the goals of athletic participation during the high school years? In most cases, the goals should include: focus on learning how to get along with other people, how to play roles, how to work through disappointment, how to get your teammates to rally behind a common goal, how to improve individually and collectively, how to build a lifelong love and understanding of the importance of physical activity. Nothing has hurt high school athletics more than forcing students to “choose” a sport. Specializing turns the focus away from just “playing the game” and garnering all of the benefits associated with “playing” to the sole focus being on the individual and personal accomplishment.

As Lee Iacocca said, “A major reason capable people fail to advance is that they don’t work well with their colleagues.” Throughout life, one doesn’t accomplish much without the help of others. High school sports provides a great opportunity to learn just that.



LLOYD FORD

Varsity Softball Coach, North Carroll High School
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Yes. For any young person the use of varied muscle groups and learning different social roles within social groups is an important part of the developmental process. Sports emphasize skills that are individual-based and/or team-based. Both should be experienced. Acclimating to different roles in sports can be beneficial as well (scoring and defense, starter and

substitute). We do not ask young people to declare academic majors or career aspirations at the sacrifice of other content areas or individual interests. The same should be true in sports.



COREY ANDERSON

Head Wrestling Coach, Cleveland High School
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

I firmly believe that in regard to participation in multiple sports the benefits greatly outweigh the negatives. Each sport is unique and provides relevant learning experiences that vary. This variance in experiences assists in the process of creating more well-rounded individuals and athletes. Additionally, competition is an extremely integral part of the athletic process and the more individuals compete, the sharper they become and the athletes are more in tune with the necessary steps to become successful as an athlete and later on in life. Ultimately, participating in multiple sports keeps kids actively participating in a healthy supervised environment.



MIKE CARROLL

Assistant AD/Head Trainer, Stephenville High School
Stephenville, Texas

For a majority of participants, high school athletics gives the student an opportunity to participate in an activity that they enjoy. By allowing and encouraging participation in multiple sports, the students are able to not only have a change of focus, but ensure that they can take part in every activity in which they may have some ability or interest. Participation in multiple sports also ensures that the student will work with different coaches and teammates to achieve different goals and that concept should transfer into success later in life. ●