Benefits of Participating in High School & Youth Sports

More than 54 million young athletes participate in youth and high school sports.¹ ²

High school students who play sports are less likely to drop out.⁹

Former student athletes tend to earn significantly higher incomes than those who did not play sports.⁷³

Physically active children are 15% more likely to attend college.⁸³

Children who participate in sports, compared to peers who do not play sports, exhibit:⁷⁶

- Greater personal confidence and self-esteem
- Greater connections at school
- Stronger peer relationships
- Greater involvement in volunteer work
- Greater family attachment and more frequent interactions with parents

Sports participants are more likely to volunteer in their community, register to vote and follow the news.⁹²

Physical activity can enhance your child’s self-perceptions of body, competence and self-worth.⁸⁰

Physically active children:
- Are less likely to be obese
- Have up to 40 percent higher test scores
- Are less likely to engage in risky sex and become pregnant
- Have 7 to 8 percent higher annual earnings
- Have lower health care costs
- Are more productive at work
- Have reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes.⁸³

Teens who participate in team sports are less likely to use drugs, smoke cigarettes and carry weapons.⁶⁹

For a list of full references, visit atyourownrisk.org.