The Significance Of Playing Football For Children

Posted on October 8, 2018

View this essay online:
https://academic-master.com/the-significance-of-playing-football-for-children/

Football as a Global Activity for Children

Football is a game that has gained international recognition and has been socially accepted by people from various backgrounds (Pehkonen & Ikonen, 2016). Children and adults of all genders have ventured into professional football, while others just play for fun at their local levels. For one to be a professional footballer, he or she has to start at an early age so that he or she can gain the required skills and knowledge of play as well as the tactics that are considered the basics of playing professional football. Due to this reason, it is therefore essential for parents to allow their children to play football at the youth and eventually at the high school level, as it's at this stage that a child is capable of realizing his or her potential.

Physical Fitness and Cardiovascular Health

Playing football is associated with a lot of benefits that come along with the training (Andersen et al. 2014). A child who plays football is capable of becoming stronger and healthier than an individual who does not engage in any sporting activities. Health is the ultimate benefit that is derived from football playing, while others are just a result of the sporting activity. The numerous benefits that arise from playing football include:

Increased aerobic capacity – Football is a sporting activity that requires an individual to run intensively for a certain period. Running for the whole duration of the 90 minutes requires higher levels of stamina. The stamina is only available if the player is capable of holding in the air while running, which reduces the panicking that results from low levels of oxygen in the body. The children playing football often have a tremendous amount of aerobic capacity and, therefore, are capable of going from walking, running, and sprinting with the ability to recover very fast and tolerate the reduced amount of air in their bodies, thus making them able to run again repeatedly without much panting.

Improvement in cardiovascular health – Exercise and increased physical activity are essential components in the maintenance of a healthy body. The average player is capable of running 4 to 6 miles during the 90 minutes in a full game. Running is characterized by constant walking and jogging,

as well as running, which helps keep the child's heart rate up and thus provides excellent cardiovascular exercise (Sharma, 2015). The child can strengthen his or her heart through constant movements. Also, the movements can resist the buildup of plaques in the coronary arteries and help in burning excess calories from the body, which eventually leads to reduced blood pressure.

Body Composition, Muscle Tone, and Bone Strength

Reduces body fat and helps in improving muscle tone – football is among the best athletic sports that aid in the burning of body fats as it keeps the muscles and heart working and, therefore, makes them active. In children, football helps build masses of muscles and burn excess fats by allowing the recruitment of both the slow twitch and the fast twitch muscle fibers into the body. In general, the football workout helps in burning more calories than any other typical exercise as the players are forced to keep switching between using both the aerobic and anaerobic pathways, making the child have endurance.

Football helps build muscle strength. Lower body strength is essential for kicking, tackling, jumping, turning, and twisting, and it forms the overall foundation for explosive speed that is needed to maintain the pace in the time of play. The upper body strength is required for shielding the ball, throw-ins, and holding off opponents, and contributes to the overall power and explosiveness of the child. Continuous regular soccer play helps build strength by incorporating the whole body into the activities.

Increased bone strength – Heavy bone density is an essential component in football to avoid frequent fractures. The bone density reduces with an increase in age, and therefore, the best time to play football is during the youthful days when one is stronger in the general body. Repeated weight-bearing loads on the body during football matches are the best ways to increase the strength of the skeletal frame, thereby improving bone density. Continued maintenance of fitness throughout the soccer career in the lifetime is the greatest way of keeping the bones strong. Starting to play at a young age will be more beneficial to the child than starting at a later age when the bone density has reduced.

Coordination and Cognitive Development

Football games enhance coordination. The shifts that arise from walking, sprinting, and running are key concepts in soccer. Body coordination is enhanced through complex movements such as dribbling, passing, and turning, which have to be performed at various speeds and directions and, therefore, necessitate better coordination so as not to lose the ball to the opponents (Bate, 2014). Hand-to-eye coordination is improved by kicking and passing the ball to someone. The more coordinated the players are, the better the advantage in a match. The coordination obtained in

playing soccer is also essential for the other activities for the child, especially in-class activities, as the child is capable of getting organized and being on time.

Playing football enhances teamwork and sharing. Playing soccer can be termed a personal objective to maintain an individual's health status. On the other hand, soccer is a game that requires the efforts of a minimum of 11 players with substitutes. An individual cannot play alone on the whole field, and this calls for sharing and teamwork. Winning a match is a result of sharing a common goal with the other players, and therefore, all come together to push towards the achievement of the goal. The lessons learned from the field of teamwork are carried forth and translated to the rest of the players' lives as comrades. The ability to work as a team towards the achievement of a common target is more powerful, especially when it is related to everyday life. Children are thus encouraged to work in groups in their classes to achieve the overall best results in their academic lives.

Increase in cognitive brain functions- Football playing aids in the increased skills of concentration, self-discipline, and persistence as it is a fast-paced game that calls for quick decision-making in the field that will not cost the team (Huckabee, 2016). Even in situations where the tempo appears to slow down, the players tend to be looking for territorial advantages by trying to position themselves in strategic positions to receive a pass or mark an area to defend in case the opponent may attack. The decision-making in soccer can be translated to the class activities that a child performs, and an improvement is noted regarding decision-making, which is rational and accurate.

Confidence, Social Well-Being, and Overall Health

Soccer playing increases the level of confidence and self-esteem and, therefore, helps reduce anxiety in a child (Graydon, 2016). The building of physical strength and endurance assists in building confidence in a player during the time on and off the field, especially if there is a series of continued wins. Confidence and self-esteem are not only expected to have an impact on sports performance alone but also on academic performance in school, family life, career, and general friendships. As a result of exercise, the endorphin level is increased in the body after a match, which is known to reduce stress and anxiety and, therefore, can be a way to treat and reduce the intensity of stress and depression.

Football is a complete game where anyone can play anywhere. Soccer is not a prohibited sporting activity, and it is not expensive. It only requires space, such as the football pitch and a soccer ball, which are relatively available in all schools and public grounds. Football is also one of the simplest sports an individual can pick up. It is played outdoors and helps to increase interactions among children; thus, socialization is enhanced (Finkelstein, Baghurst & Shavers, 2015).

Soccer playing for children is thus an essential aspect of their lives. In the achievement of the overall health and well-being of a child, exercise is a recommendation, and thus, it's important that all children are allowed to take part in any sporting activities. Increased muscle and bone strength are

among the physical results that arise from playing football. Coordination and improved cognitive ability, as well as teamwork, are major measures of excellence in a child's academics, and these can be fostered by playing soccer. Quick decision-making and immediate problem-solving, such as puzzles, are all influenced by playing soccer. The general body fitness and the increased self-esteem are more significant to improving the self-esteem of the child. Parents should allow their children to take part in playing football at a young age to maximize the benefits accruing from playing soccer. It is through this that both the children and the parents will realize the full potential of their child and nurture their talents from an early age and progress to being a professional soccer player.

Reference

Andersen, T. R., Schmidt, J. F., Nielsen, J. J., Randers, M. B., Sundstrup, E., Jakobsen, M. D., ... & Krustrup, P. (2014). Effect of football or strength training on functional ability and physical performance in untrained old men. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science n in Sports, 24(S1), 76-85.*

Bate, R. (2014). *Soccer speed*. Human kinetics.

Finkelstein, M., Baghurst, T., & Shavers, T. (2015). "Cleat Chasers": College Football Players Talk about Women and Sex. *Issues in Social Science*, *3*(1), 120.

Graydon, J. (2016). Self-esteem in Physical Education and Sport. *Researching Women and Sport*, 68.

Huckabee, G. M. (2016). The Ethics of NCAA Division I Sports Team Scheduling: University Presidents Take the Field Part II. *U. Denv. Sports & Ent. LJ*, *19*, 97.

Pehkonen, S., & Ikonen, H. M. (2016). Too good to be a sport? Why dog agility struggles to gain recognition as a sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 1012690216679834.

Sharma, J. (2015). *HEALTH, WELLNESS, FITNESS AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES*. Horizon Books (A Division of Ignited Minds Edutech P Ltd).