

What?

You're The Athlete is a new project to help youth learn the fundamentals of being a well-rounded athlete. It provides current, research-based information from The Ohio State University and nationally recognized experts along with experiential learning activities to develop participant knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations in these areas:

- ▶ GOAL SETTING
- ▶ SPORTSMANSHIP & CHARACTER
- ▶ TIME MANAGEMENT
- ▶ SPORTS NUTRITION
- ▶ STRENGTH & CONDITIONING
- ▶ ATHLETES AS LEADERS (Group Dynamics and Leadership Roles)
- ▶ CONFLICT RESOLUTION, and
- ▶ CAREERS IN ATHLETICS



Who?

You're The Athlete is designed for young people who participate in sports, and adults who work with them. Youth may complete the activities individually, with team members, or with other groups. Activities are designed so that participants may apply them in developing their own personal sport-specific interests. Participants may explore all six areas of the curriculum, or focus on only one or two areas.

Why?

Although there are several curricula available for coaches and phys. ed. instructors, few resources on these topics are available for direct use with youth. There is a need for well-formatted, youth-focused curriculum in the eight *You're The Athlete* content areas.

There is a gap between what is known from research to be "best practices" and "critical aspects of positive youth development" and the practices and experiences of youth who participate in athletics today.

You're The Athlete can help bridge that gap and help accomplish the purposes for which Extension and 4-H were founded - "to educate; to interpret and encourage the practical use of knowledge that comes from research; to extend knowledge from land grant universities; and to enable youth to acquire knowledge, develop skills & form attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society".

In addition, a number of recent research studies and reports support the need for *You're The Athlete*. Examples include:

- ▶ More than half of Ohio's junior high school students play sports (Ohio High School Athletic Association, 1999)
- ▶ Female children and adolescents who participate regularly in sports are at risk for developing medical conditions such as disordered eating, menstrual dysfunction, and decreased bone mineral density. (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000; Garner, Rosen and Barry, 1998; Gidwani and June, 1999; Geydanus, Patel and Baxter, 1998; and West, 1998)
- ▶ Anabolic steroid use has negative effects on liver function, serum lipids, reproductive and cardiovascular systems, mood and behavior. Anabolic steroid use rates have been found to range from 4% to 12% of male adolescents, and .5% to 2% of female adolescents, with higher rates among those in strength-related sports and those who use other illicit drugs. (Bahrke, Yesalis & Brower, Oct., 1998; Johnson and Landry, Oct., 1998)
- ▶ 62% of youth identify sports and fitness as one of their hobbies or special interests (Alger Assoc. of Distinguished Americans, 1996)
- ▶ Sports plays a powerful part in molding the character of millions of our nation's youth. (Beedy, Zierk, Gough and Russel, 2000)

- ▶ Adolescents tend to perceive professional athletes as rich, famous and glorified; to have unrealistic goals and expectations for eventual professional athletic careers of their own; and to rank status and financial gain as more important than desire to play sports. (Stiles, Gibbons, Sebben and Wiley, 1999)
- ▶ Less than 10% of the 2.5 million volunteer coaches, and less than 1/3 of the inter-scholastic coaches in the USA have had any type of coaching education. 40,000 knees are injured from sports participation each year in the United States. 50% of these injuries have some lasting residual effect which impacts the quality of life. Most sports injuries are preventable. (National Youth Sports Safety Foundation, 2001)
- ▶ Even though only 16% of the total USA population is between ages 7 and 17, the percentages of all participants who are ages 7 to 17 in the following sports are:

soccer - 68%	gymnastics - 61%
football - 57%	baseball - 55%
wrestling - 48%	basketball - 47%
martial arts - 44%	softball - 39%
swimming - 34%	tennis - 30%
running/jogging - 25%	

 (National Sporting Goods Association, 2000)

How To Order

Copies of the new 4-H *You're the Athlete* project can be ordered through County OSU Extension Offices. Out-of-state orders may be directed to Janis Cripe, OSU Extension Publications, 2021 Coffey Rd, Columbus, OH 43210, e-mail: cripe.2@osu.edu

How?

Partners in the development of the *You're The Athlete* curriculum include:

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Introducing

You're The Athlete

A new project to help youth learn the fundamentals of being well-rounded athletes

