

A photograph of three students in a classroom, looking towards the left. The student in the foreground is a young man with short dark hair and a mustache, wearing a white shirt and a small earring. He is looking intently. Behind him is another young man with short dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt, also looking intently. In the background, a young woman is partially visible, looking in the same direction. The background is blurred, showing a window with natural light.

# CHOICES in EDUCATION

**STUDY SKILLS**  
**7 TIPS FOR HIGH**  
**SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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**MUSIC MATTERS**  
**HOW THE ARTS**  
**BENEFIT ACADEMIC**  
**PERFORMANCE**

**PAGE 6**





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## OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

# 7 study tips for high school students

Assessments such as quizzes and exams help educators recognize areas where students are excelling and where they might need a little extra help. In addition to tests in the classroom, high schoolers generally take standardized testing for state or provincial assessment purposes.

Testing may come easier to some students than others, but having solid study techniques can improve students' performance on a wide range of exams. In fact, research by Stanford scholars, whose data was published in *Psychological Science*, found that applying a strategic approach to studying helped college students improve their exam scores by an average of one-third of a letter grade.

The testing preparation resource PrepScholar says it is important to build and maintain strong study habits to help students avoid undue stress and last-minute cramming. The following are seven techniques that may help foster good study skills.

**1.** Find value in the lessons. Many students lament that what they learn in school just isn't relevant in daily life. That can make the subject matter feel less important and uninteresting. Finding value in what one is learning and seeing how it can be applied outside of the classroom may make a student more inclined to learn and retain information.

**2.** Avoid distractions. Study time is time to take a break from social media, video games and any other distractions that can pull a student away from studying. Constantly checking notifications can interrupt thoughts and make it hard to learn the material.

**3.** Establish a study schedule. Develop a system and a schedule for studying. Students should establish a fixed habit of studying each day or week — whatever is best for him or her.

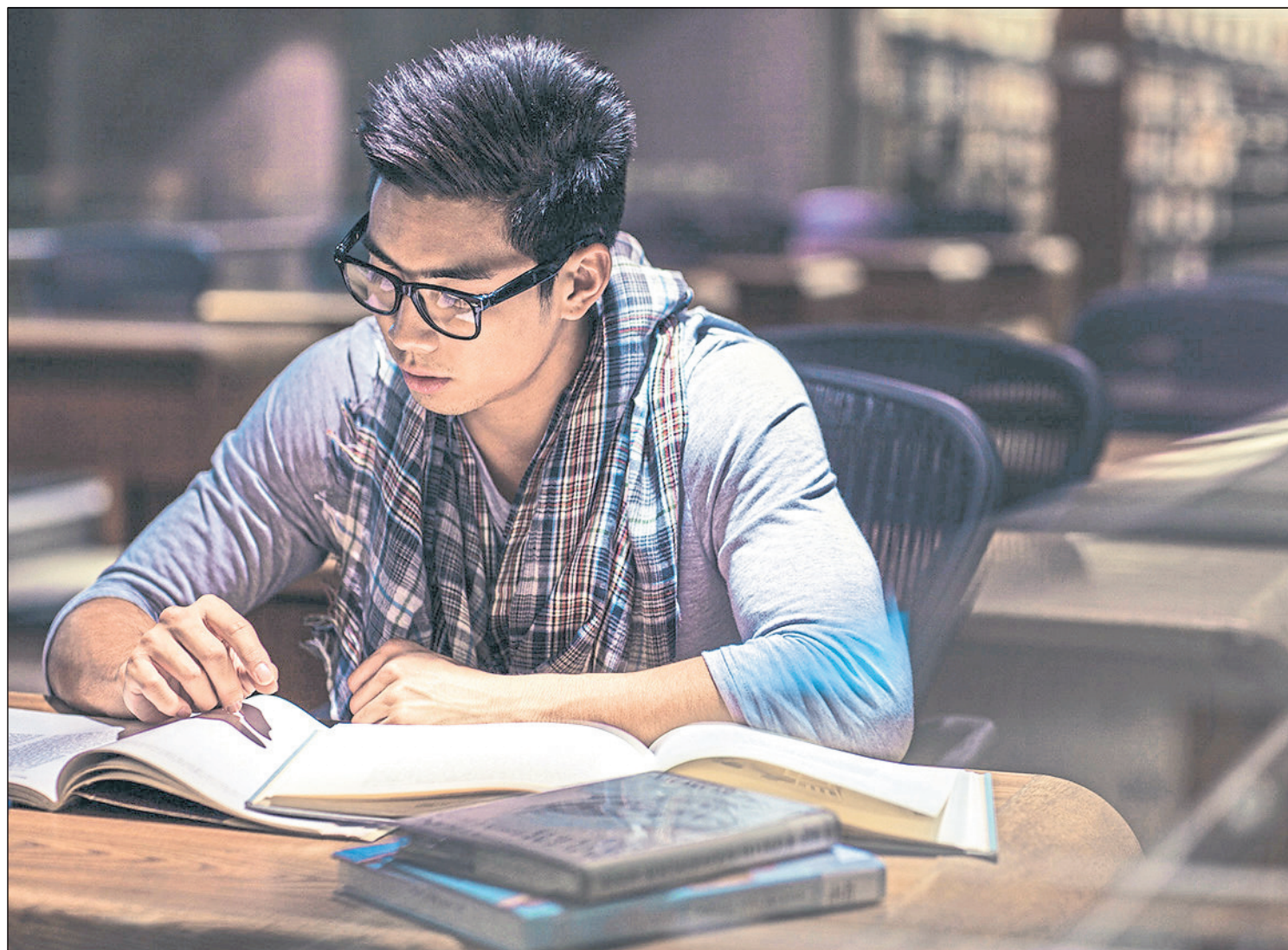


PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Testing may come easier to some students than others, but having solid study techniques can improve students' performance on a wide range of exams.

Over time, studying will become routine.

**4.** Establish dedicated study spots. Students should locate places that work best for them as study and homework stations. Certain individuals may need the quiet of a library or a bookstore. Others may do best with the hum of conversation around them or in a group. There's no right or wrong study spot. Maintaining consistency

will help the mind associate a place with studying.

**5.** Use grades as benchmarks and motivators. Blaming a teacher for a poor grade won't get a student anywhere. Rather, grades should indicate how well one is learning the material, and in turn, the effectiveness of students' studying habits. Students can tweak their habits if they find their grades are not where they want them to be.

**6.** Rephrase material. Textbook language can be dry and unappealing. Students can try putting the material into their own words or rephrase passages to make them easier to remember and recall. Similarly, teaching or sharing the material with another person also may improve retention.

**7.** Make a formula sheet. Depending on the subject, having a sheet with short-

cuts, formulas or diagrams can put the material into smaller bursts of information that are easier to digest. Along this same vein, writing information down can help improve recall.

These are a few study tips that high schoolers can utilize to improve their grades so they can be more successful in school.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*



## CAREER PATHWAYS

# Career options for people with art degrees

Creative individuals may be compelled to pursue degrees in the arts when enrolling in traditional colleges or universities or specialized schools. Studying the arts can be exciting, and an arts degree makes it possible to pursue an array of professional opportunities.

Students interested in the arts may question their desire to pursue an arts degree. Since technology is now ingrained in daily life, some students may wonder if they can chart a successful career path with a degree that does not fall under the STEM umbrella?

Thankfully, art degrees can prepare students for a wide range of jobs. Here are some career options to explore.

▪ **Illustrator.** Someone with an arts degree can work in many areas of illustration. This may include fashion illustration, medical illustration, comic book illustration, and even children's book



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Art degrees can prepare students for a wide range of jobs.

tration, and even children's book illustration.

▪ **General artist.** An artist works with different media to create and sell original works. This may include weaving, glassblowing, painting, or knitting.

ate and sell original works. This may include weaving, glassblowing, painting, or knitting.

▪ **Production artist.** Production artists produce high-quality print materials, packaging and displays across a variety of industries.

▪ **Curator.** Curators specialize in particular subjects and work in museums. Curators also may work as educators.

▪ **Graphic designer.** Graphic designers primarily work in digital artwork for editorial products, company brands and logos and product packaging.

▪ **Industrial designer.** Industrial designers develop the look of manufactured products, such as cars, toys and home furnishings, among other items.

▪ **Art director.** Art directors develop the visual style for various items, including magazines, online publications, product packaging, and marketing materials.

Art directors work in conjunction with graphic artists.

▪ **Art therapist.** Art therapists are mental health professionals who use creative outcomes and tools to help patients deal with a variety of mental and emotional issues.

▪ **Interior designer.** Artists with an eye for home design will need to take some interior design courses in school, but this can lead to a career making spaces beautiful — both for private and corporate clients.

▪ **Architect.** Artistic individuals who also are interested in designing buildings and other spaces can pursue careers in architecture. Illustration skills are a valuable asset to have in this field.

Art degrees can open doors in a variety of fulfilling fields.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*

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## IN THE CLASSROOM

# How the arts benefit academic performance

The cost of products and services continues to rise and organizations everywhere have increasingly been feeling the pressure to reevaluate budgets. It's no different in school districts nationwide, with school boards making difficult decisions about which programs to keep and which will have to go in order to save money.

Music and arts programs often are the first to be cut when school budgets are tightened. The organization Save the Music says that, during the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009, per-pupil spending in public schools decreased by approximately 7% across the country. This led to a trickle-down effect that resulted in the cancellation of art and music programs. Since then, many districts have continued to cut arts programs due to budget limitations. COVID-19 also did little to help the situation.

Art program cutbacks are rarely met with open arms, and that resistance has a lot to do with the positive effects such offerings have on students' academic performance.

## Better test performance

Numerous studies have found a correlation between early introduction to music education and a number of benefits for children. Music education can help develop communication skills, brain plasticity, language, and motor skills. A study conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles used a database of more than 25,000 middle and high school students. The researchers found that students involved in arts performed better on standardized achievement tests than students with lower arts involvement. Furthermore, data from 2015 from The College Board, which produces the SAT, found students who took four years of arts and music classes while in high school scored an average of 92 points higher on their SATs than students who only took one-half year or less.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Music and arts education are important to students' development.

## Improved emotional states

In addition to better performance on tests, a review in *Frontiers in Psychology* examined several studies linking arts and aesthetic experiences with "broad improvements" in people's emotional states. Those improvements included greater psychological and physical well-being.

## Community involvement

Participation and even appreciation of the arts can have an impact as well. Researchers from the Department of Public Administration at the University of Illinois Chicago found that being an art curator or

audience member leads to high levels of civic engagement and social tolerance.

The support and therapy company Evolve Treatment Centers reports that involvement in music and arts leads to overall higher GPAs, higher scores in math and reading and a reduced risk of behavioral problems and suspensions.

Music and arts education are important to students' development. Keeping these programs alive in schools can benefit students in many ways.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*



Art program cutbacks are rarely met with open arms, and that resistance has a lot to do with the positive effects such offerings have on students' academic performance.





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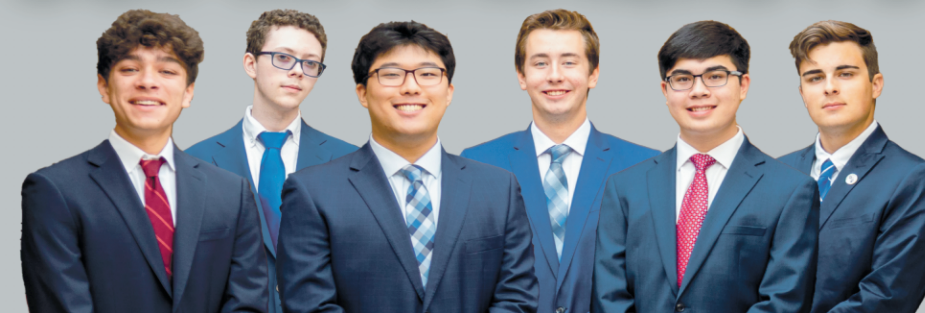
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## PARENTING

# At-home strategies that can improve reading comprehension

Strong reading comprehension skills are one of the foundations of a successful academic career. According to the Institute of Reading Development, students with strong reading comprehension skills get a big boost in all subjects, including math and science.

Though the benefits of reading comprehension are well documented, many students are struggling in this area of their academics. Officials with the National Center for Education Statistics note that, over the last decade, students have made no progress in reading performance. That likely comes as no surprise to seasoned educators, as data indicates students are reading less outside of school than they have in

years past. Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress indicates the percentage of public school students who said they read 30 minutes or more a day declined by 4% between 2017 and 2019, dipping below 50% overall in the latter year.

There's likely a multitude of reasons why students now read less than they used to.

Parents concerned about their children's reading comprehension can try these strategies to bolster this highly valuable skill.

- Let kids read what they like. The tutoring professionals at Oxford Learning report that 73% of students indicate they would read more if they found books they liked. Parents can address this issue by taking



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Strong reading comprehension skills can help students reach their academic potential.

children to their local libraries and letting them choose which books to check out. The more practice kids get with reading,

the more their comprehension skills develop.

- Read aloud to children. Various studies have found that reading aloud to chil-

dren significantly benefits literacy development. One study from the National Association for the Education of Young Children found that listening to others read helps children develop key understanding and skills, including how stories are written. In addition, the Reading Rockets project, which aspires to bring reading research to life in the hopes of helping young children develop into strong, confident readers, notes that children can listen on a higher language level than they can read. That makes complex ideas more accessible.

- Ask questions when reading to children. When reading to children, parents can compound the benefits of this activity by asking youngsters ques-

tions about the book. Asking what, when, where, why, and how can encourage children to look for answers to these questions while they're being read to. As students advance and then read more on their own, parents can encourage them to ask these questions of themselves (if they're not already doing so on their own). Asking and answering these questions is a great way to strengthen reading comprehension skills.

Strong reading comprehension skills can help students reach their academic potential. Parents can employ various strategies to help children bolster those skills.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*

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## OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

# Tips to help kids learn a foreign language

Bilingualism benefits children in myriad ways. For example, a 2014 study published in the *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* found that bilingual children have a higher vocabulary range than monolingual kids. In addition, a 2010 review published in the *Review of Educational Research* found that bilingual students typically have stronger working memories and attention spans than their monolingual counterparts.

The benefits of bilingualism are undeniable, but learning a foreign language can be challenging. However, that challenge could be less significant for youngsters. Though there are different theories regarding why children seem to learn lan-

guages more readily than adults, Dr. Eleonore Smalle of Tilburg University in the Netherlands indicates that adults tend to translate from their first language when trying to learn a new language. In an interview with the United Nations in Western Europe, Dr. Smalle said that adults' attempts to adopt language rules they already know results in a "less stable consolidation of the new language into memory." Children, on the other hand, unconsciously implement the new language rules and even use newly acquired words in everyday life. That, Dr. Smalle says, benefits long-term memory consolidation.

It's important to note that researchers, including Dr. Smalle, feel that chil-

dren may find it easier to learn a foreign language up to adolescence, at which time their conscious memory begins to develop more strongly. So parents who want to help their children learn a foreign language have a relatively long window of time to get that ball rolling before kids could find it more challenging. Parents also can try some additional strategies to help kids learn a foreign language.

- Bring lessons home from the classroom. Children learning a foreign language in school or via a private tutor can be encouraged to bring those lessons home and continue to develop those skills in a fun way. Play games in a foreign language at home on family game night. Young chil-

dren just beginning foreign language lessons can be encouraged to count to 10 when playing hide-and-seek at home.

- Shop for groceries in a foreign language. When grocery shopping with children in tow, parents can point to foods around the store and ask kids to say each item in the foreign language they're learning. Make a list before going to the store and reward kids who name all of the items on the list with a special treat at checkout.

- Read books in the language the child is learning. This could be tricky if parents are not bilingual. However, in that scenario, reading books to children in a foreign language provides a great way to reverse roles and let children teach their

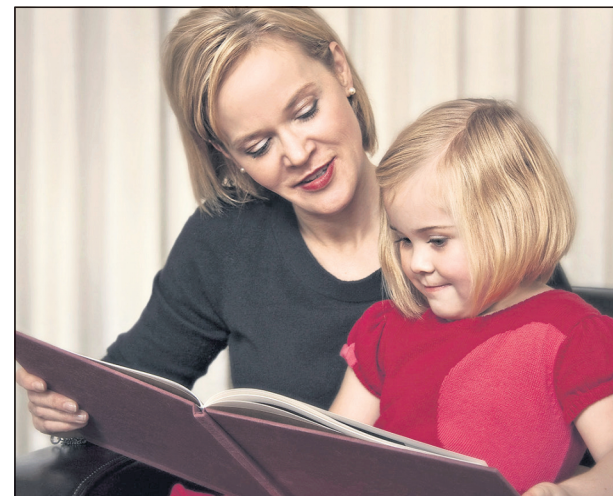


PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Parents can try various strategies to help kids learn a foreign language.

parents everything they've learned from their teachers or tutors. Keep stories simple and even seek recommendations from teachers or tutors.

The benefits of bilingualism are significant. Par-

ents can try various strategies to ensure foreign language lessons learned in the classroom are reinforced at home.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*

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## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30

### 1:00pm-3:00pm



[mhsmi.org](http://mhsmi.org)





## OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

# How to help student athletes navigate social media

Scholastic sports participation benefits student athletes in myriad ways. Competitive sports teaches students how to cope with the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat, while providing firsthand experience that emphasizes the value of working with others in pursuit of a common goal. Student athletes often apply these lessons long after their playing days have ended, benefitting from their experiences in competitive sports throughout their lives.

Athletes of all ages can relate to some of the common experiences of competitive sports. At one point or another, all competitive athletes must learn to handle losing. But modern student athletes have a relatively recent phenomenon to contend with that was not around when their parents played sports: social media. Social media can connect people in ways that were previously unimaginable, but it also poses unique challenges to modern student athletes. Parents and coaches can help student athletes navigate social media so it does not adversely affect their scholastic sports experiences.

- Consider shuttering accounts dur-

ing the season. In recent years, numerous professional athletes have bravely acknowledged their mental health struggles. For example, NBA All-Star Kevin Love has shared tales of his struggles with anxiety and depression. These issues confound many athletes and can be exacerbated by negative comments on social media, particularly after a loss. Student athletes can avoid the negative aspects of social media by avoiding it during the season.

- Emphasize the potential effects of athletes' own comments on social media. It's not just negative thoughts from disgruntled spectators that can make social media a minefield for young athletes. Student athletes' own negative comments can have some lasting and unfortunate effects as well. A 2017 survey from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars found that 11% of respondents indicated they had denied admissions to an applicant based on social media content. Furthermore, an additional 7% acknowledged rescinding offers due to social media content. Fair or unfair, these decisions highlight the very real effects that comments made on social

media can have on young people's futures. Sports often generates highly emotional responses, and parents and coaches can urge student athletes to avoid voicing negative or knee-jerk reactions about opponents, officials or even games they're not involved in via social media. Such commentary could have unforeseen consequences that adversely affect student athletes for years to come.

- Highlight how student athletes can use social media to their benefit. Social media can be a minefield, but it also presents opportunities for student athletes to showcase themselves in a positive light. Parents and coaches can emphasize how student athletes can use social media to show good sportsmanship. Win or lose, urge athletes to praise their teammates and opponents after a big game. Positive commentary on social media can be just as beneficial to student athletes as negative commentary can be harmful. Student athletes who showcase their maturity and sportsmanship on social media can improve their standing among college coaches and admissions officers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Parents and coaches can help student athletes navigate social media so it does not adversely affect their scholastic sports experiences.

Student athletes who learn to successfully navigate social media can reap the rewards of those efforts for years to come.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*

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## OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

# Sportsmanship principles all young athletes should know

Competitive sports have a lot to offer young people. In addition to exposing children to the thrill of competition, competitive sports can set a foundation for a lifetime of healthy living. One study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine in 2014 found that afterschool physical activity programs were the most effective strategy to reduce childhood obesity among children between the ages of six and 12.

Competitive sports also teaches valuable lessons about humility and respect. Sportsmanship is a vital and valuable component of competitive sports, and that's a lesson no athlete is too young to learn. Coaches and parents can work together to emphasize these principles of sportsmanship to young athletes.

▪ Always respect officials. In the era of instant replay in professional sports, criticism of officials has become more common. Such criticism can easily move from the professional to the amateur arena if players are not taught to always respect the officials. Unfortunately, many amateur sports officials continue to be the victims of overaggressive behavior on the parts of coaches, parents and athletes, and many have simply chosen to walk away rather than subject themselves to abuse. Estimates from the National Association of Sports Officials indicates that the group's membership has dropped by more than 20 percent since March 2020. Coaches and parents can practice what they preach when teaching young athletes to respect officials at all times, regardless of how games unfold on the playing field.



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Coaches and parents can work together to emphasize these principles of sportsmanship to young athletes.

▪ Respect the rules. Respect for officials should coexist with respect for the game itself. Every game has rules, and knowing and adhering to those rules is a vital component of good sportsmanship. Coaches and parents can set the tone for this by encouraging kids to play by the rules during the games, but also by adhering to rules governing practice times and off-season workouts when no one is watching too closely.

▪ Respect opponents. Showing respect for opponents is another principle of good sportsmanship. Social media provides a readily available platform for athletes to disparage their opponents before and after games. Such platforms have even proven too tempting to resist for some professional athletes. But showing respect for opponents, even in defeat, illustrates to parents and coaches that young athletes are mature and cognizant of the fact that participation in sports requires good sportsmanship.

▪ Respect coaches. Good

sportsmanship also involves respecting coaches, even when they make decisions players and their parents do not necessarily agree with. That respect has been dwindling in recent years, and it's contributing to a coaching shortage in youth sports. One survey of more than 200 coaches in the Syracuse, N.Y., area found that nearly 60 percent of coaches had considered quitting over conflicts with parents. Many coaches volunteer their time to teach young people the game, and players should be taught to respect coaches at all times. That includes those times when players feel like they aren't getting enough playing time or when they disagree with coaches' in-game decisions.

Sportsmanship is a vital component of sports participation. Teaching young athletes the principles of sportsmanship adds one more unique benefit to sports participation.

*Story courtesy of Metro Creative Connection*



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