



What Makes Sports Fun?

When it comes to sports, kids just want to have fun.

But what does “fun” mean to them? Research found there are 11 basic categories of fun that kids mention when answering this question.

1

Trying Hard

Setting & achieving goals, playing well, being active.

2

Positive Team Dynamics

Supporting teammates, playing well as a team, showing good sportsmanship.

3

Positive Coaching

Having a coach who is a positive role model, allows mistakes and listens to player’s opinions.

4

Learning and Improving

Learning new skills, improving on mistakes, being challenged, playing different positions.

5

Games

Getting playing time, playing your favourite position, playing in tournaments.

6

Practice

Having a well-organized practice, having the freedom to play creatively, doing different drills.

7

Team Friendships

Getting along with your teammates, being around your friends, having friends outside of school.

8

Mental Bonuses

Keeping a positive attitude, relieving stress, ignoring the score.

9

Game Time Support

Consistent calls by referees, parents being encouraging, being congratulated for playing well.

10

Team Rituals

Cheering, fist-bumping, team parties (virtual or in-person), team dinners.

11

Swag

Having nice equipment, earning medals/trophies, travelling to new places to play.

References: Amanda J. Visek, PhD (2018) "Toward Understanding Youth Athletes' Fun Priorities: An Investigation of Sex, Age, and Levels of Play"