

STAR SPORTS

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SOCIAL PROBLEM ADDRESSED:

According to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, children need 60 minutes of exercise each day. Children who join sports teams exercise while improving their physical, psychological and social well-being. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry reports that behavior learned in childhood influences future adult behavior—youth involvement in sports instills healthy habits and behaviors in children.

Children who participate in sports learn good social skills, conflict resolution and goal setting, and gain high self-esteem and positive behaviors. Sports programs help control obesity, promote activeness, increase a child's self-image and social skills, and increase motivation. Fundamental motor and physical skills are also developed. Sports serve as an essential role in physiological and psychological development for children.

Unfortunately, children with disabilities do not have many opportunities to participate in sports leagues. Many parents are apprehensive to encourage their children to become involved because of the range of obstacles they are likely to encounter. At pools, playgrounds, restaurants, and other facilities, Paula Schiedler, mother of 14 year-old Megan who has Down syndrome, says she feels uncomfortable when she and her daughter experience stares and disrespectful comments. Many parents of children with disabilities feel isolated and alone.

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

We propose to establish STAR Sports, a sports league for children with disabilities in Benton County, Oregon. STAR will offer fall, winter, and spring programs which include various seasonal sports. Children will participate in soccer during the fall season, basketball in the winter, and track and field in the spring.

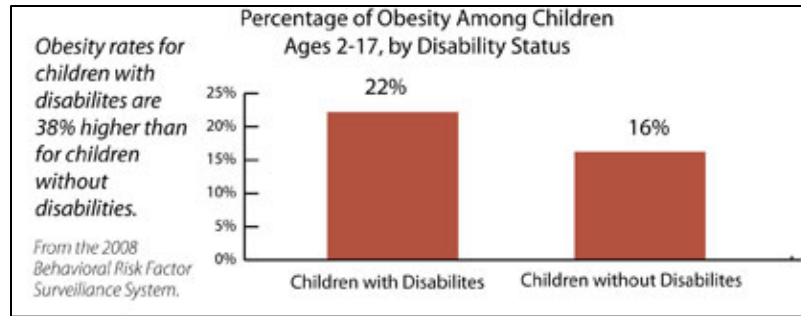
The league will provide children with disabilities the opportunity to get involved, learn new skills and develop long-term, meaningful relationships. These programs promote healthier lifestyles and encourage children to compete to the best of their individual abilities.

STAR Sports will create partnerships with Oregon State University, where there are multiple fields available for all types of recreational sports. This will create multiple sporting event opportunities. Volunteers, parents of participants, and college and high school students will staff the events, as there are many looking to be more involved in community outreach and often seeking opportunities for service hours.

Volunteers will be required to go through background checks and a comprehensive training program, educating them on coaching tactics to accommodate children with disabilities. The sports league will be divided by age as well as capability when appropriate. Kids from ages four to six will be in their own league along with kids aging from seven to nine, and ten to twelve. All participating athletes' parents must sign a consent form allowing their children to participate in all activities offered by STAR Sports.

MARKET ANALYSIS & MARKETING STRATEGY:

According to the Center for Disease Control, in 2012, 16.5% of children ages two to nine in the United States were obese, equating to roughly 12.5 million children. The CDC also states that children with disabilities are 38% *more* likely to suffer from obesity than children without disabilities. This is a problem in Oregon where 26.8% of the population is obese. It has been proven that regular physical activity paired with good nutrition enhances the mental health and ability to execute daily life activities of children with disabilities.



In 2009, 33.9% of people with disabilities in Oregon were determined obese, equaling approximately 220,505 people. In Benton County approximately one out of four teenagers is in jeopardy of being obese. Benton County is an ideal location to implement a program like this because there are over 700 hundred students in the Corvallis School District that have received special education services in 2011. That makes up approximately 11% of the K-12 student population. The sports league will be able to fight obesity head-on by providing an opportunity for children with disabilities to become active and pursue physical fitness.

FINANCIAL PLAN & SUSTAINABILITY:

Each team will have one practice session during the week and one game on Saturdays. Practices and games will be held at Oregon State University’s Student Legacy Park. Volunteers will operate the league and referees will be volunteers with referee experience. Each athlete will be required to pay \$35.00 to join the league and will need to provide their own uniforms and shin guards. Scholarships will be available for families who are in need of assistance. We will run a concession stand during games.

Total Costs = Venue Costs + Ref Equipment + League prizes – Sponsor Money

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS – FALL SOCCER LEAGUE			
EXPENSES	QUANTITY	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
Fields, Student Legacy Park	(2 hrs/day, 3 days/wk) x 7 wks	\$40.00	\$1,680.00
Size 3-4 Soccer Balls	24	\$13.00	\$312.00
Referee Equipment	12	\$20.00	\$240.00
Trophies	132	\$5.50	\$726.00
Liability Insurance	1 + 132 supplements	\$475 + \$2/participant	\$739.00
Sports First Aid Kit	12	\$17.00	\$204.00
Concessions	1	\$400.00	\$400.00
Total:			\$4,301.00

Projected Revenue: \$35.00 x 132 participants = **\$4,620**, revenue exceeding expenses will be reinvested in the sports league for continued education and training seminars for coaches and referees.

IMPACT SUMMARY – SOCIAL BENEFITS:

- Promotes physical and social well being for 150+ children and volunteers
- Strengthens communities by facilitating positive relationships between children with disabilities, college students, and local community volunteers
- Encourages the community to be socially, mentally, and physically active
- Results in lower healthcare costs due to a healthier population, community development, and reduced obesity rates
- Spreads a legacy of inclusion and community strength