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Dear Youth Sports Enthusiast,

During the past twenty years we have seen an explosion of organized youth sports activities. Whether team sports-baseball, basketball, football, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball-or more individualized endeavors-gymnastics, martial arts, skating, swimming, tennis, and track and field and wrestling – there are numerous opportunities for our children to participate.

Some benefits of these activities: working toward common goals, learning new skills, using sports as a natural social outlet and having fun.

But there are also costs: increased pressures to perform and specialize at ever-younger ages, a fanatical desire by adult coaches to win and a senseless lack of sportsmanship by adults and children alike.

My goal is to help all adults involved in organized youth sports to balance their perspectives.

I am a former 4 – year NBA player and first round draft pick, I graduated from Winchester (MA) High School as one of the top fifty basketball players in the country. However, like many children during the 1950's and 60's, I rarely participated in organized youth sports.

During the past two decades, I have counseled thousands of adults; trying to help them keep their youth sports involvement in perspective while enriching their children's experiences. To date, I have given over 1000 talks to adult groups throughout the world, including Mexico, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

In 2008, I was named one of America's top 100 Sports Educators by the Institute for International Sport at the University of Rhode Island.

I have also co-authored a book, *Just Let the Kids Play* (Health Communications, Inc.), that describes organized youth sports' major systemic problems and offers many reforms for better changes. This book is being distributed throughout the United States and Canada.

Broad media coverage – including *NBC Today Show*, *Sports Illustrated*, *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, WEEL-AM Radio (Boston), *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, WFAN-AM Radio (New York City), *Toronto Sun*, has also helped me spread this message.

My mission is to continue to talk to groups of adults involved – or soon to be involved – with their children's athletics play. To that end, I continue to conduct speeches that help educate and guide parents as to their children's' needs, wants and capabilities in sports. I have enclosed an outline and several testimonials attesting to this talk's benefits.

I hope I can conduct this talk in the future for your community. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely, 

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**ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN ORGANIZED YOUTH SPORTS;  
WHO WINS, WHO LOSES?**

- A. From Unorganized to Organized – How Time Flies**
- Baby Boomers – organizers of two generations of youth sports
  - Full-fledged “careers” before high school
  - Performers or players?
  - Neighborhood pick-up to interstate play-offs
- B. Physical, Psychological and Emotional Age-Appropriateness**
- Children, teenagers or miniature adults?
  - Techniques or Tactics, which will prevail?
  - Cognitive overload – teaching calculus before middle school?
  - 365/24/7-one sport? How young?
  - Is everybody or anybody having fun?
- C. Defining Ability and Talent**
- Elementary school “All-Stars” and “Phenoms” – the not-so-harmless oxymoron
  - The potential delusions of pre-pubescent grandeur
  - Are children placed on irrevocable tracks?
  - Current and future relative ability– when will/does it finally materialize?
- D. Can we do better?**
- From performance to recess
  - Organized boards – is there pediatric, recreational and physical educational representation and clout?
  - Good “picket fences” make better neighbors – and sports
  - SOS – Sidelines of Smiles; Grin and wear it

# **BOB BIGELOW**

## **TESTIMONIALS/ENDORSEMENTS**

“This is the best presentation I’ve seen anywhere, on any subject. If you’re the parent of a child involved- or soon to be involved – in youth sports, **SEE IT.**”

**Aaron Vittone, Pittsfield (MA)**

“Bob was animated, thought-provoking and insightful. He addressed an explosive topic with candor, wit and passion. Our thoughts have been challenged and we’re considering many of Bob’s suggestions to transform our youth sports.”

**Nancy Jarrett, Edina (MN)**

“Bob’s presentation was exceptional. It should be included in all youth training. He’s right on target.”

**Dan Schofield, San Antonio (TX)**

“Bob places youth first in youth sports. His talk is so informative, refreshing and thought-provoking.”

**Lawrie Johns, Vancouver (BC)**

“We were inspired by Bob’s words. We’d love to have him back next year.

**Amy Parratto, Dover (NH)**

“Bob’s enthusiastic and passionate message was right on target, we were amazed how he could tell the audience that they do some things wrong in a way that they listened, laughed and looked for change.”

**Paula Hoiland, West Linn (OR)**

“Bob is a captivating speaker. His presentation is very informative, point-of-view compelling and enlightening. Parents and educators will truly benefit from Bob’s written and spoken words on youth sports.”

**Sarah Caldwell, Libertyville (IL)**

“Bob’s talk has helped our community put the kids first in organized youth sports.”

**Mark DuPrez, Ft. Wayne, (IN)**

“Bob is truly an advocate for children of all ages. His approach to youth sports even transcends athletics and is a model for teaching and parenting all youth.”

**Ed Canzonese, Cherry Hill (NJ)**

“Bob’s talk is a must for any organization that deals with children in sports. His research and insight are second to none.”

**Bob Gillen, Grand Forks (ND)**

“Bob speaks with tremendous passion. We all need to be Bob’s ambassadors in all our nation’s communities.”

**Dave Petrosky, Rochester (MI)**

“Bob Bigelow, renaissance man? Or perhaps someone who has witnessed the good and bad in youth sports and has the courage to tell it like it is.”

**Keith Arnold, Brewster (MA)**

“An enlightening, informative and entertaining evening...please see this talk.”

**Sheila Nee, Falmouth (ME)**

“Bob identifies the good, bad and ugly in organized youth sports and provide tools and solutions to enhance the experience for ALL kids.”

**Steve O’Shea, Westport (CT)**

“Bob’s message is so important;also compelling and long overdue here. Bob delivers this talk with such enthusiasm and humor.”

**Susie Rush, Scarsdale (NY)**