

Perceptions of COVID-19-Related Adaptations in Youth Travel Sports

ABSTRACT

COVID-19 has impacted nearly every area of life, and youth sports is no exception. States and counties have published and are regularly modifying their guidelines for permitting youth sports to return. Governing bodies, sports facilities, and event operators have created modifications and adaptations for participants and spectators to ensure a safe environment.

This study sought to evaluate the current perceptions and attitudes of parents, athletes, coaches, officials, and administrators towards COVID-related adaptations. Over 2,900 survey responses were collected in March 2021 from parents, coaches, and athletes who participate in youth travel sports, predominantly from seven Midwestern states (Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin).

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR REMOVAL OF **COVID-RELATED ADAPTATIONS**

Support for the removal of face coverings for participants	75%
Support for bench and dugout modifications:	73%
Support for limiting spectators:	71%
Support for limiting amenities:	71%
Support for altering arrival and departure time: 60%	, D
Support for limiting personal contact between athletes: 58%	
Support for face coverings for spectators: 57%	
Support for social distancing for spectators: 55%	
Support for facilities scaling back sanitization to pre-COVID levels	

RESPONDENTS FEELINGS TOWARD YOUTH SPORT COVID-19 ADAPTATIONS Respondents wanting at least seven of the **50%** nine adaptations removed: Respondents wanting at least four of the adaptations remain in place: 35% **YOUTH INDOOR AND OUTDOOR** RESTRICTIONS Respondents – no restrictions for 45% indoor tournaments: 76% **Respondents – no restrictions for outdoor tournaments:** Attendance Restriction for Indoor & Outdoor Venues INDOOR RESTRICTIONS OUTDOOR RESTRICTIONS No restrictions: 44.94% No restrictions: 76.46% Restrict to immediate family: 33.40% Restrict to immediate family: Restrict to extended family and Restrict to extended family and friends: 13.67% friends: 11.02% Restrict to one family member: Restrict to one family member: 6.35% 0.94% Restrict to players and coaches only: 1.64% Restrict to players and coaches only: 0.35% **YOUTH SPORTS TRAVEL IMPACTS** 0/0 $\frac{0}{0}$ Respondents – Respondents – NO affect on travel **Confidence** in plans or habits lodging

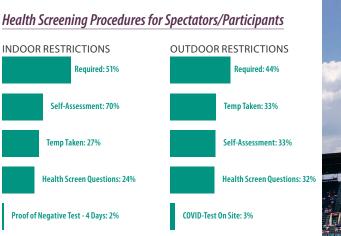
Respondents – Allocating less money in their budget toward youth sports travel

COVID-Test On Site: 2%

Respondents – COVID-19 had no impact on sports travel

SPORTS PARTICIPANTS & SPECTATORS AT VENUES





Proof of Negative Test - 4 Days: 2%





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SUPPORT FOR RETURN OF AMENITIES AT YOUTH SPORTS VENUES

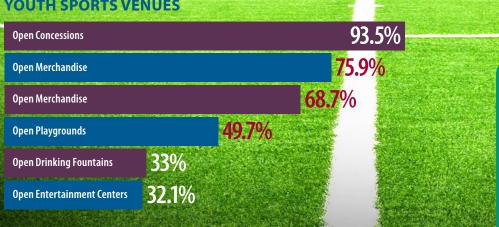
Four Main Groups Defining Characteristics

1. Normalcy Overdue Group – eliminate all of the COVID-related adaptations utilized by youth sports venues and strongly believes that we should have "returned to normal" before now.

2. Ready to Return Group - similar to the Normalcy Overdue group with two key exceptions, a lower adaptation removal score and 96% believe that society should return to normal now.

3. Middle of the Road Group - eliminate half of the COVID-adaptations

4. COVID Cautious Group – keep all of the COVID-related adaptations utilized by youth sports venues and strongly believes that we should return to normal when herd immunity is reached.





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