

Group Dynamics in Youth Sport

Dr. Mark Bruner, Dr. Ian Boardley, Dr. Mark Eys, & Dr. Jean Côté

THANK YOU!

One or more sports teams in your school participated in our study on youth social development in sport. Results of this study have added valuable understanding to various research areas and we could not have done it without you. Please take a moment to read through this document and gain a better understanding of the project that was completed and the key findings that were discovered. Your contributions have not gone unnoticed and we greatly appreciate the time and effort you and your athletes put into the project. Thank you!

WHY STUDY GROUP DYNAMICS IN YOUTH SPORT?

The role of team sport on youth development is not very well understood. Specifically, it is unclear how group processes (i.e., social identity, cohesion) shape youth's moral behaviour and developmental experiences within a sport context.

What is Social Identity?
The thoughts and feelings that individuals associate with group or team membership

WHAT WERE THE GOALS OF THIS PROJECT?

Over the course of one athletic season, our goals were to examine:

- (a) the effects of social identity on moral behaviour (prosocial and antisocial behaviour)
- (b) the role of task and social cohesion on personal and social development

WHAT DID WE DO?

449 male and female athletes (ages 13-17) from 37 different high school sports teams (basketball, volleyball, soccer, ice hockey, football, rugby, lacrosse, & cross country) completed questionnaires at the beginning, middle, and end of the season assessing social identity, task and social cohesion, prosocial and antisocial behaviour toward teammates and opponents, and personal and social development.

Social Identity: "I feel strong ties to other members in this team."

Task Cohesion: "I like the way we work together as a team."

Social Cohesion: "We stick together outside of practice"

Prosocial Behaviour: "I gave positive feedback to a teammate"

Antisocial Behaviour: "I criticised an opponent."

Personal & Social Development: "I learned how my attitude affects others in the group"

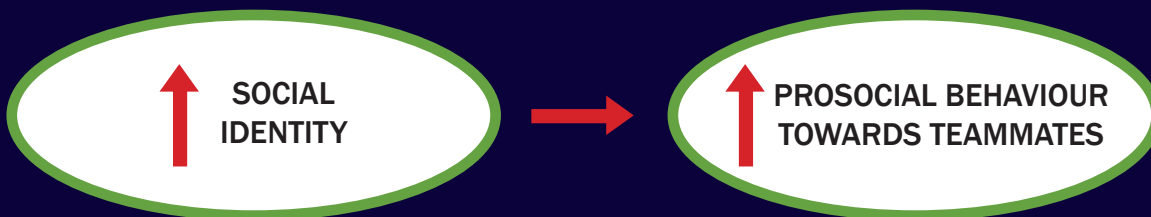
EXAMPLES



WHAT WERE THE KEY FINDINGS?

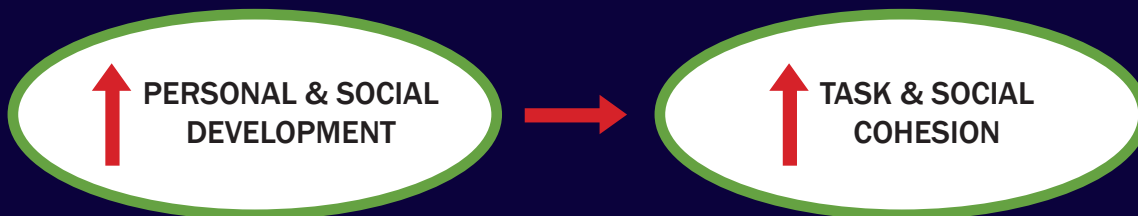
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Adolescent athletes with higher perceptions of social identity showed increased prosocial behaviour towards teammates and increased antisocial behaviour towards opponents compared to those with lower perceptions of social identity.



2

Adolescent athletes on teams with higher perceptions of personal and social development showed higher perceptions of both task and social cohesion throughout the season compared to athletes on teams with lower personal and social development.



FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

- Gain a better understanding of social identity by conducting interviews with athletes and coaches.
- Examine group processes (e.g., norms) that may influence social identity and moral behaviour.
- Identify how cohesion and personal and social development influence one another.
- Conduct team-building interventions to promote social identity, cohesion, and youth development.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Mark Bruner, PhD

Assistant Professor, School of Physical and Health Education
Schulich School of Education, Nipissing University, North Bay, ON

Phone: (705) 474-3450 x.4068

Email: markb@nipissingu.ca

Web: <http://www.nipissingu.ca/about-us/people/pages/mark-bruner.aspx>

