Who Isn’t Playing?

A 5-minute access and safety check for youth sport leaders

This check is a companion to *Who Gets to Play: Youth Sport Access That Works*. It is a snapshot, not a full audit, built for anyone running youth programs: facilities, parks and recreation departments, clubs, leagues and school districts.

How to use it. For each section, check every statement that is true today. Check a statement only if it is documented and consistently applied, not informal or dependent on one person. Score each section from 0 to 3.

1. Who Is Playing, and Who Isn’t 0–3

- ☐ We track participation by age, gender, neighborhood or school, household income and disability status.
- ☐ We have compared our participation against our community’s demographics.
- ☐ We can name the groups that are underrepresented and the most likely reasons.

Score: ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Reality check: *If you can’t say who isn’t playing, you can’t say why.*

2. The Full Cost of Playing 0–3

- ☐ We know the full cost per child per season, including registration, equipment, uniforms, transportation and travel.
- ☐ Fee assistance exists, and families know it’s available and how to ask.
- ☐ Asking for help is confidential and doesn’t single a child out.

Score: ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Reality check: *Families judge cost by the total, not the registration fee.*

3. Barriers Beyond Cost 0–3

- ☐ Schedules, locations and transportation work for families without flexible jobs or a second car.
- ☐ Program information is available in the languages our families speak.
- ☐ We offer adaptive or modified options for young people with disabilities.

Score: ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Reality check: *Opening registration is not the same as being open to everyone.*

4. The Safety Baseline 0–3

- ☐ Coaches and staff meet defined qualifications and complete required training.
- ☐ A written emergency action plan is in place, practiced, and includes heat and concussion procedures.
- ☐ Abuse-prevention policies, conduct standards and a clear process for escalating medical or safety concerns are in place.

Score: ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Reality check: *A program that isn't safe hasn't delivered access.*

5. Partners and a Plan 0–3

- ☐ We work with at least one partner outside our organization, such as schools, a health system, a foundation or local businesses.
- ☐ We have chosen one or two barriers to address this season.
- ☐ We have set a measurable participation goal and identified funding to support it.

Score: ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Reality check: *Concern about access is common. A mechanism for acting on it is rare.*

Your Snapshot Score

Total possible: 15 Your score: _____ / 15

0–5	Access and safety are assumed rather than built. Start with section 1; everything else depends on it.
6–10	A working foundation with gaps that tend to surface when enrollment grows or something goes wrong.
11–15	A strong foundation. Focus on measuring results and sustaining funding.

There is no passing score. The point is to see where to start.

Where to Start

Pick one or two barriers you can address this season. Common starting points:

- **Fee assistance** with a simple, confidential application
- **An equipment library** for gear kids outgrow every season
- **Transportation** through carpools, shuttles or practice sites closer to home
- **Adaptive programming** designed around the athlete, not retrofitted
- **A neighborhood league** with local games and limited travel

A final note

Access gets a child onto the field. Safety determines whether that experience is worth coming back to. The programs that do this well build both at the same time, and they fund the work so every child gets the same experience.

Graham Melstrand · Founder & CEO, ActivSport Advisory · activsportadvisory.com