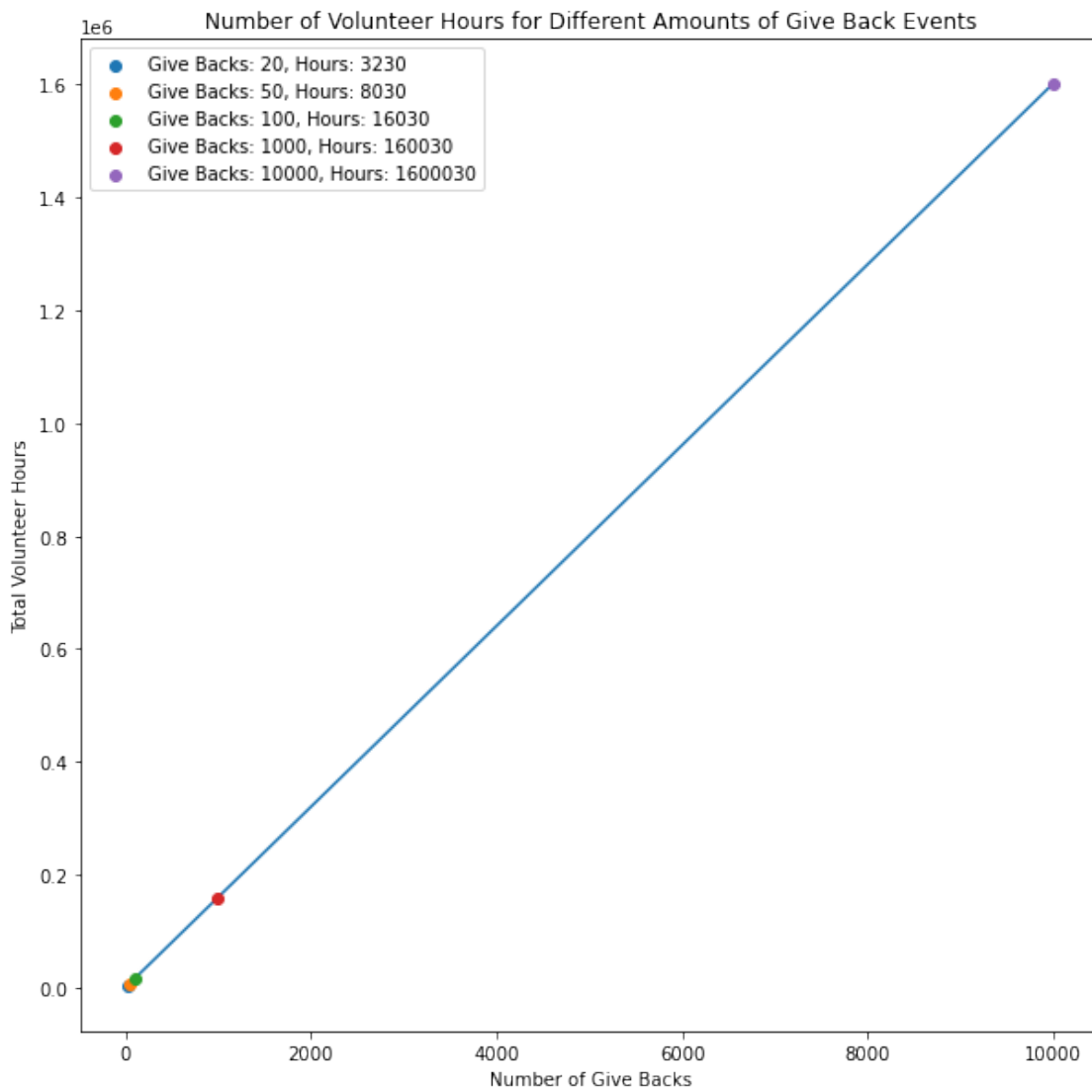


# SowGoodNow

December 15, 2023

Sam Handel

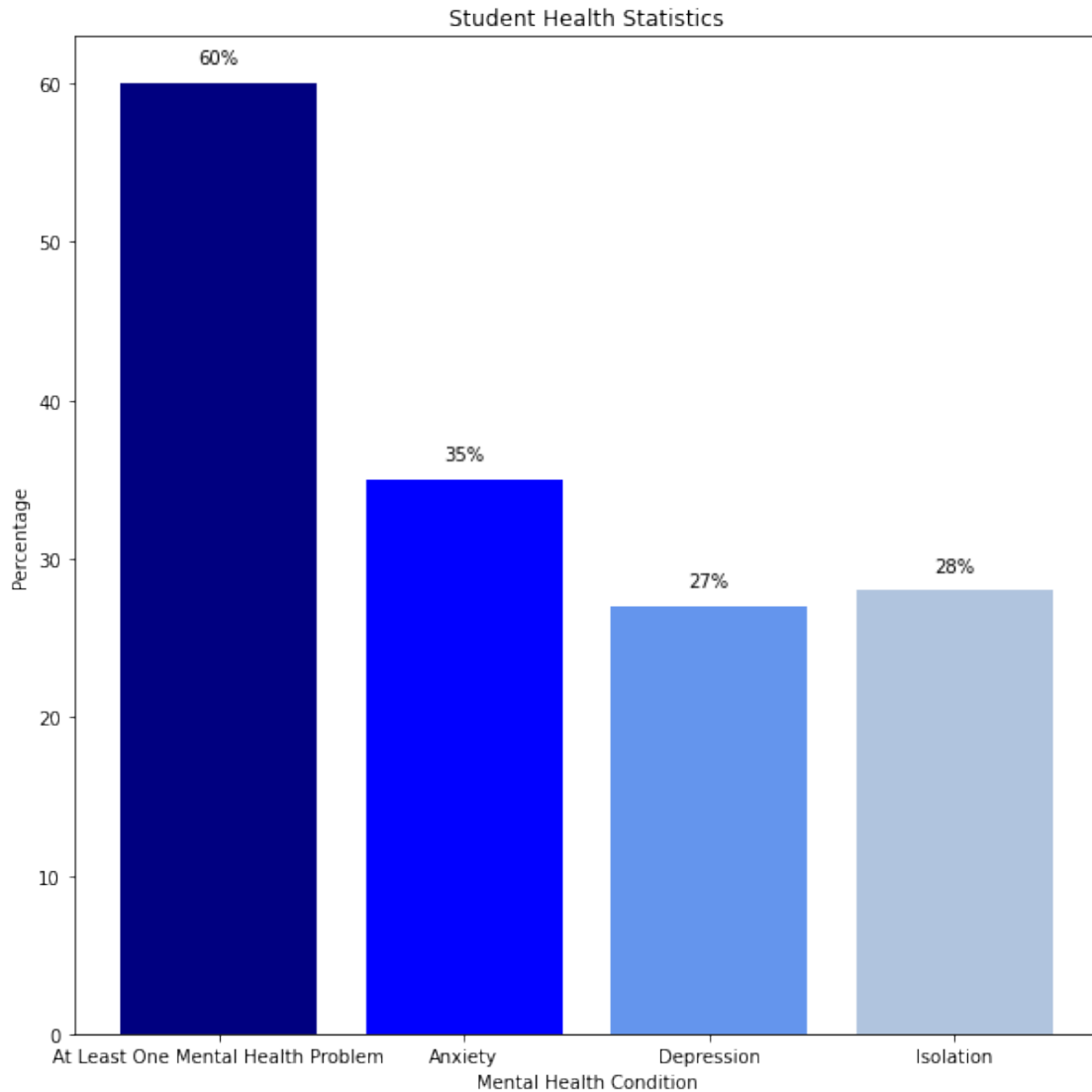
## 1 Increase Volunteerism



By participating in Give Backs through Sow Good Now, high school and college athletes would most likely increase how much they volunteer. People aged 20-24, the age of many college students, have the lowest rate of volunteering among all age groups. Only 18.4% of people in that age range volunteer, while 23.2% of all Americans formally volunteer with a philanthropic organization. The specific statistics for college athletes are much better than for the average college student. According to the NCAA, “Recent data shows that 90% of female student-athletes and 87% of male student-athletes volunteer a few hours a year, while nearly 50% of all student-athletes in the division serve at least a few hours a month with a variety of organizations, both local and national.” This data only applies to Division 1 college athletes. The NCAA has not provided data for athletes from Divisions 2 and 3 since 2014. Because of the high rate of college athletes that volunteer, this should definitely be a place that Sow Good Now should continue to target to expand its outreach. It said in that NCAA survey, “62% of those from Division I reported that their college athletics experience had a positive effect on their commitment to community service.” This is a strong number, and shows that giving student athletes more opportunities to volunteer can increase volunteerism. Many teams are required to volunteer, so doing that with an organization like Sow Good Now can create a long lasting relationship, beneficial to both parties.

Additionally, the dichotomy between how much the average college aged person volunteers and how often student athletes volunteer could create new opportunities. Sow Good Now could allow former high school athletes, who currently attend college, to attend Give Backs and teach youth the sports they formerly played. That would allow access to new people to attend the events. Also, that could increase the mental well being of those college students, many of whom miss the sports they formerly played, but no longer have the time or skills to continue at a higher level.

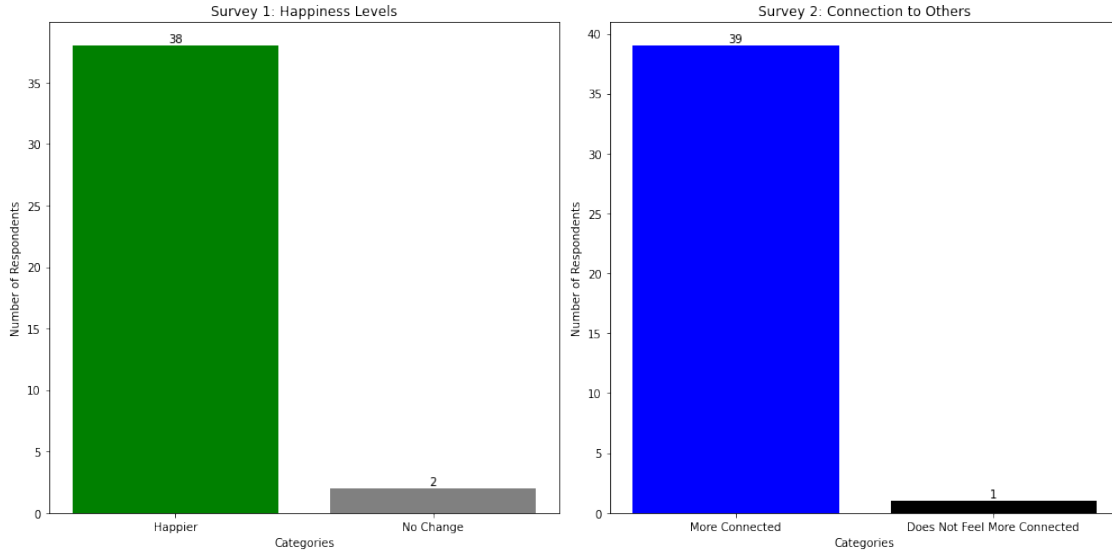
## 2 Improve Mental Well Being



Currently, there is a mental health crisis on college campuses. As shown in the graph above, more than half of current college students meet the criteria for having at least one mental health problem. Also shown is the approximate rates for people having Anxiety and Depression, but there are most likely more undiagnosed cases. I also included the percentage of people having feelings of isolation. That is something that Sow Good Now can directly address. Give Backs bring people together for a common goal and a shared activity. Hopefully, that can help people feel less isolated and that they are part of a community.

After Give Backs, 40 people were surveyed about how they felt volunteering.

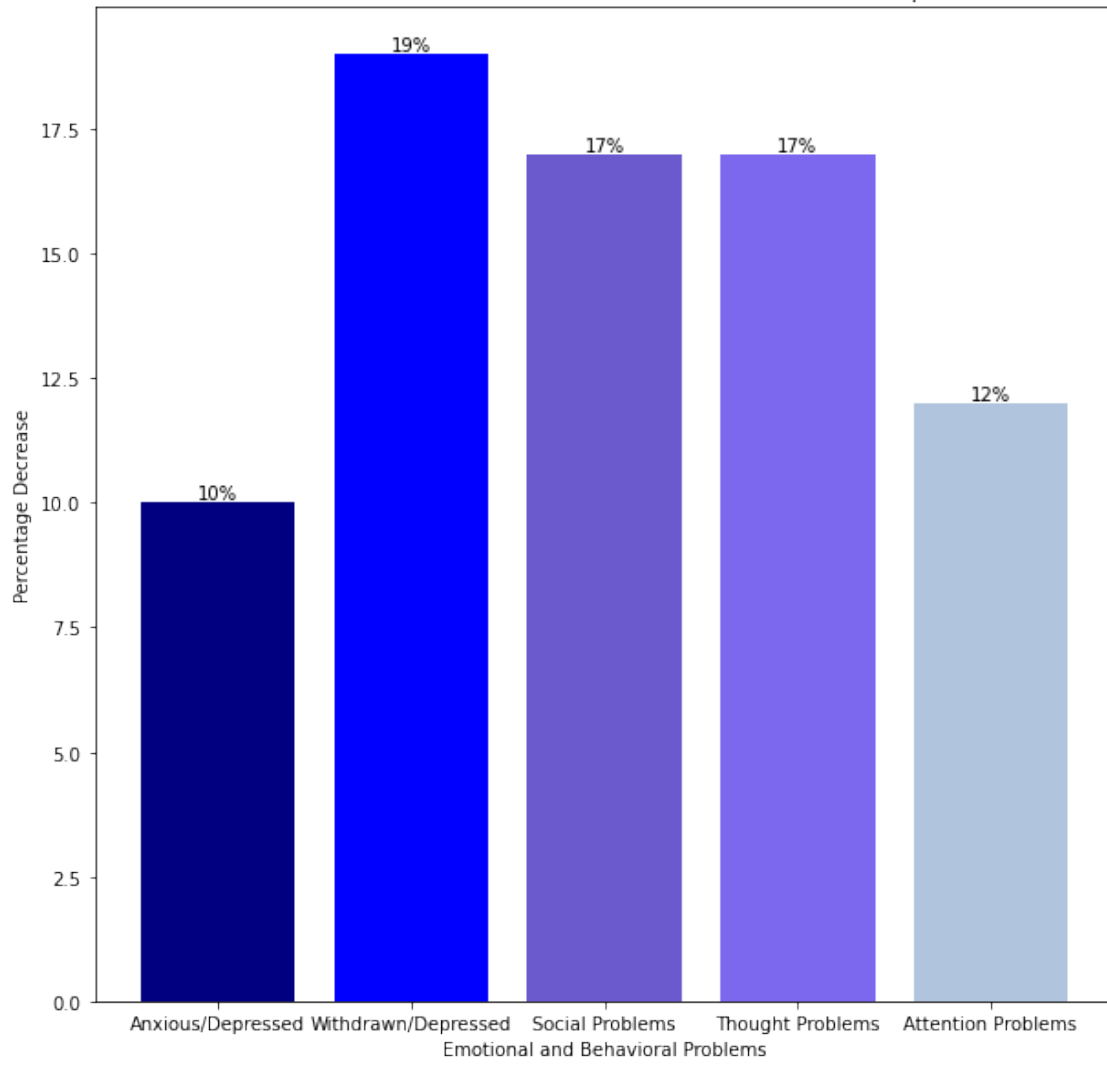
- 38 said they were happier (2 no change)
- 39 said they felt more connected to others



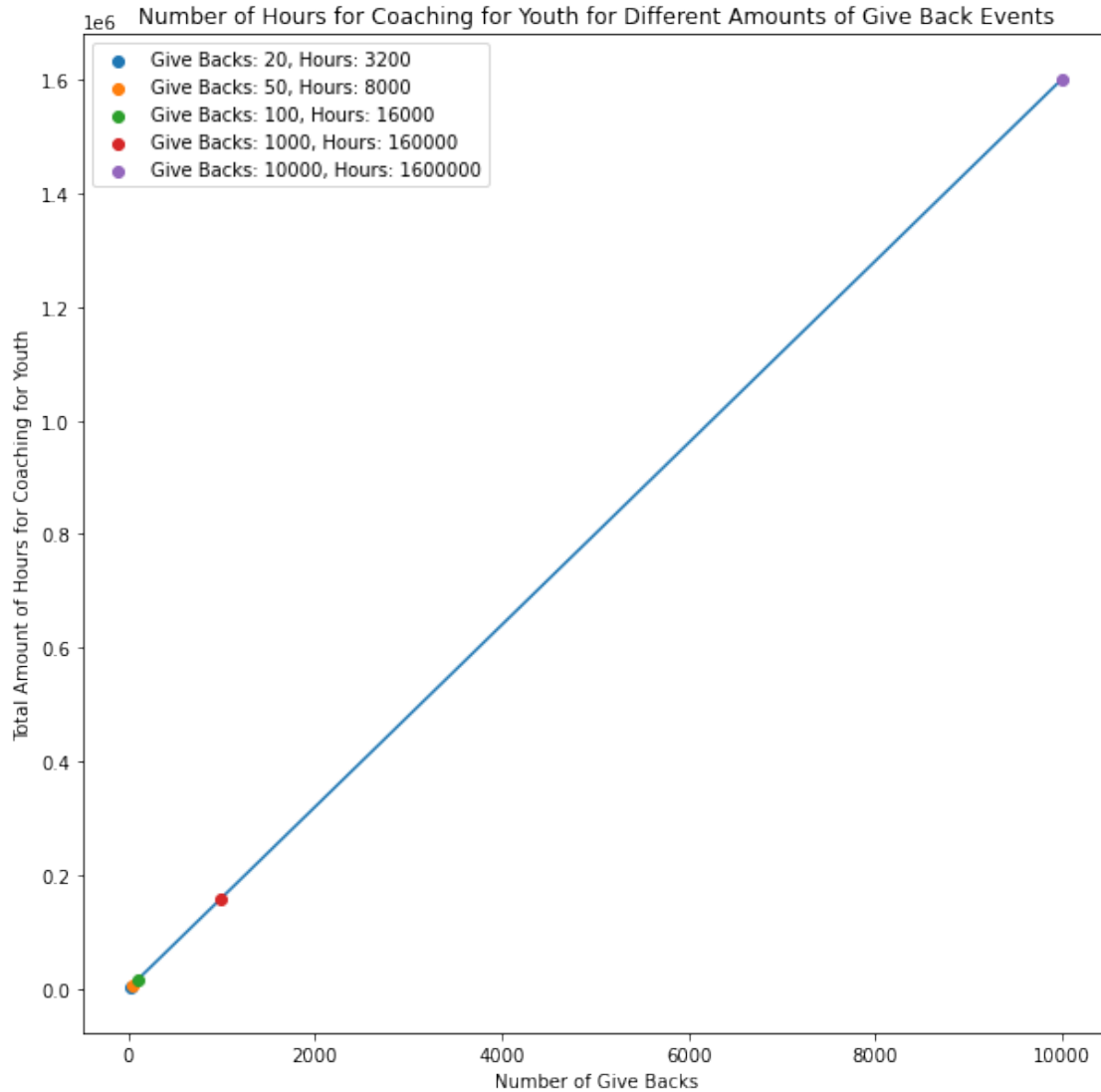
These results show that volunteering can improve the mental well being of those who participate in it, although the sample size is small. More people would need to be surveyed to create a concrete rule, but based on the data currently available there is strong evidence that volunteering with Sow Good Now improves mental well being.

Participating in Give Backs could help both the players of the teams volunteering and the youth who have not had access to playing organized sports. According to Business Insider, “Between 2009 and 2019, the share of high-school students reporting”persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness” increased by 40%“. This also comes at a time when participation in youth sports has been declining. Going to a Give Back can definitely help people feel less lonely. They will be part of a community, if only for a short time, but that is still way better than sitting at home alone. In a study conducted on around 11000 youth, the research found that”participation in team sports compared to non-sport participation was associated with 10% lower anxious/depressed scores, 19% lower withdrawn/depressed scores, 17% lower social problems scores, 17% lower thought problems scores, and 12% lower attention problems scores“. It is clear that there are mental health benefits in participating in sports, something Sow Good Now can help with.

Decrease in Emotional and Behavioral Problems with Team Sports



### 3 Increase Access to Youth Sports



Receiving coaching is one of the biggest challenges for kids in underserved areas. That is why attending these events can be so critical for kids who are trying to get better at their individual sports. As I will illustrate, the cost of lessons and camps is one barrier to entry for many underserved youth. Each youth who attends a Give Back gets 4 hours of high level coaching, so attending even one event can help them greatly improve their skills.

The average family spends \$883 on youth sports per season, divided into the following area.

Registration: 168

Equipment: 154

Travel: 260

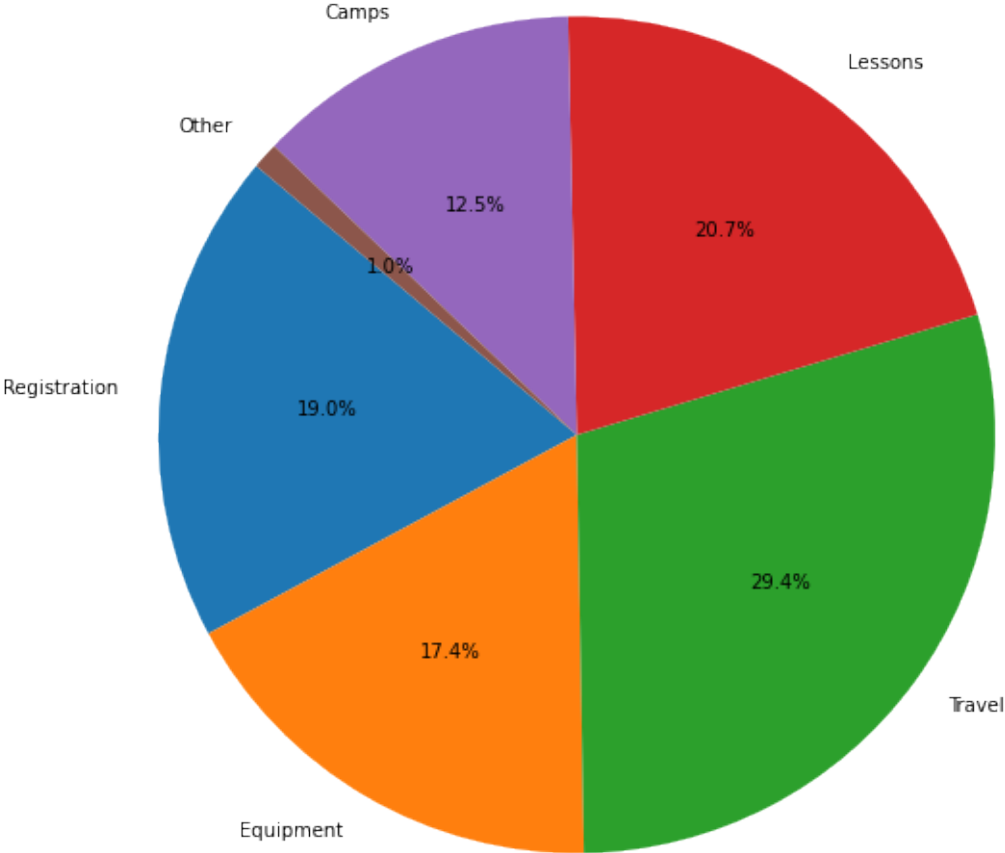
Lessons: 183

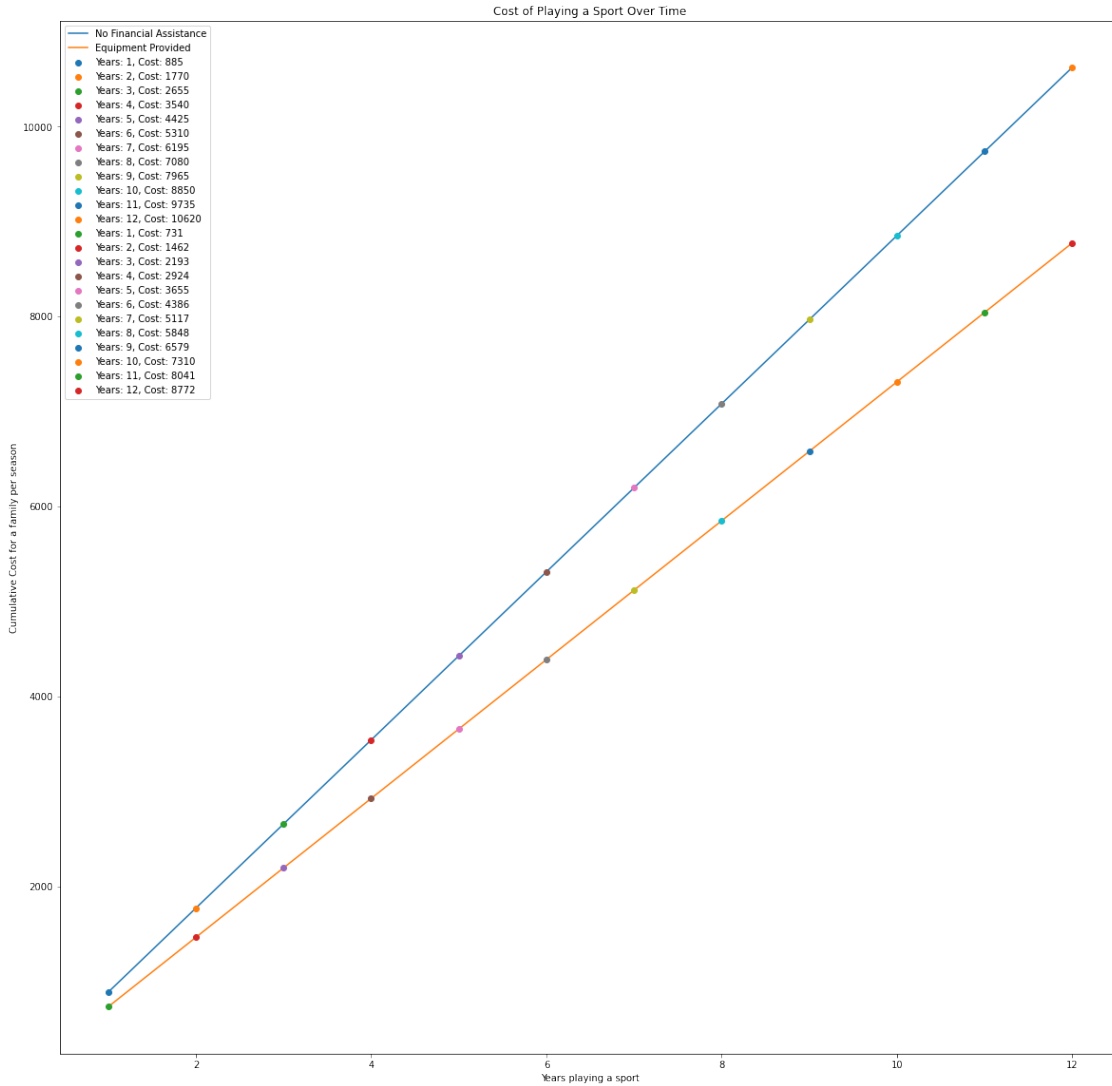
Camps: 111

Other: 9

Those expenses can be seen in the following pie chart.

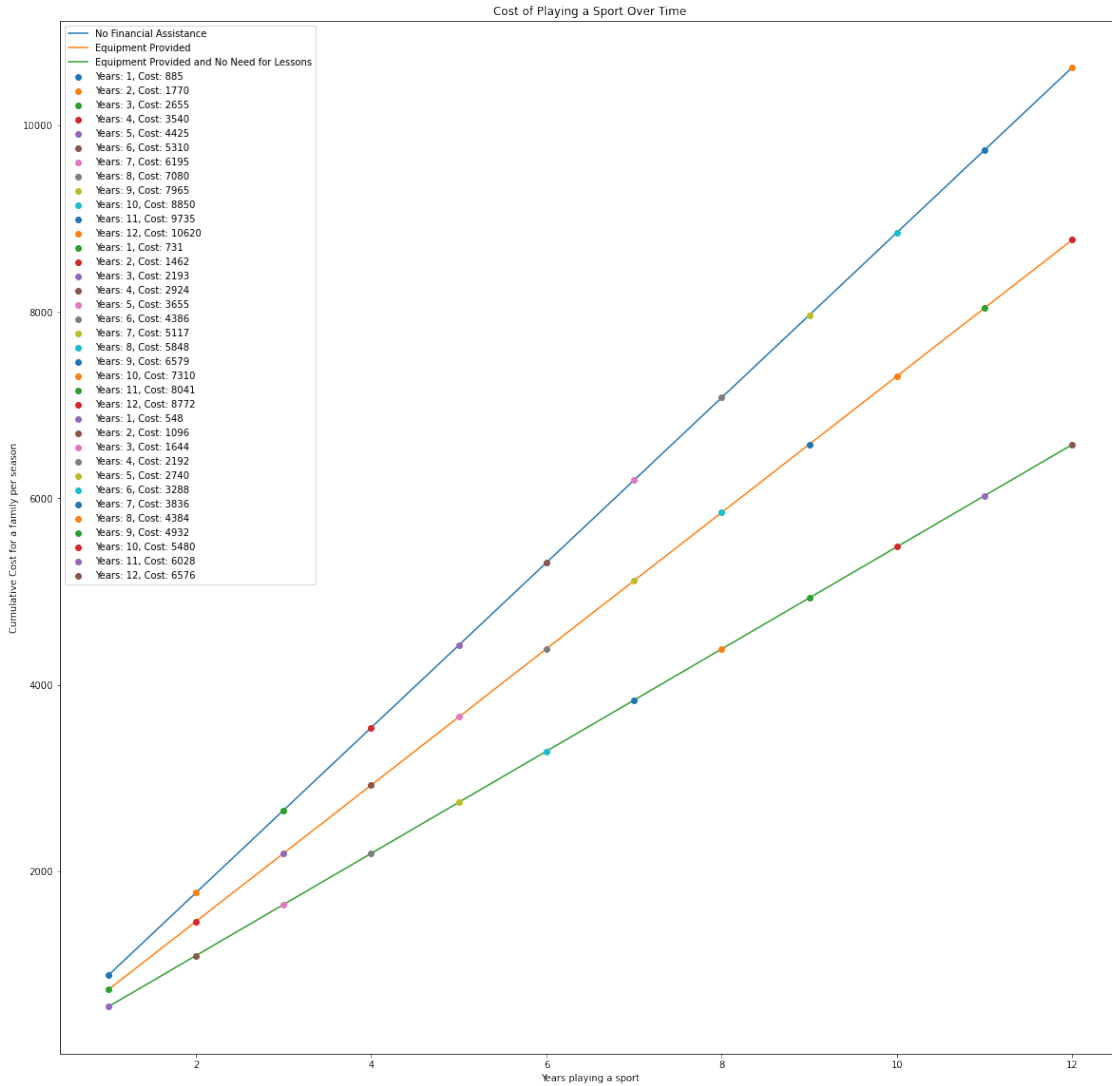
Distribution of Youth Sports Expenses



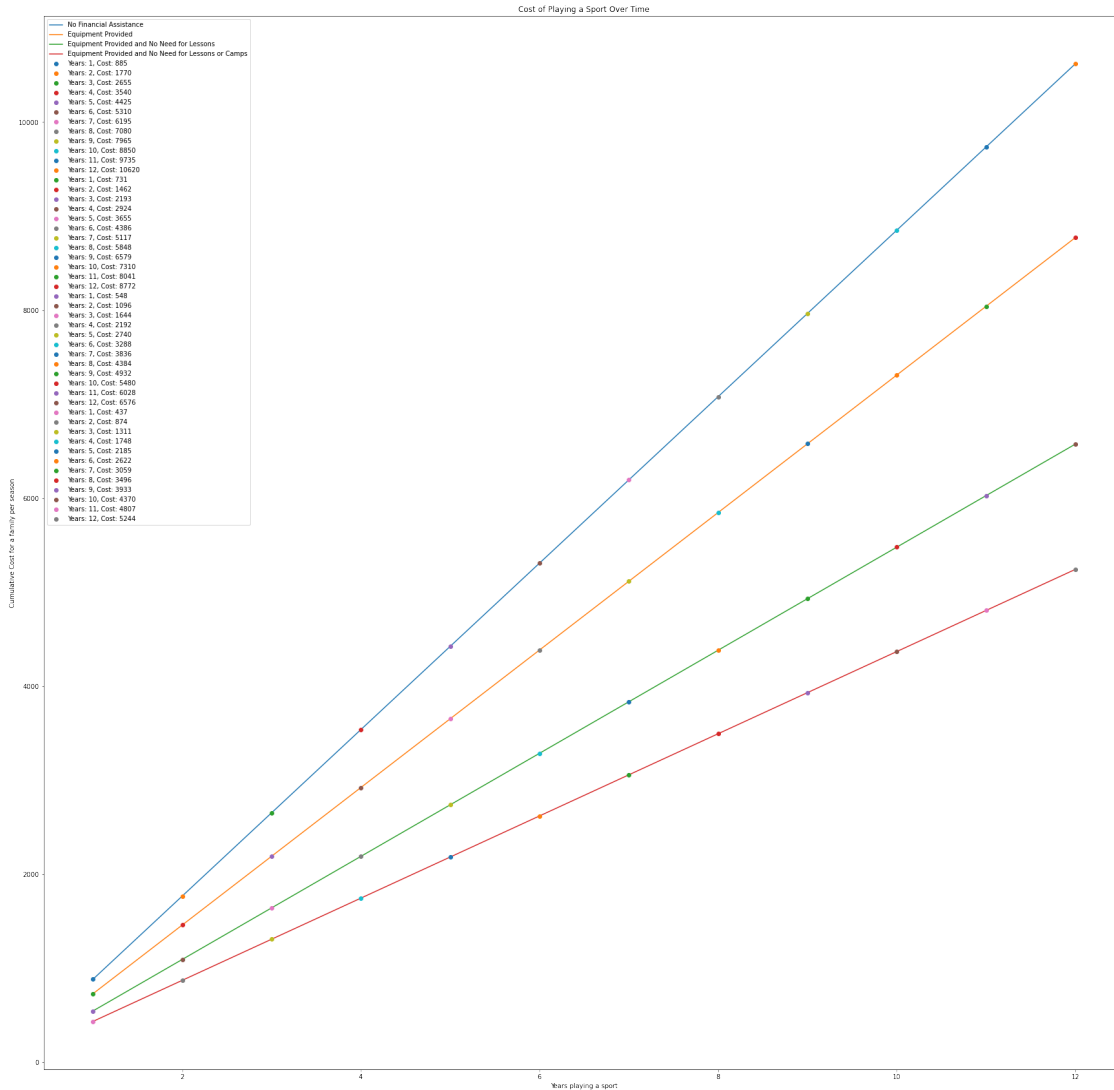


The graph above shows how much money can be saved over time if a child from an underserved area receives equipment after a GiveBack event once per year. Having equipment to keep would save families about \$154 per year.



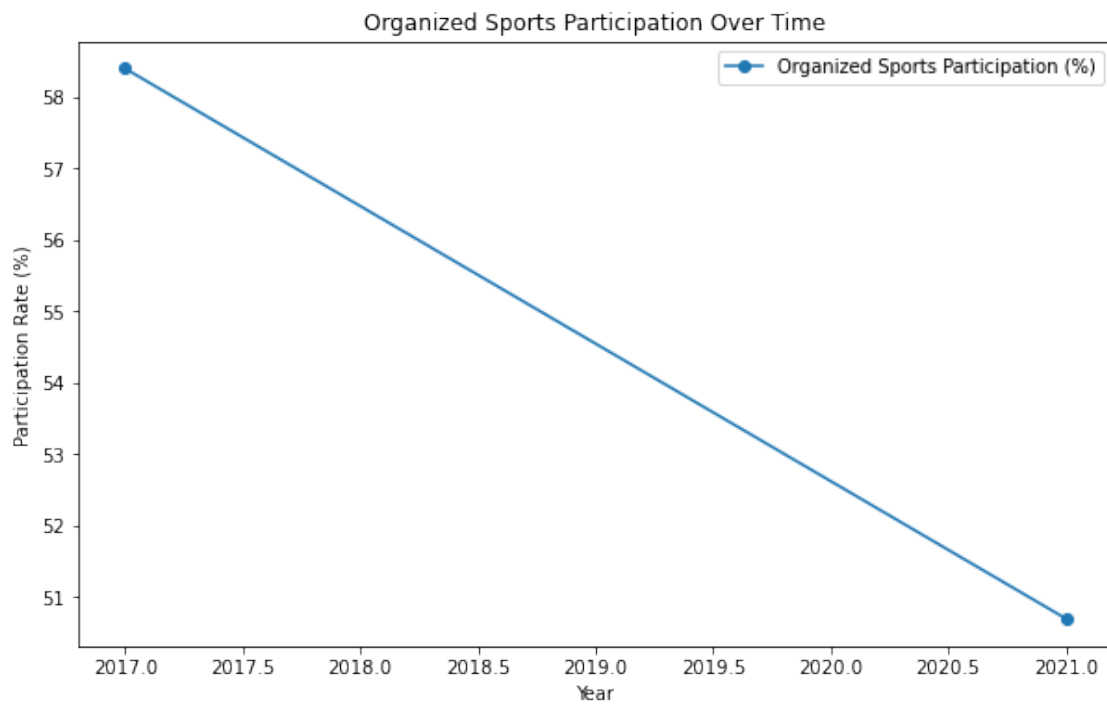
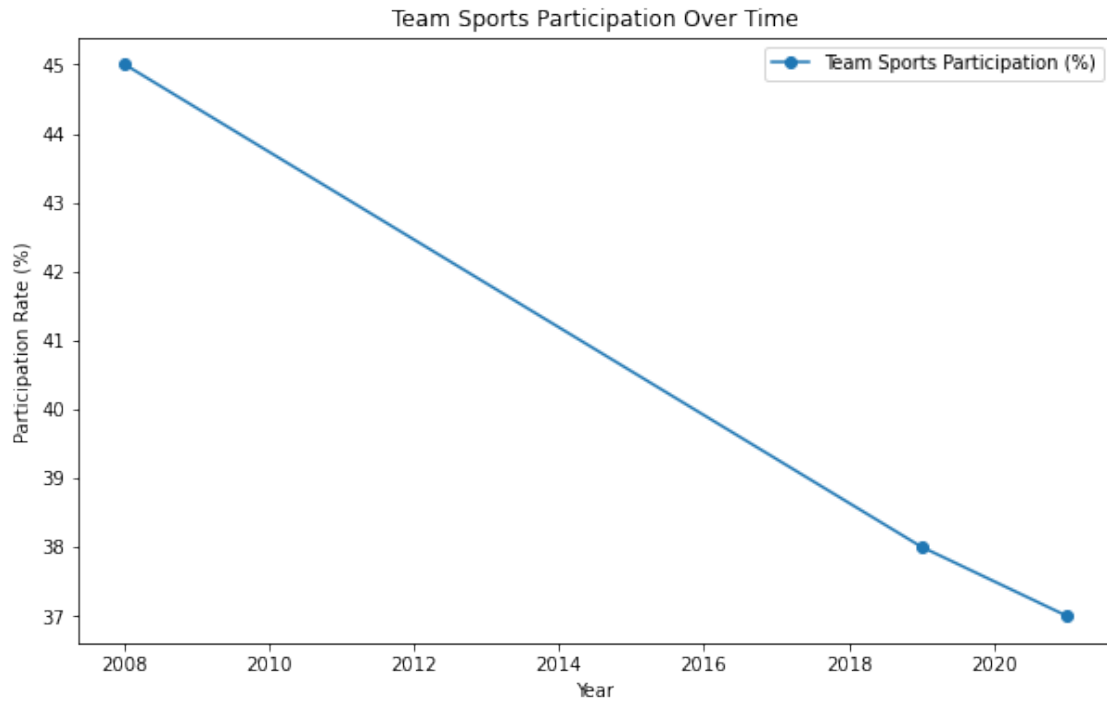


Going one step further, kids receiving coaching from high school or college athletes and coaches could replace the need for them to receive lessons. That could save families a lot more money per season, as lessons cost an average of \$183.



I went another step in this graph and made an assumption that camps would also not be needed. That fact might not necessarily be true, as camps serve other purposes besides teaching the sports. For instance, many kids attend camps while their parents are not at home so they are not left alone all day. Going to one 4 hour event would not replace that, but the ability to go to multiple events over a week span would make a difference.

Through all of the graphs, it can be seen that access to provided equipment and time from Sow Good Now would save families money, potentially allowing them to enroll their children in more sports or letting them play their sport for longer. In the last graph, the savings of not attending lessons or camps and not paying for equipment are approximately 50%, making youth sports way more affordable for families. Even in the first graph, where the only provided expense is equipment, the savings are meaningful. Families could save about \$500 over 3 years, the average amount a time a child plays a sport. The savings keep growing from there, showing how important it can be to provide equipment.



One issue is the access to sports before reaching middle or high school. Many schools offer free sports once kids reach a higher age, sometimes in middle school and more often in high school. The

problem is the only way to play at a younger age is to pay, creating a barrier to entry. According to federally collected data cited by the Sports Business Journal, “67.7% of children ages 6 to 17 from the wealthiest homes participated in organized sports, compared with 33.9% from the lowest-income households.” The pay to play barrier is stopping kids from underserved communities from playing sports, widening the gap between the wealthy and low-income. By the time these kids reach high school age, with their first opportunity to play a sport, they will be starting at a lower level than people who have been playing that sport for many years. Natalie Hummel, from the organization Every Kid Sports, said “If someone hasn’t played recreational sports growing up, they’re going to have a hard time making a high school team if the try-outs are against students who’ve been playing in recreational clubs from a young age”. This is why it is crucial to provide high level coaching to kids who would otherwise not receive it. Even if Sow Good Now cannot provide a league for kids to play sports in, the coaching can help them prepare for when they reach high school.

## 4 Youth Philanthropy Strengthens Communities

One way philanthropy helps to strengthen communities is through the monetary value of it. By donating and participating in philanthropy events, more money is being put into communities, allowing people to gain from it. According to Team Stage, “Volunteers contribute nearly 200 billion dollars to their communities annually, and their labor is valued at around \$28.54 per hour”. By allowing this money to be given to underserved areas, they are highly benefitting from philanthropy. In the case of Sow Good Now, this helps bring sports to people who would not have access to them previously. This money can go to new sports facilities, equipment, and programs, helping youth. The more youth sports opportunities there are, the stronger the communities will be, because kids will have the chance to bond with other people from their areas.

Philanthropy can help strengthen communities by bringing people together who would normally not be connected. Sports are one of the most popular ways of bringing together people, uniting them over a common interest and goal. People that play sports come from a variety of different racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Sheryl Seller, in a study for Brandeis, wrote “Without purposeful attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion, expanding youth philanthropy practice could serve to widen inequality by providing only youth with family wealth the opportunity to make grants.” This is why what Sow Good Now is doing is important, by providing assistance to those who most need it, strengthening those kids’ ties to the sports they play and the communities they are part of. Kids in underserved areas have been forgotten for a long time, even though they are most in need of support. Their communities need the most help, giving them the resources that everyone should be entitled to.

## 5 Data Sources:

<https://dogood.umd.edu/search/node?keys=volunteering%20decline>  
<https://www.bestcolleges.com/research/college-student-mental-health-statistics/>  
<https://projectplay.org/youth-sports/facts/challenges>  
<https://heller.brandeis.edu/sillerman/pdfs/opportunity-briefs/youth-led-grantmaking.pdf>  
<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/01/volunteering-and-civic-life-in-america.html>  
<https://nonprofitssource.com/online-giving-statistics/volunteering-statistics/>  
<https://nonprofitssource.com/online-giving-statistics/>  
<https://americorps.gov/about/our-impact/volunteering-civic-life>

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/5/11/division-i-outreach.aspx#:~:text=Recent%20data%20shows%20that%20>  
<https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/February-2022/How-Volunteering-Improves-Mental-Health#:~:text=Finding%20Purpose,while%20keeping%20you%20mentally%20stimulated.>  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10902-020-00242-8>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8497066/>  
<https://usacheer.org/how-to-support-underserved-communities-through-access-to-sport>  
<https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Journal/Issues/2023/05/01/In-Depth/youth-sports.aspx>  
<https://www.businessinsider.com/loneliness-decline-in-kids-sports-new-model-cheaper-easier-2023-8>  
<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0268583>  
<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/10/mental-health-campus-care>  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165032722002774>  
<https://teamstage.io/volunteering-statistics/#:~:text=Statistically%2C%20how%20does%20volunteering%20help>