

Children and sport

Sport isn't just good for children's bodies; it's good for their minds too. Studies have shown that sport has psychological benefits for children and teaches them important life skills. Sport has many *psychological and social benefits* for children – even more than the physical activity during play.

Researchers think this is because *children benefit from the social side of being in a team*, and from the involvement of other children and adults. Development from sport goes beyond learning new physical skills. Sport helps children develop better ways to cope with the highs and lows of life. When they're playing sport, children learn to lose.

Playing sport helps *children learn to control their emotions* and channel negative feelings in a positive way. Playing in a team helps children to develop many of the social skills they will need for life. *It teaches them to cooperate*, to be less selfish, and to listen to other children.

An important part of playing in a team is *accepting discipline*. Playing sport means children are expected to follow rules, accept decisions and understand that they could be penalised for bad behaviour. It teaches them to take directions from the coach and other adults.

Why is sport so important for children?