

Research: investigate
experiment discover!

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Understanding Children's Physical Activity and Communicating Research Findings

Nicholas L. Holt

Associate Professor

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

University of Alberta

**Talk for AALP Networking Meeting
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Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Overview

- Rationale
- Research Contexts
- Children's Neighborhood Play and Physical Activity Studies
- Some Suggestions...

Crisis of Low Physical Activity

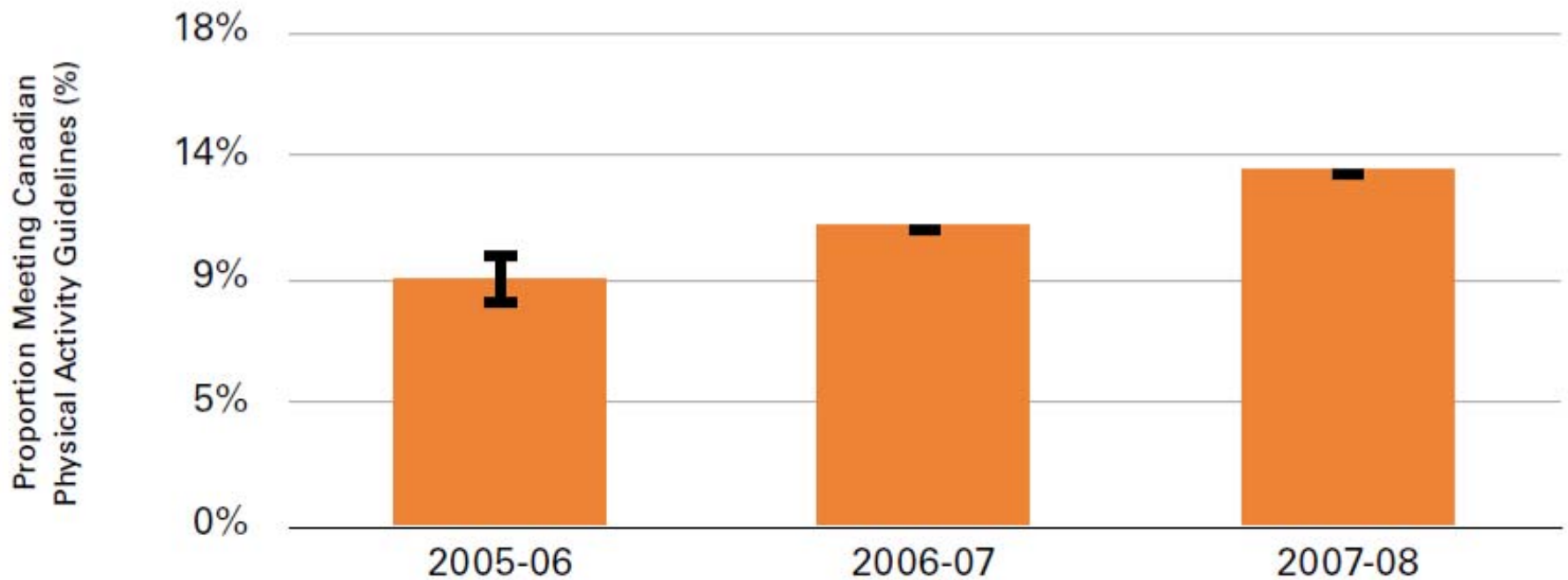
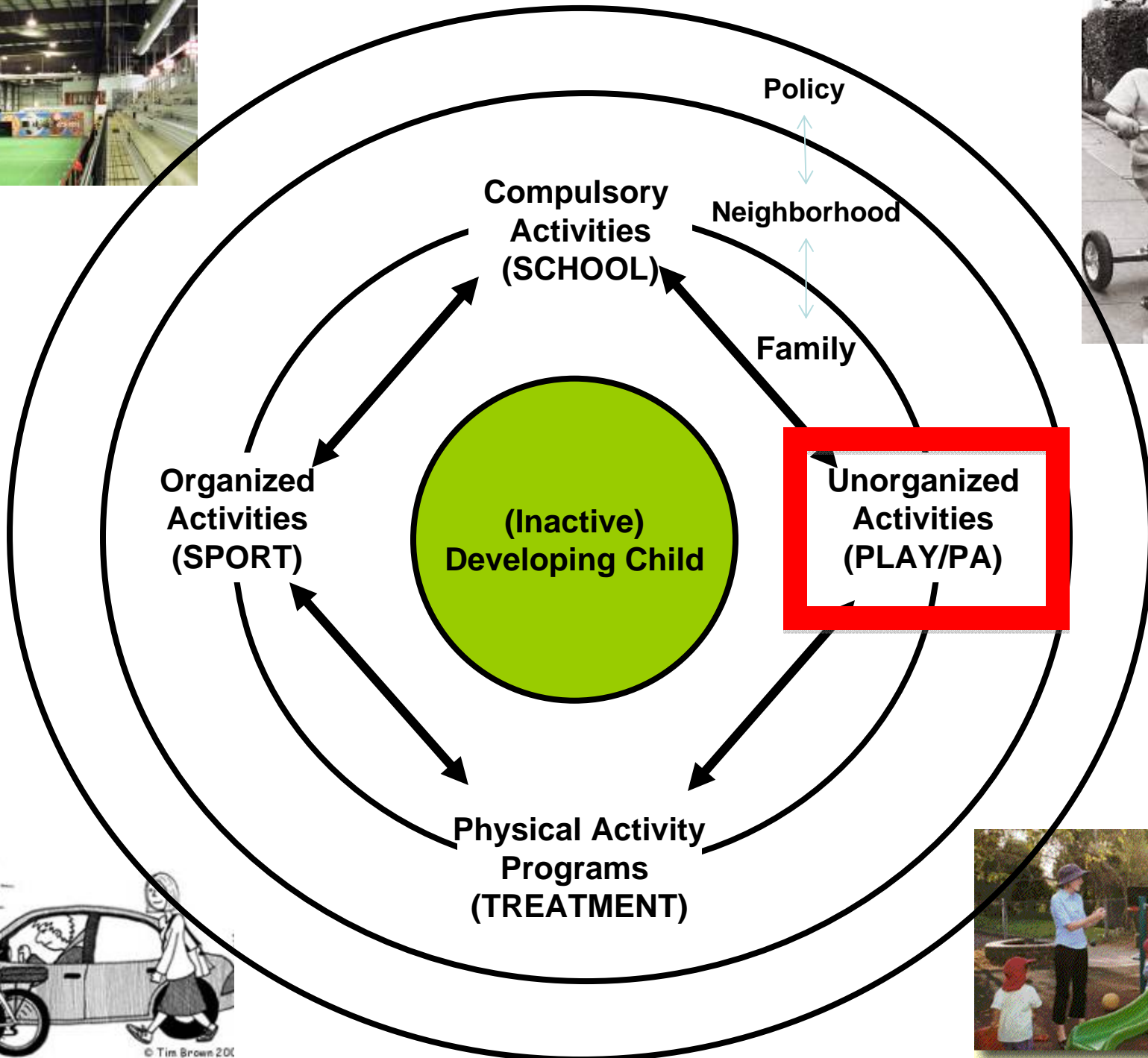


Figure 6: The proportion of Canadian children and youth meeting Canadian physical activity guidelines from 2005 to 2008 (Source: CFLRI CANPLAY).



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Preferences for Play Spaces

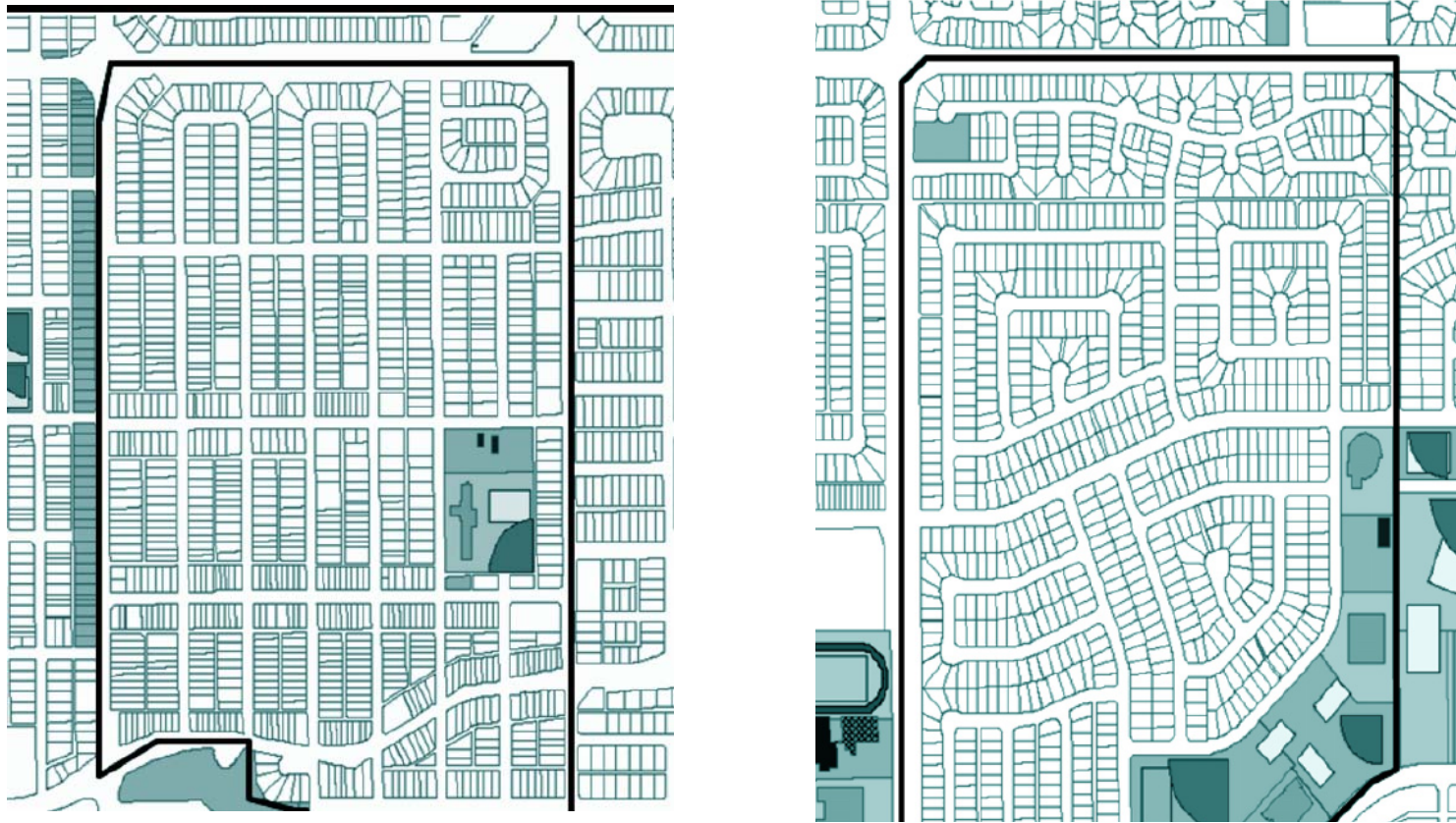
- Splashpads
- Shade
- Swings
- Cleanliness
- Lighting

(Veitch et al., 2006)

- Safety
- Independence
- Facilities
- Social Opportunities
- Urban Design *

(Tucker et al., 2007)

Edmonton...?



- Neighborhood and developmental differences in children's perceptions of places to play (Holt et al., 2008).
Equitable distribution of playgrounds, but quality low in 'high social need' neighborhoods (Smoyer-Tomic et al., 2004).

Children's PA in Edmonton

- **Purpose:**

- To assess perceived PA opportunities and barriers for inner-city youth in Edmonton.



ALBERTA CENTRE FOR
CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY
RESEARCH

Method

Participants

- 59 children from one inner-city school (28 f, 31 m; M age = 12.4 yrs).
- 8 school staff;
- 13 youth workers.

Data Collection & Analysis

- Individual interviews – content analysis.
- GIS mapping to calculate a walkability score.
- Census and city mapping data.



Results

Table 1

Summary of main findings.

| Main theme | Enabling factors | Constraining factors |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Neighborhood characteristics | Availability of PA resources High walkability | People-related safety concerns |
| Family involvement | Accompanied PA Play at home | Family 'disarray' |
| Adult supervised programs | Availability and involvement | Staffing problems |

Neighborhood Characteristics



- **Highly walkable**, but:
- “There’s actually a lot of poor **people**, there’s some drunks... it’s not really **safe** during the night time.”

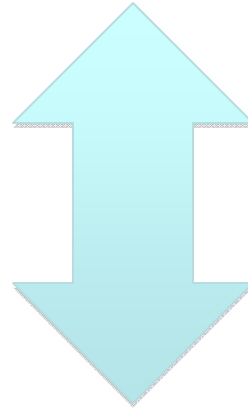
–“It’s kind of a **bad neighborhood**. Oh yah, at night time... the **prostitutes**... a lot of people just walking around... **I usually hear people getting beat.**”



Family Involvement

Accompanied PA

Play at Home



Family Circumstances

Adult-Supervised Programs

- “**Safety** is a huge concern. We have trouble getting the kids to the clubs because they’re afraid to come. And once they’re at the club, they don’t want to leave. Our staff end up driving kids home.”

“The **retention** piece is difficult. The **wages** we can pay are substantially lower.”



So What?

- Children's perceptions are important.
- Creating change...?
 - Publications
 - Networking Workshop (June, 2009)
 - Community Talks
 - Press Release
- Ideas...!

What Next?

- Summer camps and “Critical Hours” program
 - KidSport Alberta, Sport Central, Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton Foodbank, and PSOs
- “Playscapes” project

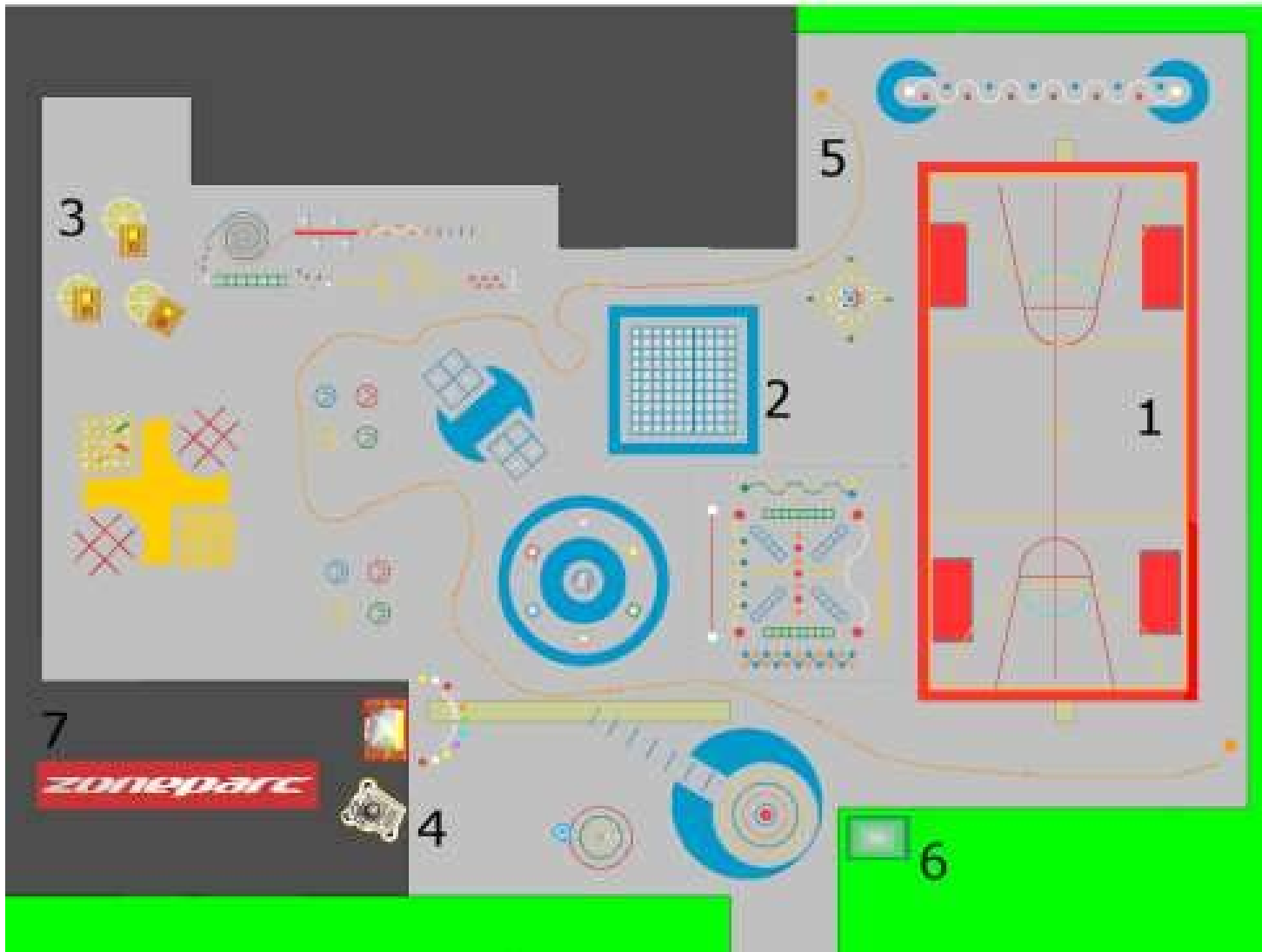
Playgrounds



Playground Markings



Playground Colour Zones



http://www.youthsporttrust.org/images/cms/Zoneparc/zoneparc_map.jpg

Some Other Ideas

Before, During, & After Competitions

BEFORE MATCHES:

Suggest match tactics if we ask

Give us **time and space** to be alone

Recommend good pre-match habits but don't try to do everything

Remind us you will be **proud** of us *whatever the outcome*

Keep **relaxed** and **calm**

DURING MATCHES:

Attend matches to show your interest

Pay attention to the match

Keep a **neutral or happy expression** throughout the match

Clap and cheer *appropriately* during the match to show your support

Have a **positive** and **happy attitude**

Be respectful towards our opponent

AFTER MATCHES:

Support us *whether we have won or lost*

Encourage us for the next match and **boost our confidence** if we have lost

Always give **positive feedback first**

Keep **feedback short** and **simple** after a loss

Only **talk about the match** *if we want to*

Give us **space after a loss**

OVERALL:

JUST ENJOY OUR TENNIS!

The trouble with learning to parent on the job is that your child is the teacher. ~ Robert Brault






Child and Adolescent Sport and Activity Lab

Contact: Camilla Knight
Phone: 780-492-5644
E-mail: cjknight@ualberta.ca

Child and Adolescent Sport and Activity Lab
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
Website: <http://www.ualberta.ca/~nholt/index.html>

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

How do players want their parents to behave at tennis competitions?



Child and Adolescent Sport and Activity Lab

Camilla Knight
Candice Boden
Dr Nicholas Holt
Tel: 780-492-5644



The Athletes' Views

42 tennis players (aged 12-15 years) from 6 different clubs talked to us about how they want parents to act at tennis tournaments.

This study was unique because it revealed **children's views** rather than those of coaches or parents.

Here are some of the general ideas the players came up with, as well as some specific quotes from the players themselves! Hopefully this can help to **better both your and your child's experience in tennis.**



What Players want their Parents to Do

- 1. SUPPORT us without putting pressure on us to win**
 - Focus on our **attitude and effort** rather than the outcome of the match
 - **Motivate and encourage us**
 - **Keep tennis in perspective**
- 2. Ensure your INVOLVEMENT is APPROPRIATE**
 - Be **involved** in our tennis but **don't go overboard** with loud comments or gestures
 - **Keep your comments appropriate to your level of experience** in tennis
 - Please don't **break the rules** by **getting involved in the match**
- 3. Be RESPECTFUL** to officials, opponents and other parents
 - **Please don't argue or yell** at anyone
 - **Be friendly, approachable and calm**

From the Kids



***Scott:** "... he like gives the thumbs up or claps, and after the match he just like gives all the positive stuff."

Sally: "say 'Have fun, good luck, and I love you.'"

Henry: "More than three words is probably not necessary.... Anything more than three words is just to get in your head... It's either "nice shot", or uh, "let's go", "come on", "good get", ...ah "nice try" or something."

David: "Sometimes I don't like when, like my dad sometimes, he tries to like, to put me on the spot and like gives me signs and all that and sometimes I don't agree with that ..."

Peter: "Leave the coaching to the coach and leave the refing to the ref."

** All names have been changed to respect the privacy of the players*



A Final Idea

- DVD/PSA.



Closing Remarks

1. Researchers are traditionally poor at communicating their findings outside academic community.
2. Collaborations to create and act on novel ideas.
3. Change can happen.