INTRO: As daily news reports remind us about the obesity issues facing our society, there’s some concern young people are dropping out of sports just when they should be encouraged to stay active. Speculation is that kids quit because there’s too much emphasis on winning or they’re simply burning out early because of the overall pressures. Vivien Williams speaks with a psychologist about keeping youngsters thriving in and enjoying sports activities.
FUN OUT OF THE SPORT AND KIDS MIGHT PLAY BECAUSE OF THAT PRESSURE, NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN INTEREST.”

DR. TRENERRY SAYS WHEN KIDS PLAY TO PLEASE OTHERS, OR THE SAKE OF A REWARD, THEY’RE AT INCREASED RISK OF DROPPING OUT. SO HOW DO YOU KEEP KIDS IN THE GAME?

DR. TRENERRY SAYS THERE ARE THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO HAVE TO KEEP KIDS INTERESTED IN SPORTS. CHOICES, COMPETENCE AND CARING.”

“THESE ARE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS. IF WE DON’T HAVE THEM WE DON’T KEEP DOING WHATEVER IT IS.”

WE’LL START WITH CHOICES. KIDS NEED TO BE ABLE TO CHOOSE THE SPORTS THEY WANT TO PLAY.

NEXT IS COMPETENCE. KIDS NEED TO FEEL A SENSE OF SUCCESS.
THEIR SELF-BELIEF NEEDS TO COME FROM A SENSE OF EFFORT AND IMPROVING ATHLETIC SKILL REGARDLESS OF WINNING OR LOSING.. AND YOUNG ATHLETES NEED TO FEEL CARED FOR – THAT PARENTS AND COACHES CARE ABOUT THEIR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS AND WILL TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY WIN OR LOSE THE GAME. AND THEY NEED TO FEEL THEY BELONG TO A GROUP. “WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED TO DO?” ONE WAY TO COMMUNICATE CARING IS TO ASK CONSTRUCTIVE QUESTIONS AFTER PRACTICE OR A GAME. NOT DID YOU WIN OR SCORE A GOAL, BUT. “DID YOU HAVE FUN? WHAT DID YOU LEARN IN PRACTICE? HOW DID THE TEAM PLAY? HOW WERE THE GUYS?”
Anchor tag:

Dr. Trenerry says if you notice that your child is losing interest in a sport or if he or she is stressed, talk about it and try to find out why. It could be too much pressure or it could be something else such as an incident that happened on the field. And admire your child’s skill development and effort regardless of winning or losing a game. For more information, visit our Website at...[STATIONS: Per the licensing agreement, please provide a link from your station's website to http://www.mayoclinic.org or voice tag "mayoclinic.org" for more information.]