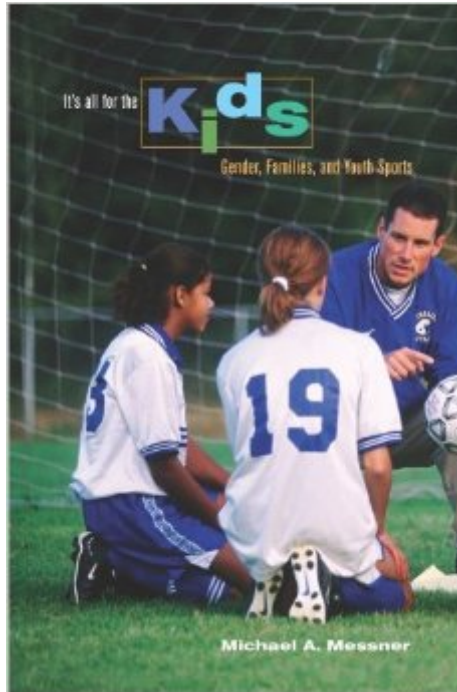


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# It's All For The Kids: Gender, Families, And Youth Sports



## Synopsis

Today, in a world quite different from the one that existed just thirty years ago, both girls and boys play soccer, baseball, softball, and other youth sports. Yet has the dramatic surge in participation by girls contributed to greater gender equality? In this engaging study, leading sociologist Michael A. Messner probes the richly complex gender dynamics of youth sports. Weaving together vivid first-person interviews with his own experiences as a volunteer for his sons' teams, Messner finds that despite the movement of girls into sports, gender boundaries and hierarchies still dominate, especially among the adults who run youth sports. His book widens into a provocative exploration of why youth sports matter; how they play a profound role in shaping gender, class, family, and community.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Michael Messner's newest book, "It's All For the Kids" furthers his long record of scholarly excellence coupled with bold insightfulness. He is one of those scholars that make you say after you read his work, "Of course! Why didn't I think of that?" He makes difficult truths seem so obvious. In this book, Messner discusses the politics of youth sports from the standpoint of parental involvement. In spite of gains made for girls' and women's athletic participation since the early 1970's, Messner finds that not much has changed in terms of gender segregation of young athletes and the adults who sponsor and facilitate their participation. Women rarely coach, and so both boys and girls expect that men are still the voice of athletic authority and role models, while women are

the "team moms" -- snack providers and team administrators. Messner's point is that this parental segregation with its message about rigid constraints about gender roles in society overshadows the advances that have been made to include girls in sports. He also addresses the impact of economic and social segregation on our kids' athletic careers. This book is a great read for anybody who cares about gender equality and the politics of youth sports. If you are a parent of a young athlete, it shouldn't be missed.

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