



NATIONAL  
**MENTORING**  
RESOURCE CENTER  
A Program of OJJDP

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# Program Report: PLAY4PURPOSE Pittsburgh Summer 2019



Evaluation Prepared by Meredith Getachew

*The goal of the National Mentoring Resource Center is to support mentoring programs incorporating evidence-based practices with training and technical assistance to improve the quality and effectiveness of their programming, leading to improved outcomes for our nation's youth. This project was supported by Award No. 2016-MU-MU-K001-awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice, Office of Justice Programs. It is prepared by Meredith Getachew, Technical Assistance Provider for the National Mentoring Resource Center grant sponsored by OJJDP.*

## Introduction

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Almost a decade ago Open Field began its quest in the Southwest Region of Cameroon, Africa with a vision to improve the lives of youth through the global game of soccer. The idea came when CEO and founder Justin Forzano meet Peter Ngwane during a trip to Cameroon, Africa where he was working on a rural development project. Together they embarked on a mission to fill a void in social infrastructure by creating a sport-based youth development, or Sport for Good, program under the name Cameroon Football Development Program. Initial activities included an educational soccer camp in 2010, followed by after-school programs and international team exchange in 2011. After-school and community-based programming continued year after year for hundreds of youth in the Southwest and Northwest regions of Cameroon.

By 2017, Open Field was developing and testing a new model for Sport for Good that put youth at the center of all program activities. The goal was to create a safe space for youth to play and learn, with an educational topic connected to every practice and game. Further, PLAY4PURPOSE provided youth leadership roles as coaches, referees, and match delegates on the soccer field and as mentors and role models off the field. Ultimately, they gain skills to succeed in school and in the workforce.

Open Field launched its Pittsburgh program in the summer of 2019 with the support of The Heinz Endowments and PNC Charitable Trusts. Through partnership with community organizations such as Somali Bantu Community Association of Pittsburgh (SBCAP) and Youth Places, Open Field piloted a program in Northview Heights, a low-income neighborhood located on the northside of Pittsburgh. Training material and curriculum for the pilot program were developed by Open Field, with a focus on engaging youth from the Northview Heights community in healthy physical activities, peer mentoring relationships in a group setting, and life skills education through the game of soccer.

This report highlights an evaluation of program impact for junior leader participants and youth participants in Northview Heights (survey respondent ages 10-17) from June 19<sup>th</sup> to August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## Open Field Summer 2019 Program Goals:

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Youth-led, neighborhood-based educational soccer activities that:

- Support learning leadership and life skills
- Promote health and well-being
- Encourage voluntary service among youth participants
- Foster improved relations between African immigrants and African Americans living in Northview Heights

## Program Design

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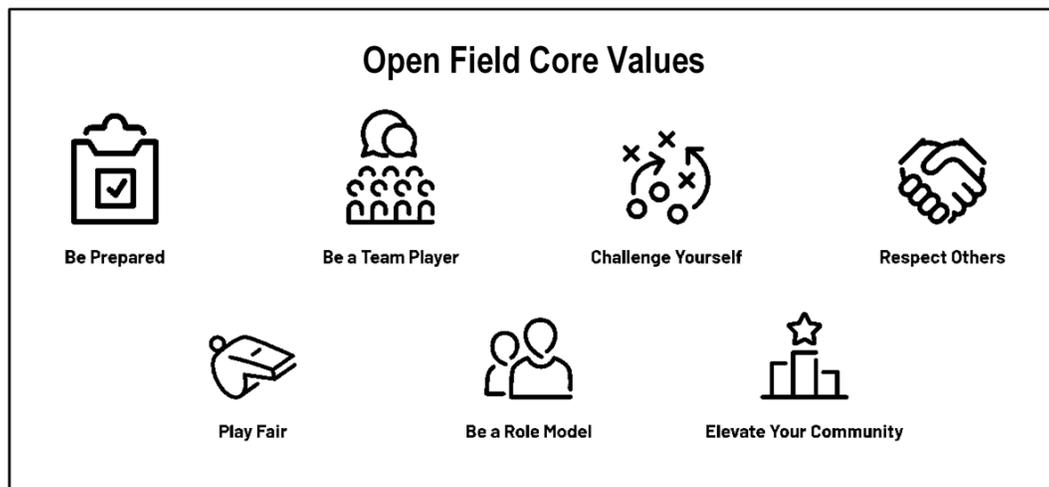
For the Northview Heights program, Open Field employed Northview Heights resident, Abdi Lugundi to serve as a community liaison and program leader. With Mr. Lugundi's support, Open Field recruited teenagers living in the neighborhood to serve as Junior Leaders for their 2019 summer program.

Phase 1 of the program was a 3-day workshop designed to prepare the selected Junior Leaders for the weeks ahead, and cultivate skills needed both for the success of the program and long after the summer would end. The training workshop included activities centered on teaching *goal setting*, *collaboration*, and developing their *interpersonal skills*. The following table includes an outline of the training workshop.

Topics	Activities and Exercises
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Junior Leaders participated in and facilitated group discussions.</li> <li>– <i>Spread the Word</i> created social media posts to promote the Open Field program</li> <li>– <i>Elevator speeches</i>; workshop exercise</li> <li>– <i>Photo assignment</i></li> <li>– <i>Communication Tools</i>; Information session</li> </ul>
Self-advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Self-advocacy!</i> Workshop session focused on discussing and defining self-advocacy</li> <li>– <i>Setting Goals and Overcoming Obstacles with Never Fear Being Different's</i> Jordon Rooney, guest speaker</li> <li>– Self-assessment as an integral part of all exercises</li> </ul>
Problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Memory puzzle</i>; Group exercise</li> <li>– <i>Breaking up fights</i>; Information session</li> </ul>
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>What makes a team effective?</i> Group exercise</li> <li>– <i>Memory puzzle</i>; Group exercise</li> </ul>
Conflict resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Establishing ground rules (collaboration between Junior Leaders and Open Field staff).</li> <li>– <i>Conflict Prevention and Resolution</i>, information session</li> <li>– <i>Dealing with anger</i>, information and workshop session</li> <li>– <i>Breaking up fights</i>, information session</li> </ul>
Coaching and refereeing soccer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>What is a Peer Leader?</i> Information session</li> <li>– <i>Positive Leadership Skills</i>. Workshop session</li> <li>– <i>How to coach a soccer team</i>. Workshop session</li> <li>– <i>How to be a referee!</i> Workshop session</li> </ul>

Phase 2 of the program was the youth-led soccer activities, which ran on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am-noon and engaged 60 youth participants from the community. These sessions consisted of the following components:

1. Warm-up exercises and stretching
2. Group discussion on that week's topic (each week having its own topic based on Open Field core values, shown below)
3. Soccer skills learning facilitated in smaller groups by age. Each of those groups would be led by two of Junior Leaders
4. 5 vs. 5 soccer games. The topic of the week would then be discussed further by using Curriculum Cards containing different statements and questions on the topic
5. Cool down and summary discussion, including take away message



## In Summer 2019, Open Field produced the following:

60 youth<sup>1</sup> (aged 7-19) participated in a program aimed to increase their understanding of life skills.

13 educational soccer sessions each lasting 2 hours held at the community field in Northview Heights.

8 Junior Leaders (teenagers 14-17) gained leadership skills through a part-time summer job.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the 60 participants, 57 of them were residents of Northview Heights while 3 participants joined after hearing about the program from a program advisor.

1 Community Leader (age 21) gained leadership skills through a part-time summer job.  
1 community service project completed by the Junior Leaders

## Results:

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68 total youth ranging from ages 5 to 17<sup>2</sup> participated in Open Field for summer 2019. Eight junior leaders oversaw the participation of an average of 45 youth participants per day in Northview Heights. 1 Community Leader oversaw all activities during the summer program and supported Junior Leaders in the field. All participants were asked to rate: their experience in the program and their knowledge gained. Results are divided into two categories: Junior Leaders and Youth Participants.

### *Highlights from Junior Leader Responses:*

- **100% agreed** their voice was heard in the training seminars and contributed to the success of the program.
- **100% agreed** that Open Field helps bring together people in the community.
- **100% identified** at least 13 new life skills they learned or experienced as a coach, referee, and communicator/organizer during the summer 2019 program.

### *Highlights from Youth Participants Responses:*

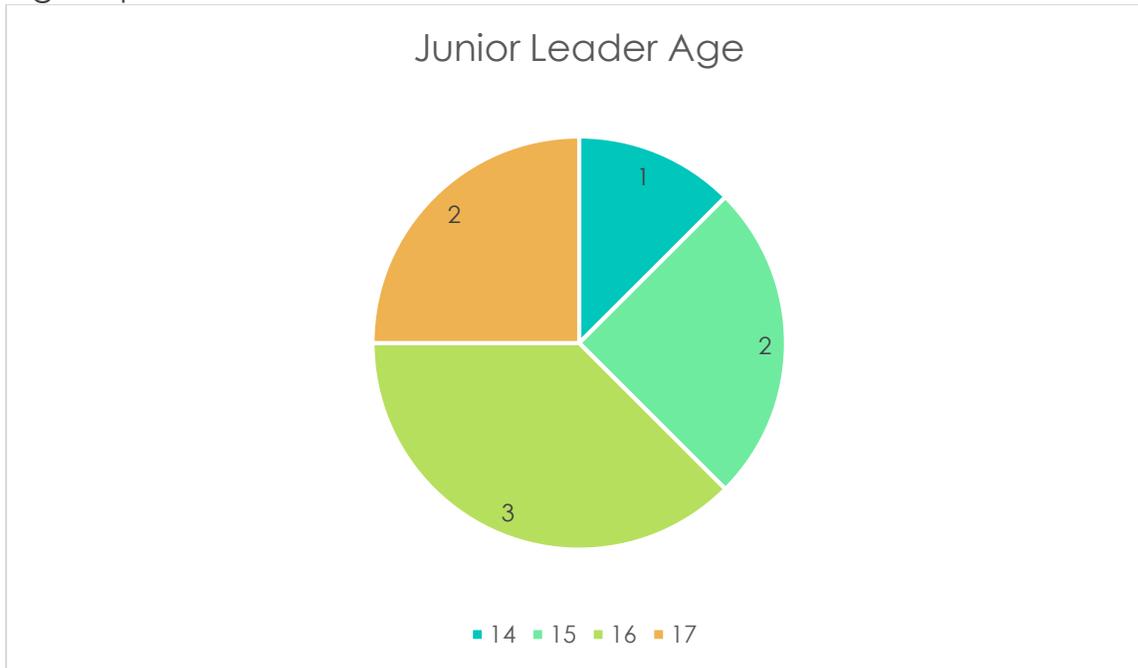
- **98% agreed** that being a part of the Open Field soccer program helped them to feel healthy.
- **93% agreed** that they Junior Leaders help them to do their best.
- **93% agreed** that the Open Field program helped them try new things, even when they appeared difficult.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that only participants 10 and older were asked to participate in the survey due to written comprehension and understanding.

## Junior Leader Program Impact<sup>3</sup>:

Age representation:



The gender breakdown of Junior Leaders is as follows: 6 males and 2 females.

Experience:

Junior leaders were asked to reflect on their experience and learning at the end of the 7- week program. In multiple choice questions, students were able to select Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral
<b>I felt that my voice was heard during the training seminars.</b>	50%	50%	0%
<b>I felt that my voice was valuable in contributing to the success of the program.</b>	50%	50%	0%
<b>I feel more connected to my community through meeting new people.</b>	37.5%	50%	12.5%
<b>I connected with Youth Participants who have a different background than me.</b>	62.5%	25%	12.5%
<b>I connected with Junior Leaders who have a different background than me.</b>	62.5%	25%	12.5%

<sup>3</sup> N=8. Total number of Junior Leader participants=8. 100% surveys collected.

<b>I believe that the Open Field program helps bring together people in the community.</b>	75%	25%	0%
<b>I learned what to improve on (weaknesses).</b>	62.5%	12.50%	25%
<b>I found goals that I want to set for myself.</b>	25%	62.5%	12.5%
<b>I learned how to use my strengths to be a better leader.</b>	62.5%	25%	12.5%
<b>I have become a better public speaker.</b>	37.5%	50%	12.5%

### Referee Knowledge Gained:

Junior Leaders **all** learned/experienced the following as a referee:

	<b>Skills Learned:</b>
<b>1</b>	How to resolve conflicts
<b>2</b>	Patience and self-control
<b>3</b>	Decision-making
<b>4</b>	Observational/awareness of the game

Participants reflected on how they applied their knowledge from the workshop to their role as a referee:

- As a referee I called outs and corners and I had to pay attention to how they were playing. Public speaking.
- Elevator pitches, staying near the ball, communication, and calling the outs.
- I learned how to call fair things and control the game.
- Even though contact isn't too hard, if you make the call it could prevent a player from being angry.
- We learned that you call certain things in soccer.
- I don't let nobody tell me what to do.
- Observational like knowing were to stand when you are playing referee. Another one is decision making when to call foul even if the player don't agree.
- I discovered teamwork guides you to see your goal. When we used the blocks during the workshop it helps to connect us on the field.
- From the workshops we learned and got trained on public speaking. From that I learned how to take control of spaces and have my voice heard.

## Coach/Team Captain Knowledge Gained:

Junior Leaders **all** learned/experienced the following as a coach/team captain:

	<b>Skills Learned:</b>
<b>1</b>	Working well in a team
<b>2</b>	How to guide others
<b>3</b>	Listening and understanding
<b>4</b>	Understanding/controlling your emotions better
<b>5</b>	How to motivate others to follow your lead

Participants reflected on how they applied their knowledge from the workshop to their role as a coach/team captain:

- I learned to give feedback to my peers and to work as a team.
- I was giving good answers. Thinking of different things to do every Tuesday's and Thursday's.
- When there was two players with conflict I know what to do.
- I observe and tell a player to move position to help lead us to victory.
- Told kids to no judge other only they stop (sic).
- The way I applied it was working in a team better at helping them on their weakness.
- How to guide others, telling them what to pass or shoot in the game. Another one is listening and understanding like hearing out what the team have to say and choosing what to do.
- When being a coach/team captain, I learned it's not about having control but learning how to facilitate and encourage other players to be part of the team. Being a team captain, I learned how to lead by example not just words.

## Communicator/Organizer Knowledge Gained:

Junior Leaders **all** learned/experienced the following as a communicator/organizer:

	<b>Skills Learned:</b>
<b>1</b>	How to express my thoughts and ideas
<b>2</b>	How to set personal goals
<b>3</b>	An improvement in my public-speaking abilities
<b>4</b>	How to communicate a clear message

Participants reflected on how they applied their knowledge from the workshop to their role as a communicator/organizer:

- I learned earning to be on time is one thing and communicating like telling each other what time we will be come(ing) to work.
- I was good at working with other people when it came to the activities.
- When we were setting up the field got the right amount of cones.
- I organize plans for the activities we do.
- The way I did it was by leading them.
- How to set a personal goal like setting a goal to run fast or to jump higher.
- In the workshop I learn (sic) to raise my voice so I can get my message across and I learned to keep everyone (sic) interest by limited distraction like moving them towards the sun so they look away.
- Time management is crucial to be a communicator/organizer. Learning to be on time and planning ahead helped me with planning events and communicating with people.

## Open-Ended Questions<sup>4</sup>

**Participants wrote how they can apply skills learned during the workshop to their life (i.e. school, home, etc):**

Like team work I can use that in school and public speaking.

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By expressing my thoughts.

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Public speaking can help during presentations during class.

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I learned to set goals, and goals ahead of your goals (when you complete your goals what's next). Be specific in how much you want to accomplish.

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By being a more open communicator.

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By listening to their ideas and to control myself more.

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I can apply communication, giving decision and listening and understanding others.

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I can apply my communication skills during class so my voice is heard when I am responding to a question.

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Time management, public speaking, and communication skills will help me further develop my role as a college student and a leader for my community.

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<sup>4</sup> Note that these are raw, unedited responses.

**Participants wrote things that they got better at as a result of being a Junior Leader this summer:**

Giving edvic (sic) and communication and leading.

I've got better at speaking to people and using my voice also connecting with others.

I'm a coach now, and I learned to see things from a different view.

Public speaking talk to new people.

Public speaking, leadership, and also patience.

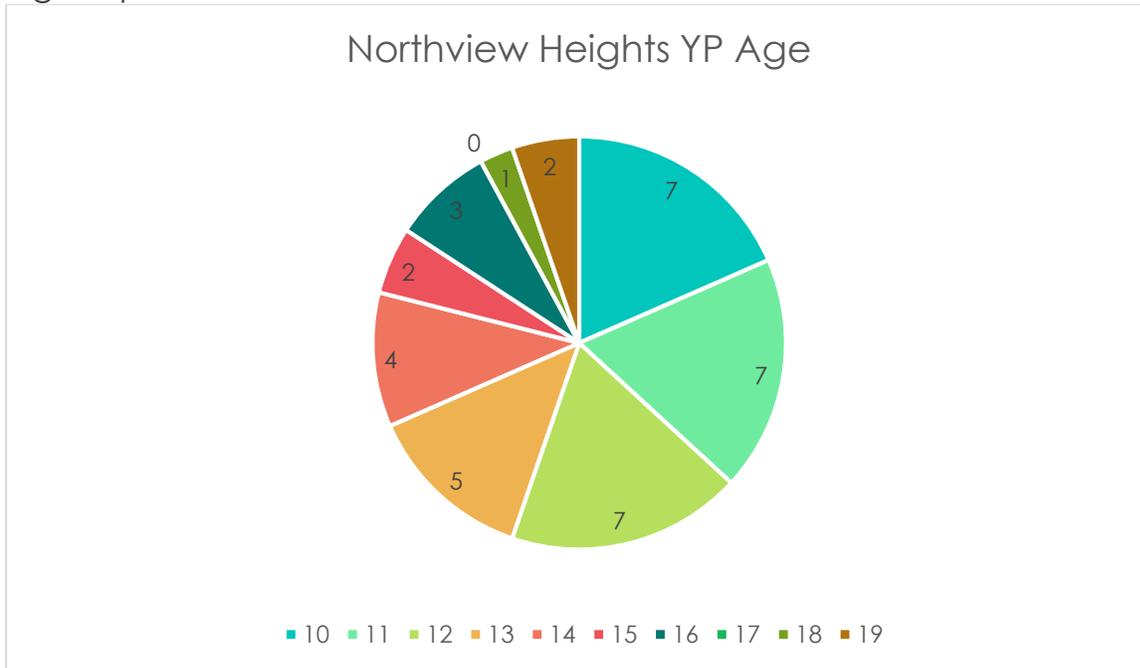
Speaking up to others, knowing what to do when conflict start and set a goal in life.

I got better at public speaking and leading big groups of people and teamwork especially when it came to playing that was the most important thing.

Public speaking, patience and controlling my anger, time management.

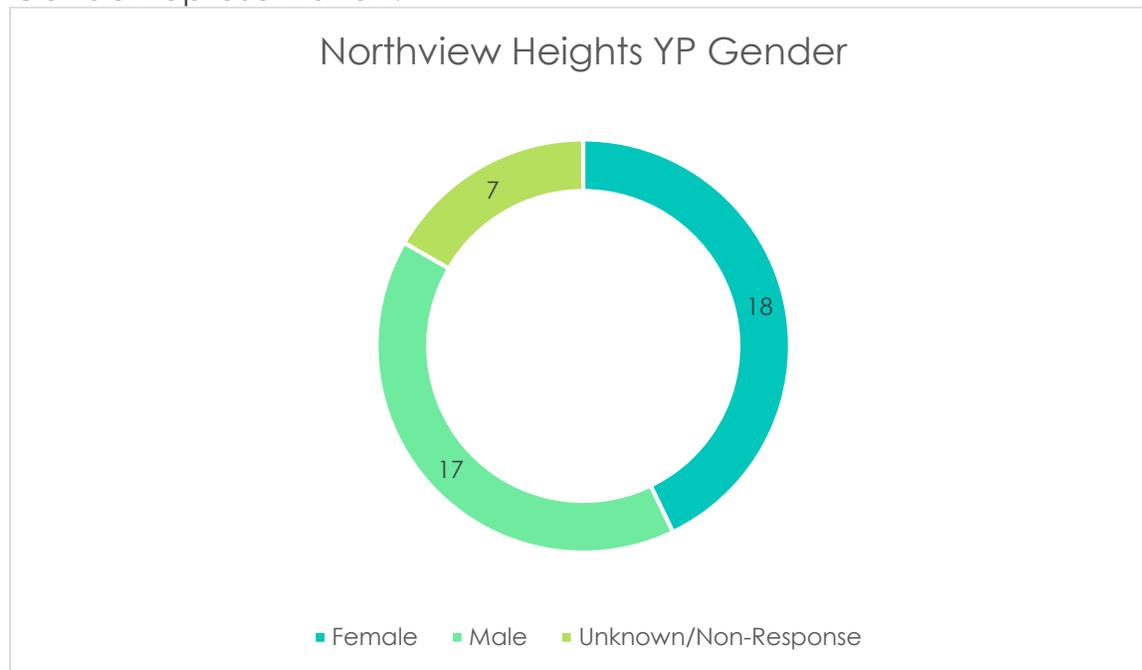
## Northview Heights Youth Participants Program Impact<sup>5</sup>:

Age representation:



<sup>5</sup> N=42. Total number of Northview Heights youth participants=60. 70% surveys collected.

Gender representation:



Experience:

Northview Heights youth participants were asked to reflect on their experience and learning at the end of the summer program. In multiple choice questions, students were able to select Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
<b>The Coaches/Leaders care about me.</b>	37.5%	50%	5%	7.5%
<b>The Coaches/Leaders help me to do my best.</b>	38%	55%	7%	0%
<b>I could go to the Coaches/Leaders for help if I had a problem.</b>	29%	60%	2%	10%
<b>The soccer program has helped me to make friends with my teammates.</b>	37%	46%	7%	10%
<b>The soccer program has helped me to learn to keep trying even when something is difficult.</b>	49%	44%	2%	5%
<b>The soccer program has helped me to feel better about trying new things.</b>	36%	50%	2%	12%
<b>The soccer program has helped me to feel like an important member of the team.</b>	45%	41%	7%	7%

## Open-Ended Questions<sup>6</sup>

### Participants answered what they liked best about the soccer program this summer:

#### Scoring

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Playing soccer and meeting new people.

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I can make new friends and it's a good work out.

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What I liked or enjoyed about the soccer program is I took a chance to try something new.

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It is fun (9)

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Playing with/meeting new and different people. (3)

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The positive encouragement the coaches give.

#### Participating

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I feel 100% great.

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That we could play with people I don't know.

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Learning how to play soccer for the first time

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Playing soccer and winning.

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Doing the relay races.

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Playing soccer and Belitne was the best coach.

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Playing a soccer game. (2)

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Playing soccer helped me learn how to play. (2)

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What i like about it is you get to have fun and get stronger.

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It helps me to get free time and be off my phone (I [heart] all my coaches)

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The coaches

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That we do 1V1

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That team work is key.

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The people

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I like to play and have fun. (2)

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<sup>6</sup> Note that these are raw, unedited responses from participants

**Participants answered what they would change about the Open Field summer program:**

Nothing (11)

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Not play in the sun/the weather/playing indoors (6)

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Having more people participate (3)

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Us playing more than just soccer. (2)

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Cold water bottles and snacks. (2)

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Make team.

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Skills

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To divide everyone into two groups and all play a game.

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They need to have more water breaks

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Me being a coach to enspire (sic) kids to play and learn stuff.

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The goals

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Stop playing too much.