

## What Youth Soccer Has Meant To Me

Youth Soccer has played a huge role in my life. It has helped me to develop leadership qualities, helped keep me in shape, and helped prepare me for the future. If I am not playing or watching soccer, I am probably thinking about it.

I started playing soccer when I was four. The first team I played for was the Thunderbirds. Since then, I have played on numerous teams, and for several different coaches. My experiences have taught me different things, not only about soccer, but also about life in general. While the vast majority of my experiences have been positive, there have also been situations where there were obstacles to overcome and tough decisions to make. Through these experiences I believe I have become a better person, and am better equipped to handle what life may present me in the future.

Playing soccer has helped me to develop qualities such as hard work, sportsmanship, teamwork, and even leadership. I am currently a captain of my U18 competitive team. This responsibility has helped me learn that a leader must not only lead with his mouth, but also by his actions. Youth soccer has also helped prepare me for the future as I plan to play at the college level. I owe this, in part, to youth soccer. The countless hours of practice and the numerous amounts of games and tournaments have made me the player that I am today.

Another benefit of youth soccer is the many friendships I have developed over the years. Not only have I been able to become friends with my teammates, but I have also been able to get to know many of the players I have played against throughout the years.

Youth soccer has become a huge part of my life, and I thank all those involved. I also encourage everyone to continue to play a part in the development of youth soccer in Oklahoma as well as the rest of the country. Through soccer, and the positive atmosphere that it creates, we can continue to mold America's youth.