

## The Research Question/Problem

- ◆ The political and ideological importance and scope of youth's involvement in sport has been a topic of research.
  - The important role of the family as a socializing agent and source of emotional, physical, and financial support has been investigated.
- ◆ However, less attention has been directed to the impact organized youth sport may have on family life (interactions, values, and relationships), and thus, will be the aim of this study.
  - Organized youth sport may also reflect and contribute to broader ideologies of parenthood and gender. To date, little substantive research has explored this connection (Coakley, 2006).
- ◆ This study also seeks to address another gap in the literature and the lack of research that has investigated sport in the rural context.
  - There may be unique experiences, benefits and/or challenges.



## Description of the Project

- ◆ **Participants:**  
Approximately 5 families. All family members will be included (mothers, fathers, step-parents, children, and siblings of child-athlete).
  - Families must have at least one child 12-15 yrs old who is currently participating in organized sport, as this is the age where parent-child negotiations may be particularly heightened and drop-out rates increase.
  - Families must reside in a rural community (both farm and non-farm residences).
- ◆ **Data Collection:**
  1. Semi-structured interviews - Interviews will be held separately with each individual family member to allow discussion of different (and sometimes conflicting) experiences.
  2. On-line participant journals for duration of 10 days.
- ◆ **Data Analysis:**  
Constructivist grounded theory approach.



## New Understandings From Project

- ◆ Understand the connection of youth sport to family life, both inside and outside the sport domain (family time, financial resources, family interactions/relationships/processes)
- ◆ Understand youth sport in terms of broader changing parenthood ideologies (a culture of "involved fathering" and "intensive mothering" and criterion whereby a parent's "moral worth" may be judged)
- ◆ Understand how youth sport reflects and contributes to broader gender ideology (resistance/change and reproduction)
- ◆ Understand how residing in the rural context shapes or influences the nature of youth sport participation



## Increasing Participation/ Development of Policy

- ◆ Identify what processes are fostering positive and negative experiences for both parents and children, in connection to youth sport organizations.
  - Through education and awareness, promote aspects that encourage positive experiences for parents and children, and educate why decisions are made (by parent and/or child) to cease sport participation.
- ◆ Identify factors/processes that promote positive and negative interactions between family members
  - Recognize and educate ways that we can help families promote positive interactions, while minimizing time stress and fatigue, to encourage continued and/or increased participation.
- ◆ Identify unique barriers/ challenges that rural families encounter in facilitating youth sport.
  - Recognize and educate potential ways that families can minimize/overcome these barriers.

