

Kids & Fandom

The Global Kids Sports Report is one of the most comprehensive pieces of research of its kind, looking at why kids do and do not participate in sports and what drives their fandom for particular teams and sports stars. We spoke to just over 4,300 tweens and their parents across 7 countries through both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

Below is a little taste of the first report from our research, on Sports Fandom. To get the full report, visit www.GlobalKidsSportsReport.com. In the following months, we'll release standalone reports on Sports participation, the Sports Gender Gap, and E-Sports.

Our Key Findings

1. Social connection



Tweens use fandom to strengthen social bonds

7-12 is a critical age for building and strengthening social bonds. The most immediate social connections are with friends and family who are the catalysts for many tweens' fandoms. However, tweens are beginning to connect with the broader fan community across social media.

2. Self definition



Tweens use fandom to define who they are

One of the main jobs that a tween has is understanding who they are and how they fit into those social groups. Many children are using sports as a building block for their self-identity and use sports merchandise as a form of badging, letting the world know which group they are a member of.

There is a complicated interplay between team affiliation, player aspiration and brand associations. A lot depends on the importance that the tween places on each of those things to define who they are.

3. Winning



Tweens love a winner, but NOT at any cost

Nothing sweetens a fandom like being on the winning side! Performance and skills are one of the main drivers for player and team affinity.

However, the number one reason a tween will stop supporting a club or player is that they are caught cheating.

Tweens have a very acute (and possibly idealistic) sense of right and wrong and their own sense of identity is so intertwined with their fandom that they will reject cheaters very quickly in case it damages their own integrity.



4. Home advantage

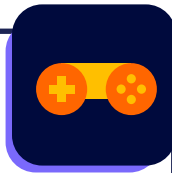


Local teams are favoured, but not because they are local

You are more likely to support your local and national team than any other team, so far so obvious... However, this is more likely due to exposure and family influence than any deeper affinity with the local community.

Sports stars can herald from anywhere. While there is a local bias, it is far less of an influence than the player's skills or the teams they play for.

5. Players



The protagonist in your fandom story

Players are the draw for many children, they are the relatable and aspirational characters that drive all good story franchises.

Their skills are one of their main draws, but their personality and backstory are also interesting for many children, particularly girls.

What happens when a player leaves a team and moves on is vastly different in different countries and tied to local culture of team loyalty. Countries like Italy and Spain will stick with their clubs, players come and go, however in the USA they are more likely to follow the player.

6. The changing exposure/fandom cycle



Exposure drives fandom but the medium of exposure is changing

Tweens will engage with multiple sports across multiple channels, multiple times a day. Each channel and engagement is 'scratching a different itch'.

Tweens will consume official content, unofficial audio, video, even games. Though we did see decreasing interest in the live experience both from a broadcast and actual attendance perspective.

The exposure this content gives leads to greater levels of fandom, which in turn leads to greater levels of exposure. However, exposure doesn't just come from media, it also comes participation. There is a very strong link between those play and those who support.



Want to find out more?

Download the full report at:

GlobalKidsSportsReport.com