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COMM 773

Sports Communication & Culture

ACTIVITY 3B Performance Enhancing Substances in Sports

1. Your boss is giving testimony to a President's Council on Drug Control in Sports. You will be accompanying the team to Washington. The Council members want to know why substance use among athletes is widespread and they should sponsor a new drug testing agency to conduct tests in an effort to eliminate doping of all kinds in all
2. Locate at least 3 articles online or in the NYIT electronic library that highlight recent examples of the controversy.
3. Develop a 500 word essay for your boss.
4. DUE February 25

Substance abuse amongst athletes is a common practice now more than ever before. Why is this the case? Some may say that it is the pressure that is imposed on the athlete...pressure that makes them feel that they need to perform above and beyond their body's potential.

This pressure begins at a very young age. Young athletes feel the same pressure and the professionals to achieve abnormally high standards. It is so important that we educate our youngsters on the dangerous effects of drug use especially performance enhancing drugs. In Susan Gaidos article, "Foul Play," the author describes how some athletes can actually beat the drug tests that look for these performance enhancing drugs. So now what some scientist are trying to do is to test the athlete's genes. The article states that "most steroids abused by athletes (called anabolic steroids) are made of testosterone. In a drug test, we are looking for a one to one ratio of two chemicals...epitestosterone and TG. Fifteen percent of male athletes without a specific gene do not produce the enzyme that is detected in urine that confirm the use of steroids. This is why some scientist are looking to not only drug test but to also test the genes of certain athletes.

The practice of using drugs has become such a common practices that most professional sports now test for this type of abuse. In fact, Dr. Donald Catlin ran the largest drug testing company for the past 20 years. According to the article, "Chemical Warfare" Dr. Catlin's lab tested for the National Football League, Minor League Baseball, The National Collegiate Athletic Association and the agency that screens US Olympians. A quote from Donald really sums up sports today..."Sports is a mess. I've lost my taste not for the ideals of sports but for how they're practiced today. We need to preserve sport. If we can't find a way to preserve it. We

got troubles.” One way to preserve sports is to continue to promote the practice of drug testing in sports. Catlin has helped to uncover many scandals in the world of sports including BALCO and the Tammy Thomas case. He also helped to form WADA (the World Anti-Doping Agency) “which controls drug testing in most sports.” He is currently trying to develop a urine test for the Human Growth Hormone. With people out there like Dr. Caitlin, these cheaters do not stand a chance. His goal is to be one step ahead at all times. With any hope we can eliminate performance enhancing drugs from sports altogether.

But “if players don’t like drug testing, maybe they should consider getting a job in Canada.” Andy Holloway point out in his article, “Banned in Sports” that in Canada drug testing is not a common practice. His question is are they more protective of people’s human right in Canada or are American’s lenient with drug abusers. In fact, according to the article “drug abuse is essentially considered a disability under the Human Rights Code.” So whether we are too lenient or not, this practice has to stop. We need more people in this world like Dr. Donald Catlin, who help to stop the use of performance enhancing drugs in sports. These drugs are not only dangerous, but they also give players an unfair advantage in their sport.

Works Cited

Davis, D. (2007, July). Chemical Warfare. *Los Angeles Magazine* , p. 108.

Gaidos, S. (2008, April 9). Foul Play? *Science News for Kids* .

Holloway, A. (2007, April 23). Banned in the USA. *Canadian Business* , p. 21.