

# STATE-WIDE SURVEY OF MARYLAND COACHES



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# **Coach Beyond...**



## **Introduction and Background**

In fall 2021, LiFEsports at The Ohio State University (OSU) and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) were awarded a grant as part of the “Million Coaches Challenge” funded by the Susan Crown Exchange. The Million Coaches Challenge aims to train one million coaches in social-emotional learning and positive youth development (SEL-PYD) practices by 2025. The Susan Crown Exchange seeks to bring partner organizations together to build a future where our kids know how to work together, celebrate success, manage failure, and are equipped with the skills they need to thrive. LiFEsports, OHSAA, partner school districts, and youth sport organizations named our collective work in Ohio “Coach Beyond.”

In 2024, the Susan Crown Exchange provided funding to replicate the Ohio model of Coach Beyond in Kansas, Indiana, and Maryland. One step in building capacity for states is understanding their coaches' training needs and interests. As such, each state engaged in a state-wide needs assessment (e.g., a state-wide survey of youth sport coaches).

## **State-Wide Survey of Maryland Youth Sport Coaches**

Leaders at OSU LiFEsports developed a state-wide coaching survey in 2022 to assess coaches' backgrounds, experiences, philosophies, behaviors, training interests, and training histories. Guided by this initial work in Ohio, leaders in Maryland selected items to include in their needs assessment. This report presents the results of the Maryland state-wide survey conducted from September 2024 to March 2025. To summarize our findings, we first present the study methods. Next, we present the demographics of Maryland coaches who completed the survey, followed by an overview of their coaching behaviors. Coaches also reported their training histories and interests, top coaching philosophies, and perceived needs in their schools and communities.

## **Method**

The OSU Institutional Review Board approved all study procedures. Participants were recruited via social media and emails sent out to contacts on a comprehensive list of coaches from for-profit and non-profit sectors (i.e., club teams, private schools, clubs, associations, and other sport entities such as parks and recreation agencies, Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA), and the Maryland Football Coaches Association (MFCA), etc.). Participants provided informed consent before completing the survey. Participant responses were included if they answered at least one question in the survey. Valid percentages are reported throughout to provide a snapshot of those coaching in Maryland.



## Coach Demographics

In total, 213 Maryland coaches participated in this survey. Most coaches had less than ten years of coaching experience, were between 30 and 49 years old, and identified as White and male. Importantly, demographic questions were optional to allow respondents to maintain anonymity. The following tables overview the characteristics of respondents who participated in our study.

Characteristics	%
<b>Years Coached</b>	
Less than 5 years	31%
6 - 10 years	24%
11 - 20 years	24%
21+ years	21%
<b>Age</b>	
Under 30	14%
30 - 39	33%
40 - 49	75%
50 - 59	18%
60 or older	7%
<b>Race</b>	
White	59%
Black	24%
Hispanic/Latino	6%
Multiple Races	4%
AAPI/Native American	2%
Other/Prefer not to answer	4%
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	73%
Female	26%
Prefer not to answer	1%

**45% had over  
10 years of  
coaching  
experience**

**The majority  
were between  
the ages of 30 -  
49**

**A majority  
identified as  
White and male**

### Role Last Season Coaching Primary Sport

Role	%	Setting	%	School Level	%	School Type	%
Head Coach	74%	School	56%	Elementary school	4%	Public	95%
Assistant	15%	Competitive	18%	Middle school	1%	Private	5%
Volunteer	8%	Recreational	19%	High school	94%		
Other	2%	Developmental (8 years or younger)	4%				
		Other	2%				
		Collegiate	1%				
		Adapted	1%				

### Relationship with School

Role	%
Teacher-Educator	27%
School Staff Member	11%
Community Member	6%
Other	6%
Volunteer	4%
Parent of Student	2%
School Admin	1%
Athletic Director	1%

**1/4 of school-based coaches reported they were teacher-educators**

*\*Note.* Coaches could select more than one option so %'s may exceed 100%.

### Hours and Pay

Hours Spent Coaching	%	Pay	%
1-10 hours	41%	Unpaid	32%
11-20 hours	33%	Less than \$999	4%
21-30 hours	19%	\$1,000 - \$4,999	52%
31-40 hours	3%	\$5,000 - \$9,999	6%
41+ hours	4%	\$10,000 or more	5%

### Educational Background

Degree	%	Degree	%
GED	1%	Master's degree	40%
High school graduate	11%	Professional or doctoral degree	6%
Associate degree	5%	Other	6%
Undergraduate degree	28%		

### Sport By Gender and Setting

Sport	Total	%	Setting		Gender of Team			
			School	Community	Male	Female	Equally Male & Female	Co-Ed
Baseball	6	3%	100%	--	75%	--	--	25%
Basketball	26	13%	33%	67%	60%	40%	--	--
Cheerleading	7	3%	100%	--	--	75%	--	25%
Cross Country	4	2%	75%	25%	--	--	--	100%
Field Hockey	4	2%	67%	33%	--	100%	--	--
Football	42	20%	92%	8%	100%	--	--	--
Lacrosse	11	5%	91%	9%	43%	57%	--	--
Soccer	65	31%	21%	79%	42%	37%	8%	13%
Softball	7	3%	71%	29%	--	100%	--	--
Swimming and Diving	3	1%	33%	67%	--	--	100%	--
Track & Field	10	5%	75%	25%	--	--	25%	75%
Tennis	2	1%	100%	0%	--	--	--	100%
Volleyball	10	5%	70%	30%	--	83%	--	17%
Wrestling	5	2%	80%	20%	50%	--	--	50%
Other	6	3	60%	40%	--	25%	--	75%

\*Note. Some coaches reported coaching more than one sport, resulting in %'s exceeding 100%.

### Top 5 School Districts Completing Survey

School District	Total	%
Montgomery County – District 2	63	34
Baltimore County – District 6	24	13
Anne Arundel County – District 4	20	11
Prince George's County – District 3	19	10
Howard County – District 5	14	8

To see the full school district breakdown, see Appendix A.



# COACHING BEHAVIORS



All coaches were asked about their ability to engage in various coaching behaviors that support the whole athlete in and out of sport. Items were measured on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. Items that generated the highest and lowest percentages of coaches reporting they felt confident in their ability to engage in each behavior are reported below. Coaches were asked, “As a coach, how confident are you in your ability to...”

5 Least Confident Behaviors	5 Most Confident Behaviors
1. Raise funds to support my team	1. Foster character development
2. Address mental health concerns	2. Instill an attitude of respect for others among athletes
3. Identify off the field stressors among athletes	3. Promote good sportspersonship
4. Prepare appropriate plans for off-season physical conditioning	4. Teach life skills through sport
5. Work collaboratively with athletic trainers	5. Teach basic technique/strategy

**Maryland coaches reported feeling confident in their ability to foster character development and instill an attitude of respect for others among athletes, yet were less confident in areas such as team management (e.g., fundraising) and on topics related to mental wellness**

**Coaching Behaviors (As a coach, I am confident in my ability to...)**

Category	% Agreed or Strongly agreed	% Strongly Agreed	Category	% Agreed or Strongly agreed	% Strongly Agreed
<b>Coaching the X's and O's</b>					
teach basic technique/strategy.	93%	54%	maximize team strengths during competitions.	90%	43%
teach technical skills.	85%	42%	make strategic decisions in pressure situations.	89%	44%
accurately assess the physical conditioning of athletes.	85%	38%	prepare appropriate plans for off-season physical conditioning.	73%	33%
coach sport-specific skills for different positions/events.	86%	46%	implement appropriate endurance programs during the season.	77%	33%
<b>Teaching Life and Leadership Skills through Sport</b>					
promote good sportspersonship.	97%	74%	instill an attitude of respect for others among athletes.	99%	70%
foster character development.	99%	67%	teach life skills through sport.	95%	68%
<b>Coach Beyond... Behaviors</b>					
work with parents/caregivers.	90%	43%	help athletes regulate their emotions.	89%	32%
identify off the field stressors among athletes.	71%	29%	reduce performance anxiety among athletes.	77%	24%
address mental health concerns.	70%	29%	prevent burnout among athletes.	78%	29%

manage stress and pressure as a coach.	89%	33%	host a tryout.	86%	50%
raise funds to support my team.	59%	24%	communicate effectively with administrators.	92%	58%
implement an end-of-the-season event.	92%	52%	work collaboratively with athletic trainers.	74%	52%

## Only 29% of Maryland coaches reported feeling very confident in their ability to address mental health concerns

## TRAINING HISTORY & INTERESTS

All coaches were asked about past coaching training they had never participated in and their interest in future training topics. Below are the top 10 topics that generated the highest and lowest percentages regarding coaches' training histories. In addition, we overview the top 10 trainings coaches were interested in and those they reported having never participated in but had an interest in.

Top 5 Trainings Coaches Have Participated In		%	Top 5 Trainings Coaches Have Never Participated In		%
1.	CPR	92%	1.	Stress and Coaching	48%
2.	Concussion Management	92%	2.	Linkage and Referral to Resources	48%
3.	General Safety and Injury Prevention	90%	3.	Trauma-Informed Practice	47%
4.	AED/Cardiac Arrest	89%	4.	Emotional Regulation	45%
5.	Sport Skills and Techniques	77%	5.	Performance Anxiety	45%



## Beyond sport skills and strategy, Maryland coaches are interested in more training on performance anxiety, team culture, and mental health

Top 10 Trainings Coaches Are Interested In	%	Top 10 Trainings Coaches Are Interested In and Have Never Participated	%
1. Coaching Tactics & Strategy	84%	1. Performance Anxiety	40%
2. Sport Skills and Techniques	83%	2. Emotional Regulation	40%
3. Leadership Development	78%	3. Stress and Coaching	38%
4. Performance Anxiety	77%	4. Behavior Management	34%
5. Team Culture	77%	5. Trauma-Informed Practice	34%
6. Mental Health	77%	6. Life Skill Development through Sport	31%
7. Life Skill Development through Sport	76%	7. Team Culture	31%
8. Emotional Regulation	75%	8. Mental Health	31%
9. Behavior Management	74%	9. Linkage and Referral to Resources	30%
10. Stress and Coaching	71%	10. Conflict Resolution	27%

To see all participation rates and interest levels, please see Appendix B.

### Coaching Philosophies

Coaches were given a list of 12 different coaching philosophies and asked to rank their top 3 and bottom 3 philosophies. Coaches' top 3 and bottom 3 philosophies guiding their coaching practices are summarized below.

**The top coaching philosophy reported by Maryland coaches was helping athletes learn new life skills**

Top 3 Coaching Philosophies	N	%
Helping athletes learn new life skills	62	40%
Creating a sense of belonging through sport	58	37%
Supporting athletes in being healthy and fit	48	31%

Bottom 3 Coaching Philosophies	N	%
Winning games or competitions	107	69%
Teaching athletes how to play fair	80	51%
Making sure all athletes play	76	49%

**Maryland coaches reported winning games or competitions was not a strong philosophy guiding their practices**

### Stress, Satisfaction, and Retention

Question	Full Sample	Setting		Experience/Role		Career Wins	
		School-Based	Comm-Based	1–5-year coaches	21+ Yrs	Win <50% Games	Win >50% Games
% Somewhat or Extremely							
How satisfying is the coaching experience?	98%	98%	99%	98%	97%	95%	98%
How stressful is the coaching experience?	72%	80%	65%	68%	68%	76%	70%
How likely are you to continue coaching?	94%	92%	97%	92%	100%	76%	97%

**72% of Maryland coaches reported coaching is somewhat or extremely stressful**

### Career and Last Season Win Percentage

Estimate Over	Mean Win %	Won <50%	Won >50%
Career	63%	12%	88%
Last Season	61%	24%	76%

### Impact on Athletes

Coaches were asked on a scale of 0-100, “How much of an impact have you had on your athletes...”

Question	% Low Impact (0-33)	% Moderate Impact (34-67)	% High Impact (68-100)
Development of life skills	4%	24%	72%
Overall well-being	4%	18%	78%
Development of sport skills	1%	18%	81%

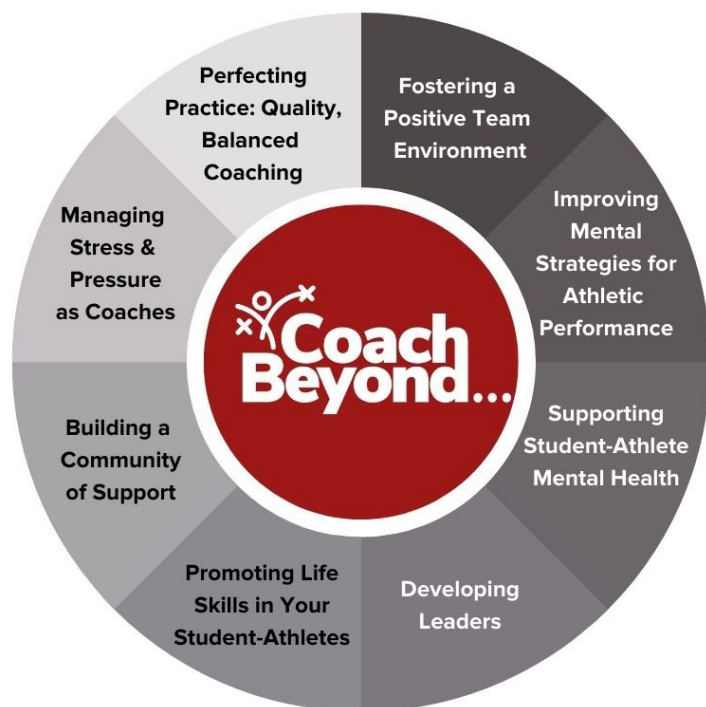
## Community Needs

**Coaches were asked** to indicate “to what degree did you have enough of the following resources during your LAST SEASON when coaching your PRIMARY sport.” Items were measured on a scale of 0 – 100, with 0 = Extremely inadequate, 50 = Neither adequate nor inadequate, 100 = Extremely adequate.

Resource	Mean	% Indicating Inadequate Resources ( $\leq 50$ )	% Indicating Adequate Resources ( $> 50$ )
Equipment	71	24%	76%
Uniforms	82	14%	86%
Facility Space	64	33%	67%
Transportation to Games	78	22%	78%
Funding for Other Team Needs	61	33%	67%
Administrative Support	71	24%	76%
Peer Support	71	23%	77%
Safe Places to Practice	85	10%	90%
Payment/Income to Coach	49	61%	39%
Parent/Caregiver Support	69	25%	75%
Access to Athletic Trainers	57	46%	54%

## Coach Beyond...

Coach Beyond used the Ohio state-wide survey results to inform the development of the following coach trainings (see image). Data from Maryland align with several of these key training areas.



More information about Coach Beyond trainings  
can be found here:

[coachbeyond.osu.edu](http://coachbeyond.osu.edu)

Training Topic	Interested in Additional Training	Coaching Behaviors
Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health	77% were interested in additional training on mental health.	Only 29% felt confident in their ability to address athletes' mental health concerns.
Improving Mental Strategies for Athletic Performance	77% were interested in additional training on performance anxiety.	Only 24% felt confident in their ability to reduce performance anxiety among athletes.
Fostering a Positive Team Environment	77% were interested in additional training on team culture.	70% felt confident in instilling respect for others among athletes.
Developing Leaders	78% were interested in additional training on leadership development.	67% felt confident in their ability to foster character development.
Promoting Life Skills in Your Student-Athletes	76% were interested in additional training on life skill development through sport.	68% felt confident teaching life skills through sport.
Building a Community of Support	71% were interested in additional training on relationship-building.	43% felt confident in working with parents/caregivers.
Managing Stress & Pressure as Coaches	72% reported coaching is somewhat or extremely stressful.	Only 33% felt confident in managing stress and pressure as a coach.
Perfecting Practice: Quality, Balanced Coaching	84% were interested in additional training on coaching tactics and strategies.	50% felt confident in hosting a tryout.

## SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

### Summary

Coaching youth sports in Maryland continues to evolve and change over time, and so too do the needs of student-athletes. The findings of this survey point to notable strengths among coaches in Maryland, including a high level of commitment to continuing to support youth sports in this state. Results also demonstrate opportunities to improve Maryland's coach education and training system in areas of youth development, wellness, and managing team dynamics, events, and stakeholders (e.g., parents/caregivers). Findings reveal that a majority of those who completed the survey were teacher-educators coaching high school sports.

Overall, Maryland coaches reported feeling confident coaching the X's and O's (i.e., technique, skills, tactics) and teaching life and leadership skills through sport. For instance, Maryland coaches reported feeling confident in fostering character development, instilling an attitude of respect for others among athletes, and promoting sportspersonship. However, coaches also reported feeling less confident engaging in behaviors that promote the holistic health of student-athletes (i.e., mental health, identifying off-field stressors, linkage and referral to resources/supports) despite a high interest in these training practices. Namely, coaches demonstrated an interest in learning holistic coaching practices that help make the youth sport environment conducive to learning skills that extend beyond the field, mat, court, etc.

### Let's Coach Beyond...

This report summarizes findings from the state-wide survey of 213 Maryland youth sport coaches. Overall, coaches demonstrate notable strengths and an interest in supporting coaches in going "beyond the X's and O's."

Coach Beyond has developed online and in-person trainings to help meet the needs of your school, district, and community. Undoubtedly, Maryland leaders will use the results of this survey to inform how they want to support coaches and promote positive youth development through sport. Please visit our website to learn more: [Coach Beyond » OSU LiFEsports](#). We look forward to continuing our partnership with your state! To learn more, please email: [coachbeyond@umd.edu](mailto:coachbeyond@umd.edu)



## Appendix A

### School District Breakdowns

County & District	Total	%
Allegany County - District 1	1	.5
Ann Arundel County – District 5	20	11
Baltimore City – District 9	6	3
Baltimore County – District 6	24	13
Calvert County – District 4	1	.5
Carroll County – District 1	10	6
Cecil County – District 7	1	.5
Charles County – District 4	2	1
Frederick County – District 1	4	2
Harford County – District 7	9	5
Howard County – District 5	14	8
Kent County – District 8	1	.5
Montgomery County – District 2	63	34
Prince George’s County – District 3	19	10
Talbot County – District 8	1	.5
Washington County – District 1	3	2

## Appendix B

### Training Backgrounds and Interests

Training Topic	% Never Participated	% Never Participated	% Have Participated	% Have Participated
	Not Interested in Additional Training	Interested in Additional Training	Not Interested in Additional Training	Interested in Additional Training
Sport Skills and Techniques	4%	19%	14%	64%
Coaching Tactics and Strategy	3%	22%	13%	62%
Leadership Development	4%	22%	19%	56%
Effective Communication	7%	18%	27%	49%
Team Culture	6%	32%	17%	46%
Life Skill Development through Sport	6%	32%	18%	44%
Mental Health	4%	31%	19%	46%
Relationship-Building	8%	23%	22%	47%
Working with Parents and Caregivers	11%	25%	23%	42%
Behavior Management	7%	34%	20%	39%
Conflict Resolution	7%	27%	22%	43%



Training Topic	% Never Participated	% Never Participated	% Have Participated	% Have Participated
	Not Interested in Additional Training	Interested in Additional Training	Not Interested in Additional Training	Interested in Additional Training
Emotional Regulation	6%	40%	20%	35%
Performance Anxiety	5%	40%	18%	37%
Diversity and Inclusion	17%	18%	30%	35%
Linkage and Referral to Resources	18%	30%	20%	32%
Trauma-Informed Practice	13%	34%	20%	33%
Stress and Coaching	10%	38%	19%	33%
CPR	2%	6%	32%	60%
Concussion Management	2%	7%	39%	53%
General Safety and Injury Prevention	1%	9%	32%	59%
AED/Cardiac Arrest	2%	10%	33%	56%

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