

Connecting Youth to Nature: Using Rock Climbing to get Youth Outdoors

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This talk will..

- Introduce the sport of climbing
- Discuss implications for climbing as play
- Introduce a line of research relating to climbing



Climbing as Sport?

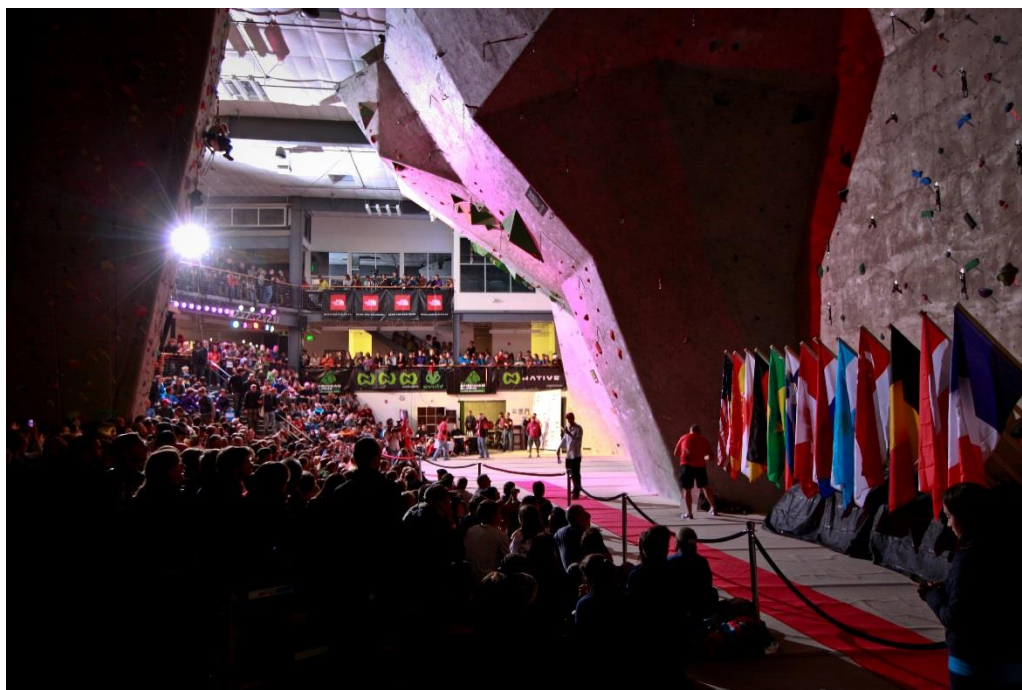




Climbing as Sport?



The Organizational Development of Competitive Climbing



The Growth of Climbing

- Media coverage
- Increased facilities in both traditional and non-traditional locations

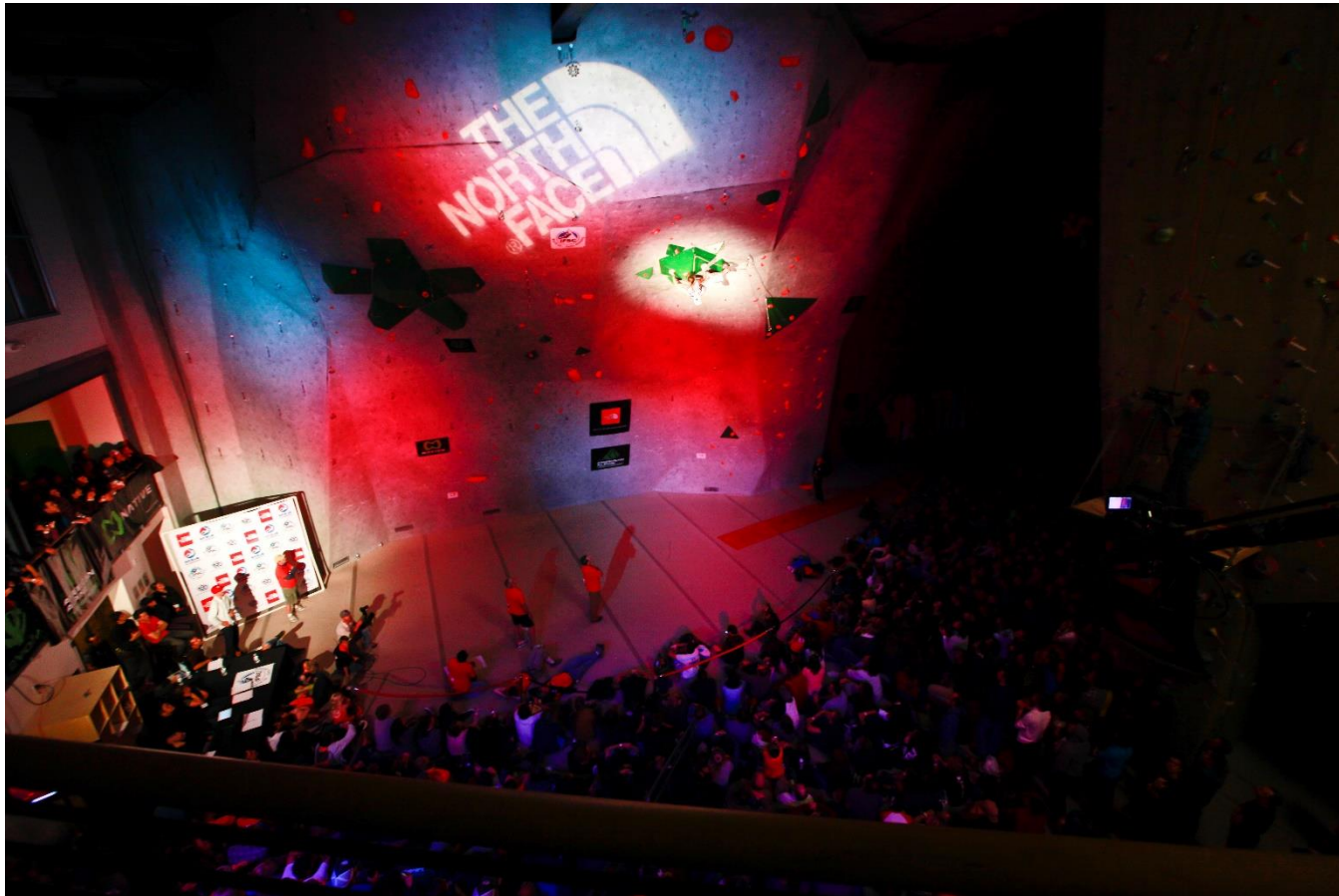


Who climbs competitively?

- Youth to “Masters” aged 8-70



What is Play?



Climbing as Play

- Competition
- Exploration
- Imagination



Climbing indoors is a natural transition to the outdoors



The benefits of outdoor participation are clear...

- Emotional
- Physical
- Social
- Cognitive



Climbing as Play: Breakout

- What are the advantages and disadvantages to climbing as play?



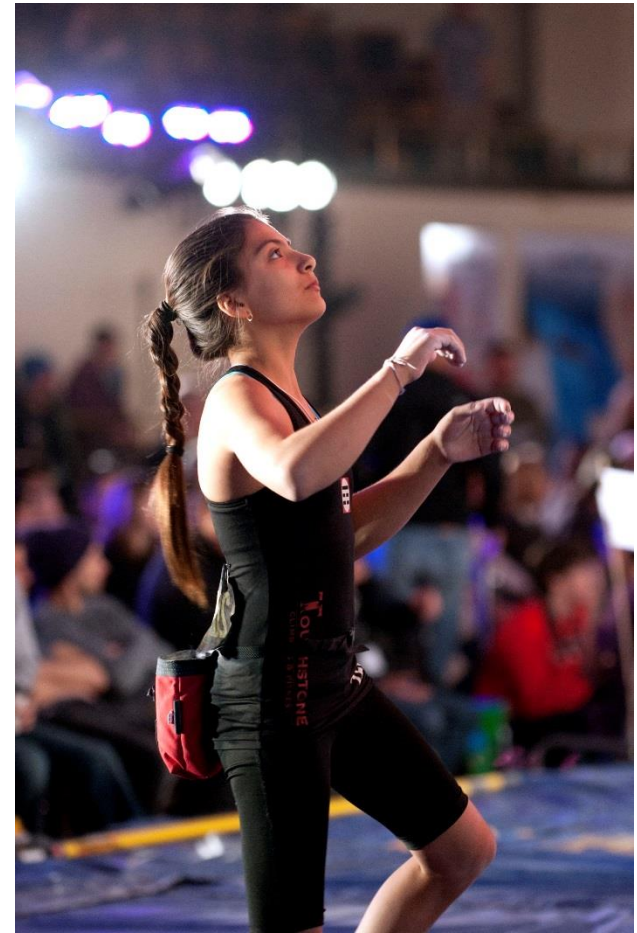
Our Research

- Methods & Samples
- Questions asked



Evidence of the shift outdoors?

- Desire to move outdoors
- 50% of climbers climb outdoors annually
- 30% of climbers climb outdoors regularly
- A majority boulder



Discovery of Sport

- Media exposure and increasing popularity are leading to higher levels of youth participation
- “Indoorisation” of sport



Positive Youth Development

- Competence
- Connection
- Caring
- Confidence
- Character



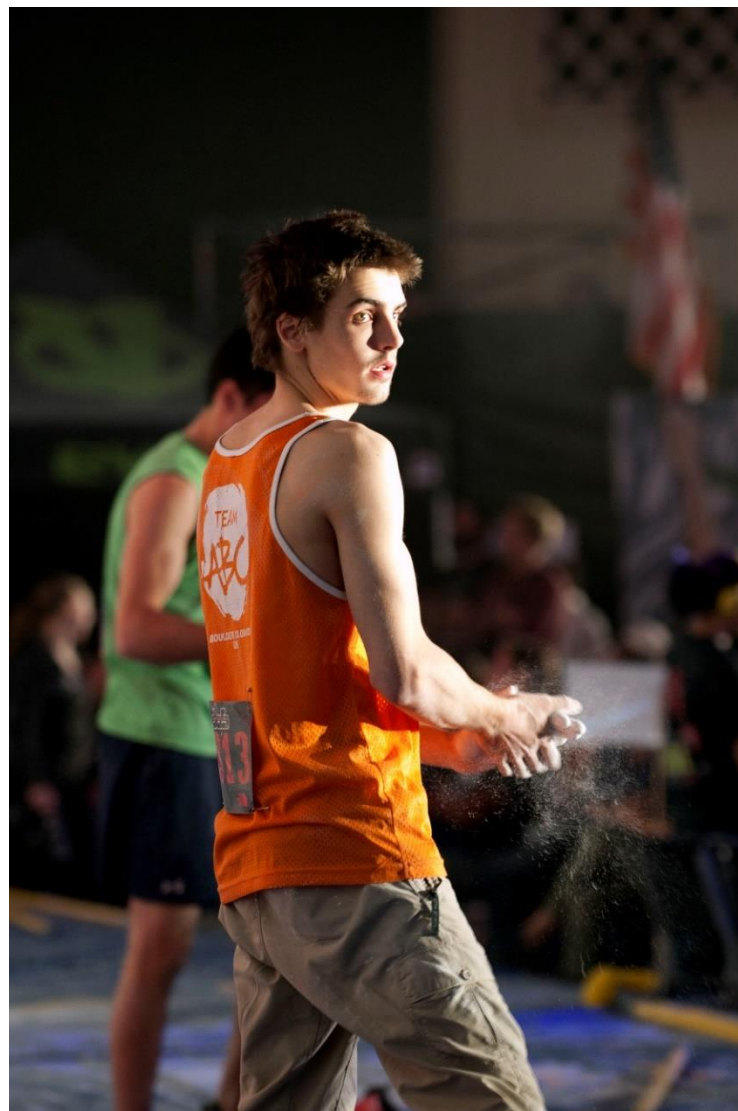
Challenges...

- Increased numbers of climbers
- Conflict and Education



Challenges...

- Cultural Barriers
- Access
- Awareness



Solutions

- More exposure of sport
- Intentionality behind coaching and recruitment



Why are you excited about climbing as play?

Additional Resources

Coakley, J. (2011). Youth sports: what counts as “positive development?” *Journal of Sports and Social Issues*, 35(3), 306-324.

Lerner, R. M. (2004). *Liberty: Thriving and civic engagement among American youth*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Louv, R. (2008). *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature-deficit disorder*. Algonquin Books.

Questions, Comments, Thoughts

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