

GET HER IN  
THE GAME



NATIONAL RECREATION  
AND PARK ASSOCIATION



Partnerships and  
Advocacy



## Partnerships and Advocacy

Park and recreation agencies can't reshape their sports systems alone. By cultivating partnerships and advocating for resources and funding, agencies can expand their reach, deepen their impact and build sustainable, long-term support for girls in sports. Agencies can implement the strategies below to build meaningful partnerships, grow efforts and advance shared goals:

- ✓ Identify potential partners already invested in getting more girls playing and more women coaching. Align on your vision, explore one another's strengths and assets, and create an action plan defining ways you can partner to advance shared goals.
- ✓ Form a community coalition that includes stakeholders who may not typically connect – parents, coaches, youth-serving institutions, representatives from schools/universities, professional leagues and more – to align on how to remove obstacles to sport for girls.



Martial arts coach provides instruction for youth participant. Photo courtesy of Miami-Dade (Florida) County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces.

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- ✓ Be proactive about seeking out funders and sponsors who align with your values and who are representative of girls and women. When applying for or managing grants, elevate community voices to make the case for support.
- ✓ Create formal agreements that define shared roles, responsibilities and goals, plus commitments from each organization to make those goals a reality.
- ✓ Compensate partners – especially community-based organizations or community members – for their time and expertise.
- ✓ Build relationships with local leaders, community supporters, city council members and park commissioners who can champion your efforts. Keep them informed of your progress and success.
- ✓ Equip parents, coaches, girls and staff with talking points, materials, or training to speak to funders, school boards, elected officials or local media. Authentic storytelling that elevates community voices can shift public perception and build momentum.



Young players from both teams battle for possession during a soccer match. Photo courtesy of San Francisco Recreation and Parks.

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## Some key partners to consider when bolstering youth programs at your organization:

- ✓ Local Schools provide access to youth participants and opportunities for shared use of facilities or joint programs.  
Schools are a powerful outlet for joint outreach to families/potential participants.
- ✓ Youth-Serving Organizations offer built-in networks of girls and families, provide program expertise and present opportunities to co-host events that meet girls where they are.
- ✓ Cultural/Community Centers serve as trusted gathering places for girls and families.
- ✓ Colleges/Universities supply volunteers and role models, especially universities that have sport management and/or park and recreation degree options.
- ✓ Small Businesses provide financial support or in-kind donations, such as equipment.



A young basketball player drives the play, dribbling with focus during a game. Photo courtesy of San Francisco Recreation and Parks.