

## Doug Abrams



"With millions of children enrolled each year, sports programs can be a valuable national resource. When programs guarantee fun and equal opportunity, children win because sports build character and a healthy lifestyle.

Parents win because wholesome athletic competition provides children lifelong memories shared with family and friends.

Communities win because values learned in athletics shape solid citizens. America wins because these values enrich a generation of children long after the scores of distant games have faded from memory. Kids FIRST In Sports will hasten these victories by empowering concerned parents

and coaches to embrace the core principle -- that the mission of youth sports is to serve the best interests of every boy and girl who seeks to participate."

Doug Abrams, a law professor at the University of Missouri, has coached youth ice hockey at all age levels since 1968. He graduated summa cum laude from Wesleyan University, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and won the Scholar-Athlete Award. He earned his law degree from Columbia University Law School, and he is a member of the Missouri and New York Bars.

Prof. Abrams teaches juvenile law and family law. He has written four books, including *Children and the Law*, which is required reading in nearly seventy law schools. Three Supreme Court decisions quote from his writing. His youth sports and juvenile justice columns appear regularly in national newspapers, and he is frequently interviewed on radio and television.

With his book royalties, Doug has created the "Happiness For Health" program at the University of Missouri Children's Hospital. HFH is a permanent endowment that provides toys, stuffed animals and games the sick and injured children can play with and then take home. HFH also provides parties for children hospitalized on their birthdays and other special occasions.

A goaltender at Wesleyan, Doug set an Eastern College Athletic Conference Division III record for most saves in a game (64), and he became the first Wesleyan hockey player named to the weekly ECAC All-East Team. He has coached with a USA Hockey National Championship team, two New York State Championship teams, travel and house league teams, and learn-to-skate programs. As goaltending coach at a summer camp in Connecticut and Rhode Island for twenty years, he instructed more than 2500 goalies. In 1989, he founded a Missouri youth hockey program; during his eleven years as president, the program grew from nineteen players to 180 while enrolling every interested child, encouraging beginners, stressing sportsmanship, providing need-based scholarships, and fully involving each child in every practice and game.

Doug's coaching stresses character development. Each year, his high school team has voted to hold an "Anti-Drug Awareness Night," an "Anti-Alcohol Night," and a "University Children's Hospital Night." Fans donate stuffed animals for the hospital, and the players visit the patients and distribute the toys. In 2001, the team also held a special Night to raise donations for charities supporting victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The players' community service is a local tradition, and a newspaper recently called Doug's team "a

philanthropic organization on skates."

As a member of the Missouri Bar Commission on Children and the Law, Doug has drafted fifteen health and safety laws, including comprehensive legislation to protect abandoned newborns. In 1994, he received the Meritorious Service to the Children of America Award from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. The Missouri Bar Foundation has honored him for his "extraordinary public service and contributions to justice." At the Law School, he has received the Administration of Justice Award, the Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award, and the Professor-of-the-Year Award voted by the students.