

Honesty Integrity  
Sportsmanship  
Respect Confidence  
Responsibility  
Perseverance Courtesy  
Judgment

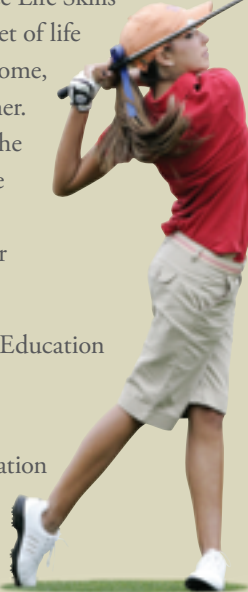


Impact Report  
2003-2006

## Why We Do Research

Young people do not automatically act with integrity or demonstrate sportsmanship. The acquisition of values is often a by-product of a series of complex processes that evolve from individuals' experiences. The First Tee Life Skills Education programs teach participants a set of life skills to allow them to face challenges at home, school, and at play in a constructive manner. The goal is for participants to internalize the Nine Core Values (cover), which are at the heart of The First Tee mission. In 2003, The First Tee developed a strategic plan for ongoing research to:

- Measure the **impact** of the Life Skills Education programs on participants
- Examine **how and why** The First Tee is a valuable youth development organization
- Enable The First Tee to **improve** its programs for participants



### THE FIRST TEE LIFE SKILLS EXPERIENCE

#### PARTICIPANT

**TARGET** Introduction to the Life Skills Experience; provides a fun and safe environment that creates curiosity about the game of golf.

**PAR** Focuses on interpersonal communication and self management skills

**BIRDIE** Emphasizes goal setting

**EAGLE** Builds on Par and Birdie levels and emphasizes resistance skills, conflict resolution and planning for the future

**ACE** The Advanced Level of the Life Skills Experience; focuses on personal planning and reinforces life skills learned in previous levels.

“The First Tee has given me the skills and values to become a more successful leader.” 15-year-old boy

**OUR MISSION** To impact the lives of young people by providing learning facilities and educational programs that promote character development and life-enhancing values through the game of golf.

## 2003 Research Results

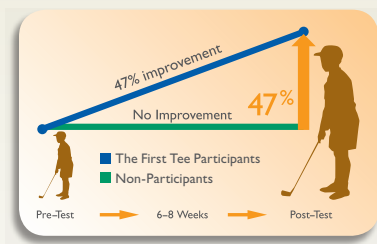
Conducted by University of Nevada, Las Vegas and University of Florida

### > KEY PARTICIPANT FINDINGS

Participants showed a **47% improvement** in knowledge and understanding of life skills after participation in The First Tee.

Improvement areas included:

- Communication
- Respect
- Maintaining a positive attitude
- Self-management
- Goal setting



Parents validated these results by reporting dramatic improvements in their child's behavior after participation in Par-level programming.

### > WHAT PARENTS/GUARDIANS SAID

"My daughter sets goals for herself."

"My son shows leadership."

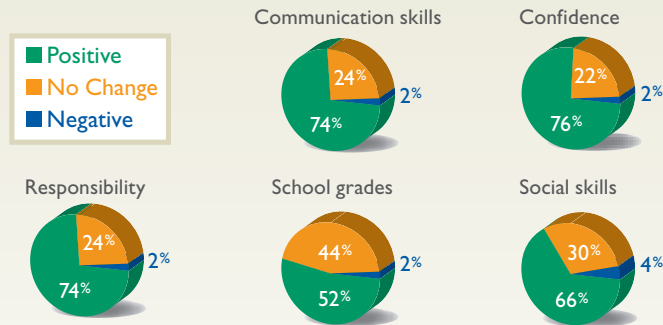
"My daughter's definitely blossoming and is much more confident."

"My kid has a better attitude toward everything."

"My child wants to go to college now."

"My daughter is much better at introducing herself and carrying on conversations with others."

### > OBSERVED CHANGES BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS



### > HOW WAS THE INFORMATION COLLECTED?

- Participants took a learning assessment survey, which was developed by UNLV, prior to entering Par-level programming and again six to eight weeks later.
- The Canon Center for Survey Research at UNLV conducted phone interviews with parents after their child participated in Par-level programming.

"It's nice having diversity in my life and being open to different kinds of people and their different cultures and backgrounds." | 16-year-old girl

## 2005 Research Results – Year one of longitudinal study Conducted by University of Virginia

### > PAR AND BIRDIE LEVEL PARTICIPANT FINDINGS

#### Learning Interpersonal Skills: Meeting and Greeting

- **100%** verbalized ability to transfer meeting and greeting skills in 10 situations outside of golf.

#### Learning Interpersonal Skills: Showing Respect

**99%** Shared ways they respect others on the golf course

**96%** Cited golf etiquette and *The Rules of Golf*

**94%** Showed respect at school, home, sports, or the workplace

**74%** Described self-respect on the golf course

#### Learning Self-Management Skills: Managing Emotions

- **100%** used methods to manage negative thoughts and emotions in a number of life domains.
- **95%** recalled and used the concepts of *Be Patient*, *Be Positive*, and *Ask for Help*, the *4Rs* (*Replay*, *Relax*, *Ready*, *Redo*), and *STAR* (*Stop*, *Think*, *Anticipate*, *Respond*) in the golf context.

#### Learning How to Set Goals

- **99%** said they used goal-setting skills in contexts outside of golf.

### > EAGLE LEVEL PARTICIPANT FINDINGS

- **96%** **get help from others** by creating Go-to Teams.
- **91%** **make healthy choices** and defined the importance of physical, mental, emotional and social wellness.
- **91%** have a **greater appreciation for diversity** since joining The First Tee.
- **78%** cited examples of how they use skills learned at The First Tee to **plan for the future**.

### > PARENT/GUARDIAN FINDINGS

**Parents/guardians** provided examples of how their children apply life skills at home and school. Four themes emerged about their belief in the effectiveness of The First Tee:

- 1 The First Tee affirms the values taught at home.
- 2 Coaches **ROCK** (Rapport-building, Open-minded, Creative, Kind-hearted).
- 3 Mentoring benefits both the participants and peer mentors.
- 4 Friendships made through golf are long-lasting and meaningful.

## 2006 Research Results – Year two of longitudinal study Conducted by University of Virginia

### > PARTICIPANT FINDINGS

**90%** { • Transfer life skills to school, home or other areas  
• Retain life skills over time

18 of 20 participants from 2005 study provided convincing examples of having retained the concepts of *STAR*, *4Rs*, *Be Patient*, *Be Positive* and *Ask for Help*, overcoming challenges, resolving conflicts and goal setting from 2005 to 2006.

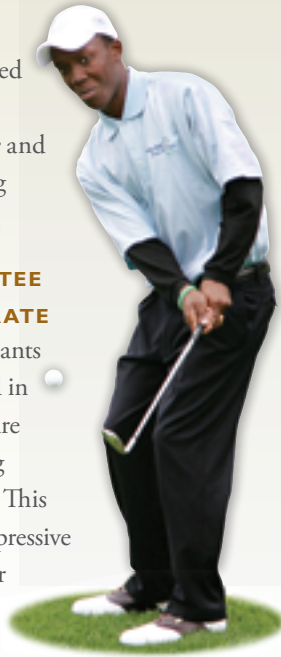
The First Tee  
other youth organizations



### > THE FIRST TEE RETENTION RATE

78 of 94 participants who participated in the 2005 study are still participating in The First Tee. This percentage is impressive

given the average dropout rate of about 50% per year in youth organizations.



### > THE FIRST TEE PARTICIPANTS TRANSFER LIFE SKILLS TO OTHER DOMAINS

533 youth from The First Tee were compared with a similar group of 159 youth participating in team and individual sports, and other youth organizations.

**Life Skills Transfer:** Youth in The First Tee scored higher than the comparison group on meeting and greeting, managing emotions, resolving conflicts, appreciating diversity, and getting help from others.

**General Life Skills Usage:** Youth in The First Tee scored higher than the comparison group on goal setting, initiative, emotional regulation, prosocial norms, and positive relationships.

**Developmental Outcomes:** Youth in The First Tee scored higher than the comparison group on perceived academic competence (**confidence**), moral conduct (**responsibility, honesty, integrity**), self-efficacy to resist peer pressure (**judgment**), and preference for challenging skills (**perseverance**).

### > HOW WAS THE INFORMATION COLLECTED? (2005 & 2006)

The researchers used a variety of methods to obtain information including individual interviews and quantitative surveys.

“After one gathering with the people of The First Tee, I knew I wanted to play golf. I was enthralled by the activities we did and being able to meet new people and discover new social skills.” 16-year-old girl

## Conclusion

Collectively, results strongly indicate The First Tee is an effective youth program in attaining its goals of teaching life skills and promoting positive developmental outcomes. Coaches are encouraging participants to transfer life skills to other domains and parents are confirming the results.



©2007 World Golf Foundation, Inc. All rights reserved.  
Use with permission.

## Acknowledgments

### University of Virginia

Maureen R. Weiss, Ph.D.  
Jennifer A. Bhalla, M.S.  
Nicole D. Bolter, M.Ed.  
Melissa S. Price, M.Ed.  
Cheryl P. Stuntz, Ph.D.  
Ellen S. Markowitz, M.B.A., M.S.

### University of Florida

Peter R. Giacobbi, Jr., Ph.D.

### University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Mark Guadagnoli, Ph.D.  
Bill Holcomb, Ph.D.  
Gabriele Wulf, Ph.D.  
The Cannon Center for  
Survey Research

### The First Tee Life Skills Education Development Consultants

Al Petitpas, Ed.D.  
*Director, Springfield College Center for  
Youth Development and Research*  
Linda Petichkoff, Ph.D.  
*Professor, Department of Kinesiology  
Boise State University*  
Peter Ryan, Ph.D.

The UNLV and UF research project (2003) was funded by The First Tee home office. The UVA research project was initially funded by a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice (2005) and is currently being funded by a positive youth development grant from Philip Morris USA Youth Smoking Prevention (2006-2008).

Some of the materials contained in The First Tee Life Skills Experience Coach Guide are copyrighted materials owned by and incorporated into this work with the express permission of Steven J. Danish, Ph.D.

“I’ve gotten a lot of confidence in The First Tee and that’s probably the most important thing to me.” 14-year-old girl

Founding Corporate Partner



World Golf Village  
425 South Legacy Trail  
St. Augustine, FL 32092  
(904) 940-4300  
[www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org)

