

FRANCHISE DEDICATED TO GETTING KIDS ACTIVE SAYS: IT'S A GREAT TIME TO CLIMB ON BOARD

With more parents realizing the benefits of getting their children active and away from the constant allure of their electronics, now is the perfect time for franchisees to make their move and open a Kids In Sports location, one of the franchise's co-founders says.

Started in 1999 by business partners Michael Strutt and Kenneth Colon, Kids In Sports runs programs for children ages 12 months to 12 years.

"We do classes, we do camps, we do birthday parties," Strutt said during a recent interview from New York City, where the franchise is headquartered. "Our specialty is our multi-sport classes for young children where we teach the fundamentals of most major team sports."

The business also has sport-specific classes for children who want a bit more of the competitive environment, plus after school programs.

Getting Started

Kids In Sports started franchising about a year ago and currently has two franchisees; one who opened a location in November in Walpole, Massachusetts and one who is looking for their facility in New York City. That leaves virtually the entire country open for people who want to run their own business with a focus on children.

However, Strutt said, the franchise aims to grow strategically, starting along the east coast and spreading outward from there.

Generally, the two types of people Strutt envisions for franchisees is either an investor/business owner who likes the concept of providing sports programs for young children or a more hands-on type of franchisee who has a background in physical education or coaching and who wants to own and operate their own business.

Strutt's own background is in physical education, as he taught Phys. Ed. at a private school for a few years and was also a personal trainer at a health club in New York where he met Colon.

Both were personal trainers and they both had backgrounds in training, teaching, coaching and each of them was a collegiate athlete, so they had similar outlooks on the importance of getting children active at an early age and teaching them the value of sportsmanship and teamwork through team sports. They developed their proprietary curriculum with an educated, structured approach that had culminated through their education and experiences.

And they certainly filled a void that became much more obvious once they opened shop.

"We started teaching just about 30 kids in a week and within a few years we were teaching over a thousand children per week," Colon recalled.

Children need to see the value of being active at a young age, the co-founder said, and the younger that children learn things,





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– Kenneth Colon, co-founder, Kids in Sports

the better they’ll be at them as they grow up.

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The Kids In Sports Difference

One difference that Colon points out that gives Kids In Sports an edge over the competition for consumers is they teach multiple sports at a young age. They don’t believe in just picking one sport too early. If children only play one sport, Strutt explained, they can risk injuries by overusing their muscles and joints in the same way all the time, plus they also burn out on just a single sport if they play it constantly.

“We believe in the multiple sport approach,” he said. “They’ll benefit from this later. When they become older and the time is right they can choose one sport if necessary.”

The franchise also tends to have a low ratio of coaches to children, meaning children get a lot of one-on-one time with the coaches.

On the franchising side, the business partners have developed an IT system



that virtually manages every aspect of the business, from online registration to scheduling to managing the franchise’s public website.

On top of that, Colon and Strutt have also developed sports equipment that is age appropriate for toddlers, not something that is easy to find.

“That’s definitely an added benefit and we pass this along to franchisees, as well,” he said.

And when franchisees come on board, Kids In Sports is still small enough that they’ll be getting trained by the owners themselves and be receiving support straight from the owners for curriculum, marketing, scheduling, staff training and finding a location.

Training is done for two weeks at the company headquarters in New York and then continued at the franchisee’s location.

The company’s Walpole franchisee Mike Brown certainly appreciates that he can so easily get in touch with the owners.

“One of the most important things I was looking for in a franchise was the amount

of support available to help me start up my business,” Brown said. “Kids In Sports has provided me with all the tools, training and guidance that I need to grow my business. Mike and Kenny are hands-on franchisors who were available when I had questions or needed advice.”

Brown called the training process extensive and said it’s helped him run his business and train his own staff.

Motivation

With Kids In Sports being such a motivated company, now is an ideal time to join, Strutt said. As evidenced by the franchise’s success with its corporate location, parents are also finding that it’s worth it to spend money to ensure their children are active from a young age.

“Parents realize that they need to get their kids active and we fill a need there,” he said.

For entrepreneurs who like the idea of inspiring children to live healthy, active lifestyles, now is the time to make their move.

www.kidsinsportsfranchising.com