**OPTION A: COOPERATION VS. COMPETITION**

Based on your knowledge of American culture and child development, respond to BOTH of the following: sets of questions:

**1.  Is competition over-emphasized in American Society?  Why? What are the advantages of such a competitive attitude?  What are the disadvantages?**

**2.  Identify situations that you have observed in which competition has actually interfered with people achieving a goal.  Is competition emphasized in children?  What recommendations would you make to parents regarding their child's participation in soccer, baseball, etc.?**

I do believe competition is over-emphasized in America Society. In my opinion, I feel like the American Society puts too much emphasis on things like sports. Sports is a very competitive, starting at a young age. One advantage of being competitive would be self confidence in one self. According to the text social comparison is “the tendency to assess one’s abilities, achievements, social status, and other attributes by measuring them against those of other people, especially one’s peers.” (Berger, 2014, p.282) A disadvantage would be overly competitive. I feel like one could become too competitive which wouldn’t make it fun for anyone, including themselves. I often hear about stories, during little kid’s football games where parents have had brawls because of the outcome, or they didn’t like the call so they beat up the ref. I think that there is where a line needs to be drawn. In my opinion, I feel like parents at time can put a lot of pressure on their child/children that when they aren’t how they want to them to be, then they often times get mad. That isn’t right or wrong but I don’t know when or how in society it became acceptable for it to become like this. Participating in sports is supposed to be fun, learning experiences. I agree good healthy competition is good for every child, but where do you draw the line for it being too competitive to the point that parents are fighting? That isn’t setting a good example for the kids and its teaching them that if you don’t like that outcome then fighting is the solution.

I do believe competition is emphasized in children. I grew up playing soccer and my dad always emphasized being competitive in me. I hated losing, yes hate is a strong word but I felt so strongly about losing. I never got to a point where it wasn’t fun for me anymore, I just loved playing soccer. I have seen in sports where a player has been too competitive to the point it has messed up their game and in the end it cost them the game. Now that I am a parent, my daughter is in soccer and I have had to take a step back. I couldn’t parent her like I was parented. I had/have to let her develop her own competiveness but more importantly I want her to enjoy playing, I want her to learn about sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership. I want her to value the lessons that can be taught through sports and it isn’t just about winning, yes winning is nice but winning isn’t everything. Not saying how I was taught was bad but I am taking another route with my own child. Recommendations that I have for parents would be let your child play and have fun. They can still be competitive but also have fun at the same time. Don’t put too much emphasis on winning, and being competitive but other things like teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership, build relationships. Winning isn’t everything, and don’t get caught up in the hype that it is.

**Reference List**

Berger, K. S. (2014). *Invitation to the life span* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Worth Publishers.