



What is Pickup the Ball?

Pickup the Ball goes to the courts where young adults play to connect them with mentors, teach them life skills, and inspire them to own the transformation of their communities.

Somewhere along the way, the ball has been dropped. Our children are raising themselves. The guidance they receive comes more from their peers than their parents; parents who are working, busy, don't care, don't know, or are not present.

Pickup the Ball does not seek to take the place of parents. We are unique in that our ultimate goal is not to fill a void, but to teach and guide young people how to fill the voids themselves. Community transformation is most effective – and becomes a part of the culture – when it comes from within. Pickup the Ball is merely a catalyst.

If knowledge is truly power, we can reach the communities through pickup basketball to inform, guide, and mentor our young adults and empower them to own the transformation in their communities. For the most part, community transformation does not occur through conventions, pamphlets, posters, community meetings, or sweeping reform. True transformation occurs through one on one mentoring and relationships, empowering and inspiring each individual to make a difference.

Why pickup basketball? If we need to reach individuals, pickup basketball not only gives us that ability – pickup players congregate regularly in public places where they can be physically reached – but they are best positioned to become the leaders of transformation. In general:

1. They play a sport in which they need to understand teamwork and leadership.
2. They are youthful, about to begin families of their own and therefore open to realizing a better future.
3. They are athletes, and have a reason to stay away from unhealthy behaviors.
4. They have a passion for something – they are not apathetic. These young people love basketball.
5. They have a support system of friends that they can (and do) utilize to hold each other accountable.

Reaching these young people gives us a head start in reaching the community at large. If we can turn these young men and women into leaders, equipping them with the tools they need, we can inspire them to spread the word throughout their communities, leading their peers, their families, their schools and their communities to a better way of life, higher standards, and meaningful transformation.

Participation in Pickup the Ball is free to anyone 15 or older willing to sign a contract which commits them to a set of standards in their individual, interpersonal, and community relationships, as well as supporting the organization through fundraising. Teammates are required to do community service on an ongoing basis. While meeting these requirements, Teammates have access to opportunities to participate in Pickup the Ball programs.



Passing hope to our youth so they can slam dunk their futures.