

Outdoor Basketball courts are a good way to get people outside and healthier

Benjamin Allbright

8th grade

St. Louis School

Shelby

April 7th, 2019

1210 words

Outdoor Basketball courts are a good way to get people outside and healthier

I love to play basketball. I shoot basketball in our driveway on most days with my dad. I like to get outside and outdoor basketball keeps me active. I asked my dad if we could find an outdoor court to shoot in since our driveway is not very big. He said we could and we drove around to try and find one. We drove around our city and could only find one court at a school. The rims were locked, and we could not use it. I asked him why there weren't many courts, and he told me some reasons. Some of the issues were maintenance, player safety, more people staying inside and neighborhood issues. I propose some ways using technology and engineering to solve these problems and create some new outdoor courts which would get more people outside exercising which would make them healthier.

The first issue is maintenance. Many outdoor courts are subject to vandalism and abuse by people and the weather depending on their location. Whoever maintains the courts are responsible for the cost of maintenance. If you can reduce the cost then it would be easier for communities to have more outdoor courts. Most courts have extra heavy duty backboards and rims. "These rims are double sized and are called double rims. Players do not like them since they hate the way the ball bounces off the rim and how there is rarely any give" (Dessources 1). The solution is to design a goal that is strong enough to handle the abuse by players. A company called Bison has solved this problem with a product called Bison Ultimate Basketball System. They advertise this product with ten people hanging on the rim and goalpost. The website claims that "Ultimate goal carries an unconditional lifetime warranty and these systems are designed to take the abuse common on today's playgrounds" (Bison 1). This would solve the problem of maintenance cost since the company guarantees it for life. Another problem is

the court surface. Most outdoor courts are concrete. Concrete can crack and breakup due to the weather and use. “A company call Dyco makes a product called InstaCOURT that makes the concrete stronger and resistant to wear from the weather” (Dyco 1).

The second issue is player safety. Concrete is harder on your body joints since it does not give. Falls on concrete causes injuries a lot of the time. A company called Sport Court has solved this problem with a product called Powergame. “It uses newer technology to create a floor system that reduces the likelihood of a head injury from impact according to testing based on the Head Injury Criterion (HIC), a nationally standardized test. On a concrete surface, the likelihood of a head injury can occur from a fall at less that 1.0”. PowerGame Suspended Surface placed on top of concrete helps reduce the likelihood of head injury by increasing the distance to 26.0” (Sport Court 1). Another benefit to this product is that the company is a zero waste company. Their website says “Sport Court was the first sports flooring manufacturer to implement and certify a quality manufacturing process through ISO certification and be a ZeroWaste company. As a ZeroWaste company, less than 1% of all our waste is sent to a landfill. We continue to explore options that will result in an even further reduction of waste reaching a landfill as a result” (Sport Court 1). Many college and pro players won’t play on concrete courts due to the possibility of injuring themselves. Pro players would sometimes play at outdoor courts which brought many people there. The most famous outdoor court is called Rucker Park. It is in the Harlem area of New York City. Kobe Bryant broke his wrist on the hard concrete at Venice Beach in California. “Locals swear the concrete D.C. courts at the Goodman League ruined Gilbert Arenas' knee. The fear of injury, missing games and losing money, coupled with jam-packed offseason schedules, has turned pros into occasional visitors rather than regulars at the nation's playgrounds” (Medcalf and O’Neil 1). The Powergame

Suspended Surface product might encourage more players to play outdoors which would help make it more popular.

The third issue is more people are staying inside. More people, especially children are staying inside now. One reason listed is electronics such as gaming systems and phones. The Kids have too many electronics keeping their minds distracted from going outside. “The youth have Iphones, XBOX Ones, PS4’s and IPads just to name a few of the things they have which keep them indoors. They are enamored by TV and gadgets which takes away their zeal for hitting the courts. Why waste time sweating with a basketball when you can sweat on your WCW or the newest song from your favorite artist. Kids are living in the cyber world and forgetting about the real one” (Desources 1). “Some parents do not want their kids to go to the park. This is a big one and many may disagree, but there are a great deal of parents who do not entice their children to go to the parks” (Desources 1). If you make the basketball courts better and more appealing, then more kids might go to them.

The fourth issue is neighborhood issues. Many outdoor courts have had crimes committed on them. Crime makes people stay away and not go to the courts. Gun crime is the most common one. Players get into arguments and settle it by shooting someone. "You're not going to go out and see LeBron in the playgrounds unless there's a special setting, a special arrangement," said Gilmore, a Hall of Famer. Because the other thing is security. Kids right now, the way they value individual guys' lives, it's not the same” (Medcalf and O’Neil 1). Some neighbors do not want basketball courts near their homes. “Recently at a park in my 'burb there occurred what police said was a racially motivated [fight between black and white youth](#), resulting in two arrests, both African-Americans. One member of my village board thinks she

has the solution for preventing future skirmishes like this, and it's something brought up often, nationwide, when there is trouble at the local park -- take down the basketball hoops. It happens even though there is no statistical evidence that eliminating basketball plays any role in reducing crime -- or that keeping the hoops up prevents it” (Cook 1). I would solve this problem by engineering a solution to make it safer. I would put basketball courts as close to police stations as possible. I would see if the Police could have an officer present during playing hours. I would build fencing that would protect people and make it harder for people to commit a crime and run away. A fence would allow you to close it and keep people from using it as a spot to gather during non playing time. I would use technology to make a fence that doesn't look like a regular fence but still keeps people safe.

In conclusion, if we can solve the issues about outdoor basketball courts by using technology and engineering, we could get more people outside and exercising, which would help people live a healthier life.

Works Cited

Cook, Bob. “Does Taking Down Basketball Hoops Really Fight Crime?” *Forbes*, Forbes

Magazine, 12 Sept. 2013, www.forbes.com/sites/bobcook/2013/09/12/does-taking-down-basketball-hoops-really-fight-crime/#3547a56e4ab9.

Dessources, Vladimir. “Why Outdoor Basketball Parks Are Deserted.” *Hoops Junction*, 26 May

2015, www.hoopsjunction.com/why-outdoor-basketball-parks-are-empty/.

“Dyco® InstaCOURT™.” *Dyco Paints, Inc.*, 2019, dycopaints.com/products/dyco-instacourt.

Medical, Myron, and Dana O'Neil. "Playground Basketball Is Dying." *ESPN*, ESPN Internet Ventures, 23 July 2014, www.espn.com/espn/feature/story/_/id/11216972/playground-basketball-dying.

"Original Ultimate Playground Basketball Systems." *Bison, Inc.*, 2019, www.bisoninc.com/product/basketball/outdoor-basketball/ultimate-playground-systems/original-ultimate-basketball-systems/.

"The Safest Court in the World." *Powergame*, Sport Court, 2019, cdn.sqhk.co/newspourt/jjeicjf/safetypowergamesportcourt.pdf.

"Why Sport Court? World's Largest Court Builder." *Sport Court*, 2019, www.sportcourt.com/about-us.