

Sport Coach + Resources



www.sportcoachplus.org

SPORT COACH+ RESOURCES

Practical ways to promote inclusion



© 2024

PRACTICAL WAYS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION

1. Set a welcoming team culture

Regardless of players' ability, gender, age, previous experience or cultural background, all young players are welcomed and included by the coach in sport.

- Coaches greet young players by name and foster a positive group spirit. Young players are actively and intentionally welcomed and included in activities.
- Coaches provide young players the opportunity to get to know each other through introductions or games.
- Everyone participates actively, and no one is excluded or eliminated.
- Accommodations are made for young people with different abilities to participate and feel equally included by modifying activities or the space and encouraging each player in their own goals and achievements.
- Young player's culture, religion, age and gender are taken into account so they can participate in ways that preserve their dignity and customs.
- Young players are referred to in gender-neutral terms, such as their name, or 'sport friends'. Don't refer to all players as 'guys'.
- Coaches use methods for dividing young players into teams in ways that do not cause exclusion and damage self-esteem. For example, instead of allowing young people to pick teams, coaches use neutral methods to divide teams; birthday month, favourite fruit or random group generator.

2. Build trusting and consistent relationships

Coaches understand they are important stable, adult role models in young people's lives, and strive to build and maintain trusting and consistent relationships with young players.

- Coaches understand that young players look up to them and their opinion matters.
- Coaches are consistent with young players, so they know what to expect, feel safe and feel a sense of belonging.
- Coaches help young players to regulate their stress – especially those with dysregulation who may have difficulty connecting and interacting with others.
- Coaches foster cooperation, teamwork and a positive group identity, and help young players learn important life skills through sport.
- Young players see their coaches reflect on their biases and work to change them.
- Coaches invite and engage young players in the process of building skills by asking questions, instead of only giving instructions. Asking questions pulls young people into the process of learning, makes them feel seen and heard, and gives coaches information about a young player that is essential to their development.
- Young players are encouraged to provide formal and informal feedback to coaches about their experiences.

3. Foster autonomy

Fostering autonomy – the chance for young players to be in control and trusted with responsibilities – is important for recovery from stressful events.

- Young players are given leadership roles and responsibilities that demonstrate trust in their abilities, help them contribute meaningfully and deepen their sense of belonging.
- Roles and responsibilities include allowing young players to choose and lead training activities, be in charge of setting up drills, manage the equipment, and so forth.

4. Enact plans for inclusion

It is important to consider and then enact plans to ensure all young players can participate with dignity regardless of ability.

- Allow young players to engage with naturally inclusive activities based on what everyone can do with little or no modifications.
- Change or adapt the activity to provide support and challenge across a range of different abilities.
- Group young players according to ability, and each group does a version of the same activity, but at a level that suits the individuals in each group.
- Support individuals to work separately for a time on specific skills before joining the whole group.
- Address gender issues related to sport and physical activity.
- Consider the implications of younger and older youth being involved in the same activity, such as appropriate language, different levels of maturity and cognitive development, physical contact and differing skill levels.



Sport Coach+ is a partnership of the Olympic Refugee Foundation and the IFRC PS Centre to support coaches working with young people (age 10-24) affected by displacement. It aims to provide sport coaches with skills, knowledge and techniques to understand how stressful experiences impact young players, create safe and supportive sport environments, and respond to young players in trauma-informed and healing ways.



Olympic Refugee
Foundation



+ IFRC
Psychosocial Centre