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Project: "Diverse and Inclusive Teams for Children under 12"

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Inclusion and diversity in grassroots sports teams for children – A systematic review

Abstract:

The literature review provides an overview on the recent state of research concerning inclusion and diversity in grassroots sports for children under 12. The research is based on a pedagogical approach and focuses on challenges of practice; including didactic considerations for inclusive sports education; the reflection on the coach-child-relationship; interaction among children; and the involvement of parents in inclusive sports settings. A literature search was performed using the databases SPORTDiscus, SURF, ERIC and Education Source, considering sources from 2005 to 2020. The results from the literature review reveal the need for de-emphasising competitive aspects with a simultaneous accentuation of cooperation, enjoyment and task-orientation in inclusive sports programmes. Furthermore, the review identifies the importance of a comprehensive competence of coaches regarding inclusion and a positive and supporting involvement of parents.

This review is part of an EU funded project. It includes further literature sources (attachment 1) and practical implementation examples from project partners (attachment 2).

Keywords:

inclusion, diversity, grassroots sports teams, competition vs. cooperation, children and youth sport, coaches, parents

Introduction

The right of all people to engage in sporting activities has been explicitly confirmed and desired by ratified political statutes such as “The UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (2008), the “Revised European Sports Charter” (2001) and the “White Paper on Sport” (2007) from the European Commission. The European Commission encourages the EU member states and sport organisations to include sport programmes that promote social inclusion and combat discrimination in sports (European Commission, 2007). National governmental authorities, federations and sports clubs anchored the topic inclusion in national policies and action plans for equal participation in physical activity (German Federal Ministry of Health, 2014).

In Germany, for instance, the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) as well as the Youth Sports Federation (DSJ) presented guidelines for a common understanding of inclusion in sports (Giess-Stüber et al., 2014). As a result, programmes, realisation strategies and methods were developed to ensure a successful implementation of sports activities in inclusive settings and to promote future commitment to inclusive projects (General Assembly of the German Olympic Sports Confederation [DOSB], 2013; German Olympic Sports Confederation [DOSB], 2018; German Youth Sports Federation [DSJ], 2016; Inclusion Committee of the German Olympic Sports Confederation [DOSB], 2015; Inclusion Committee of the German Olympic Sports Confederation [DOSB], 2015; National Paralympic Committee Germany, 2014). Other countries across Europe have built national policies and guidelines for inclusion as well. Defining the concept of inclusion on a Europe-wide basis is complicated due to the fact that each nation bases the implementation of inclusion on their national laws and action plans, which might differ immensely among countries. Former systematic reviews (Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016) showed that there were different approaches in defining inclusion that vary from the disability dimension to the

diversity perspective. The following review focuses on the diversity dimension “disability”. But within the understanding of inclusion that assumes a heterogeneous and diverse training group, didactical implications can be transferred to other diversity dimensions such as gender, migration and socio-economic status, even if they are not explicitly mentioned in this review.

At this point, it has to be noted that inclusion is a task for society as a whole and therefore takes into account all areas and stages of life and social fields with the aim to identify and discuss marginalisation, discrimination and stigmatisation. Concerning grassroots sports, legislative aspects such as the accessibility and availability of inclusive sports clubs form an important basis for equal participation in physical activity, as the project of Seitz et al. shows (Meier et al., 2017). Several projects aim at developing and testing inclusive sports club structures by investigating the possibilities, but also the barriers to inclusive sports club development on a structural, operational-practical and cultural level (Meier et al., 2017; National Paralympic Committee Germany, 2014). However, the following research is based on a pedagogical approach to inclusion in grassroots sports and therefore focuses on challenges of practice. Consequently, the actual pedagogical implementation of didactical considerations for inclusive sports education as well as the interaction of coaches and children and the interaction among children are of primary concern. Furthermore, the involvement of parents in the inclusive arrangement of sports groups plays an important role (Atchison & Goodwin, 2019; Cote et al., 2008; N. Holt & Sehn, 2008).

Most studies are concerned with inclusion in physical education. The research situation on inclusion in extracurricular children and youth sport in the field of grassroots sports is relatively sparse. However, a trend towards increased research activity on inclusion issues can be identified, at least in the area of grassroots sports (Curdts, 2018; Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016; Hoos et al., 2018; Krone, 2018; McConkey et al., 2013; Meier et al., 2017; Radtke, 2018; Seitz et al., 2016), which underlines the importance of inclusion in sports.

The following review is a contribution to the EU funded project DITEAM12 that aims at the creation of inclusive sports clubs offering a non-violent environment to children. The review provides an overview of the actual realisations of inclusion in grassroots sport teams for children (under 12 years). The review furthermore focusses on the development from a competitive environment to a more educational approach that supports inclusive settings. Within the scope of this paper four research questions will be answered and their meaning for the project will be discussed thoroughly:

1. *How can the competitive aspect be oriented to a more educational approach in sports for children under 12?*
2. *How can sport skills be taught without the competitive aspect?*
3. *How can diverse and inclusive teams be created?*
4. *How can parents be engaged in this new approach?*

The following review provides an overview of the current research situation on inclusion in extracurricular sports for children and answers the research questions consecutively. At the same time, it identifies focal points, deficits and contradictions of the current stage of research in this field and provides the basis for future improvement suggestions and implementation strategies for coaches and parents in inclusive sports teams.

Methods

For the purpose of this research, a systematic review is a particularly suitable research method, since it leads to objective, transparent and replicable results. It is structured according to the PRISMA-checklist (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) (Liberati et al., 2009).

For this review the following data bases have been searched: SPORTDiscus with Full Text, SURF – Sport und Recherche im Fokus (data base of BISP (Federal Institute of Sport Science)), ERIC and Education Source. Additional electronic searches were conducted via the Human Kinetics journals, including Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly. Furthermore publications of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB), the National Youth Sports Federation (DSJ), the National Paralympic Committee (DBS) and the Information Centre for the Sport of Persons with a Disability were taken into account. The research considers German and English language literature. Further literature collected from the partners of the EU project, is displayed in attachment 1.

Due to the fact that this systematic review deals with four different research questions, there are several search terms consolidated in an index. To allow an extensive search in order to answer all given research questions, the key words have been sorted into 6 different groups of keywords that are related to **(1)** desired outcome, **(2)** nature of behaviour, **(3)** participants, **(4)** participating instructors, **(5)** undesirable starting point, **(6)** contextual surrounding. The groups of keywords for the respective groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Keyword Search Terms

(1) desired outcome:	inclusion OR diversity OR equal access OR equal participation OR tolerance OR acceptance OR respect* OR fair play OR fun OR friendship OR cooperation OR sportsmanship OR well-being
(2) nature of behaviour	sports OR physical activity OR game* OR team sports OR adapted physical activity
(3) participants	child* OR adolescent*
(4) participating instructors	coach* OR instruct* OR train* OR parent*
(5) undesirable starting point	competit* OR high performance
(6) contextual surrounding	grassroots sports OR sports clubs OR extracurricular sports OR disabled sports

On the German data base SURF the keywords from Table 1 were translated into German. Apart from that the search structure and the keyword groups were transferred unaltered.

Relevant common inclusion/exclusion criteria for the advanced search were keywords and participants (children under 12 years). The time frame was set to articles published within the last 15 years. Criteria

such as research design, and type of data were not considered in order to gain a broader representation of the available research on the topic.

In addition to the search on the data bases, all participating partners of the DITEAM12 project contributed various studies that were mostly considered in this review. All studies that were provided by the partners can be found in attachment 1.

In the screening stage all the relevant literature was inserted and structured in the literature management programme CITAVI. After screening the abstracts of the inserted literature, the focus shifted to specificity and potential eligible articles were sifted. Initially, 682 articles were identified via SPORTDiscus. Additional studies from the other databases were added afterwards. In the end, 87 articles were included in this review. An exact illustration of the reduction staged by means of a PRISMA flowchart has been omitted.

Results

The search in the applied data bases revealed several empirical studies on the positive effects of physical activity for children with disabilities (Arbour-Nicitopoulos et al., 2018; Curtin et al., 2016; Demirci & Demirci, 2018; Healy et al., 2018; Kapsal et al., 2019; Lai et al., 2020; López et al., 2017; Sorensen & Zarrett, 2014). In contrast, there are fewer empirical studies on the positive effects of inclusive sports activities for athletes with and without disabilities (Baran et al., 2013; McConkey et al., 2013; Ryuh et al., 2019; Spencer-Cavaliere & Watkinson, 2010).

Furthermore the research revealed that the focus of the recent inclusion debate concerning extracurricular sports is still on the theoretical effectiveness and potential of inclusive sports settings (Dieringer, 2015; Kamberidou et al., 2019; Kiuppis, 2018; van der Veken et al., 2020) as well as on structural and operational aspects and barriers on the way to inclusion in sports (Giese, 2016; Krone, 2018; Meier et al., 2017; Radtke, 2018; Seitz et al., 2016; Wright et al., 2019).

The literature search revealed one systematic review concerning inclusion in extracurricular sports for children (Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016), which was supported by the German Youth Sports Federation (DSJ). The literature research was part of a project that aimed at the development, realisation and evaluation of an inclusive sports programme addressing coaches, association functionaries and volunteers (ibid.). The project focuses on promoting essential requirements for the creation of inclusive sport programmes, including an open attitude to diversity, specific methodological/didactical know-how and the ability to adapt content to the needs of a specific constellation of disabilities (ibid.). The contents and results of the programme's evaluation will be mentioned and discussed subsequently.

Former systematic reviews state a lack of empirical studies on how and with what effect inclusive sports programmes can be implemented with regard to grassroots sports for children and adolescents (Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016). Furthermore, the question of depending framework conditions for successful inclusion remains unacknowledged or at least answered insufficiently. A general research deficit can be determined, which is even more striking with regard to extracurricular sports for children and adolescents, than the lack of research in physical education in schools.

In the field of grassroots sports, there are some international research results from the context of Special Olympics. The Unified Sports Programme, in which people with and without disabilities

participate together in sports and competitions, mentions inclusion in sports as the main goal (Curdt, 2014; McConkey et al., 2013). A study by Baran et al. (2013) shows that children with intellectual disabilities benefit from Unified Sports programmes in terms of improved social skills. Moreover the attitudes of the participants towards their sports partner (with or without disabilities) improve (ibid.). McConkey et al. (2013) come to a similar conclusion in their 5-nation-study, including Germany, Hungary, Poland, Serbia and Ukraine. They were able to prove a positive development of the personality of all participants with and without disabilities in the scope of the Unified Sports Programme (McConkey et al., 2013). The sports project also led to an increased positive perception of people with intellectual disability. According to McConkey et al. (2013), the attitudes of individual athletes change as a result of the joint practice of sport, which promotes the elimination of stereotypes associated with mental development. The studies of Baran et al. (2013) and McConkey et al. (2013) show that providers of sports services repeatedly express the desire for increased financial support and personnel training opportunities. However, the research team was also able to show that inclusive sports activities can help to establish new alliances with local communities (McConkey et al., 2013).

In Germany there are a few ongoing inclusive sports projects which already made several adjustments in practice on the basis of repeated evaluations, such as the inclusive handball project “Freiwurf Hamburg” (Free Throw Hamburg) and the inclusive football project “FußballFreunde” (FootballFriends) (Greve, 2016; Pochstein et al., 2014). The results of those evaluations will be discussed below. The Information Centre for the Sport of Persons with a Disability in Germany publishes the magazine “Sportfreunde” (previously “Sportinspiration”) annually, which among other topics presents national inclusive sports projects (information centre for disability sports, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2019), including “reverse integration” programmes (wheelchair basketball, wheelchair skating, etc.). The research also revealed an evaluation on a “reverse integration” programme (Carter et al., 2014).

Further results of the literature review were concerned with coaches’ ideologies in inclusive sports settings (Hammond et al., 2019; Masala & Lazzaro, 2019; May et al., 2019). The results of the survey in the scope of the Australian football project “Auskick” are particularly interesting in this respect, as they present the coaches’ approaches and at the same time illustrate implementation possibilities for inclusive training settings and the involvement of parents in the inclusive sports programme (May et al. 2019).

In the sense of a “narrow” understanding of inclusion, which refers primarily to special educational needs, the focus is on special support for children with disabilities in inclusive sports settings. Effective practices and recommendations for the training arrangement concerning children with different disabilities are in the centre of various articles and reviews (Best, 2020; Erofeeva et al., 2019; Kraft et al., 2019; Martin & Whalen, 2014; Menear & Neumeier, 2015; Valentini et al., 2017; Wolfe & Madden, 2016).

Concerning a “broad” understanding of inclusion, which implies the consideration of all diversity dimensions and therefore the condition of heterogeneity, the research also revealed several articles focusing on implementation strategies for inclusion in extracurricular sports (Dieringer, 2015; Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016; Lu & Steele, 2014). As mentioned above, the inclusive sports project of Giess-Stüber and Freudenberger (2016) will primarily be considered in the following discussion for recommendations and implementation strategies for coaches in inclusive sports programmes. An additional important starting point for the discussion on the question of how to deal with inclusion in

grassroots sport teams in a supportive way is the work of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, the German Youth Sports Federation and the National Paralympic Committee Germany.

In the scope of the first research question (*“How can the competitive aspect be oriented to a more educational approach in sports for children under 12?”*), the research showed several results of articles that discuss the impact of competition in inclusive sports programmes (Aytur et al., 2018; Cocquyt & Sigmund, 2011; Digel, 2014; Prokop, 2013; Spaaij et al., 2019). The search also yielded results that discuss the significance of competition in sports on the development of children irrespective of inclusion (Daniels, 2007; Fenoglio & Taylor, 2014, 2014; N. L. Holt, 2008; Neely & Holt, 2014).

Following the discussion on the influence of competition in sports, the second research question (*“How can sport skills be taught without the competitive aspect?”*) seeks for alternative perspectives on the experience of physical activity (next to high performance and the competitive character), such as cooperative play, or the promotion of fair play and sportsmanship. The search on the data bases showed several results that focus on the integration of fun, cooperation and fair play in inclusive sport programmes (Collins & Barcelona, 2018; Lu & Steele, 2014; Tiemann, 2016; Visek et al., 2015).

The third research question (*“How can diverse and inclusive teams be created?”*) is mainly concerned with the actual implementation strategies of inclusion, including a comprehensive training of coaches (Braga et al., 2018; Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016; Greve & Bechthold, 2019).

Concerning the fourth research question (*“How can parents be engaged in this new approach?”*), the research showed several results. Studies concerning experiences and ideologies of parents (Atchison & Goodwin, 2019; Bassett-Gunter et al., 2017; Neely & Holt, 2014) as well as articles concerning effects of parental engagement on children (An & Hodge, 2013; Reitman et al., 2005; Shirazipour & Latimer-Cheung, 2017) and also articles focussing on recommendations and considerations for parents that are part of inclusive sport programmes (Bach, 2006; Tymeson, 2013; Witt & Dangi, 2018), will contribute to the answer of the fourth research question.

All the results that were briefly presented will be the basis for the following discussion of the four research questions, with regards to the relevance of the DITEAM12 project. The results will be discussed according to the subsequent chapters: inclusion and competition, reduction of competitive aspects and alternatives for competition in inclusive sports settings, implementation strategies for diverse and inclusive sports settings and involvement of parents.

Results relevant for the project and Discussion

Inclusion and competition

At the '5th International Scientific Congress' within the framework of Special Olympics, Rikka Juntunen (2014) describes the historical significance of sports as follows: “In former times winning was important, then health was important, after that positive feelings and joy and today we do sports all together” (Juntunen, 2014).

Worldwide there are several programmes and initiatives of integrated and inclusive sports realized. In the scope of the International Scientific Congress of Special Olympics, Curdt (2014) states, that only a few inclusive offers are initiated by (regular) sports clubs. In many cases, facilities for athletes with a

disability are the origin of integrative sport and significantly more people with disabilities are still part of sports programmes which are organised by sports associations separately from (regular) sports activities (Curd, 2014). As mentioned previously, this review focuses on inclusion of athletes with a disability. Connections can be drawn to inclusion and equality of gender and integration concerning language, cultural and socio-economic factors.

In Paralympic sports, competition and high performance play a central role, but as soon as the competitive character is adapted in inclusive sports programmes and events, a thinking of dichotomy (athletes with and without disabilities) and a question of comparability seems to occur. In the ethical discourse of modern societies the topics of inclusion and fair play in sports are given a high priority as two examples from athletics, namely the successes of Oscar Pistorius and Markus Rehm showed (Digel, 2014; Prokop, 2013). Those two athletes (who participated in the Paralympics) took part in able-bodied championships and with their success an intense media discussion was triggered and the comparability of athletes with and without a disability questioned. In the context of competitions at high performance level, inclusion as social participation is opposing the objective comparability of performance (Digel, 2014).

A contrary approach to competition in sports can be seen in the Special Olympics World Games, where persons with an intellectual disability take part. These competitions focus on participation and the enjoyment of sport rather than winning and comparing to others (Vermeer, 2014).

Attempts to bring the games of Special Olympics and the Olympic Games together have not yet resulted in inclusive sports competition, as it can be seen in the example of the “National Youth Olympics” in Germany (Diel & Knoll, 2014). With the foundation of the Special Olympics pendant “National Youth Special Olympics”, there were first attempts to bring together all athletes in a united competition (ibid.). But evaluations show that no contacts between the participants established during the event primarily due to a focus on competition and missing information about the unifying project (ibid.).

In this regard, Daniels (2007) distinguishes 3 different types of competition: *the military model* (focus on “taking out” the enemy), the *reward model* (focus on a win-at-all-cost philosophy and ego-oriented rewards such as social status, national championships and adult approval) and *the partnership model* (focus on cooperation, personal effort and challenging of own skills). Daniels (2007) furthermore adds that “instead of defining and teaching competition only in terms of winners and losers and, worse yet, winning at all costs, we must start viewing and building competition by keeping elements such as cooperative skills (for example, teamwork) and achievement motivation (for example, mastering skills) in mind.”

This egalitarian approach to promote balance competition was taken into account by inclusive sports programmes such as “Freiwurf Hamburg”, “Unified Sports” or “FußballFreunde” (Greve & Bechthold, 2019; McConkey et al., 2013; Pochstein et al., 2014). However, the empirical evaluations of these inclusive sports programmes show ambiguous results concerning the significance of competition in inclusive sports settings. The objective of the inclusive handball project “Freiwurf Hamburg”, for instance, is to weaken certain inherent criteria of competition in sports and at the same time bring others to the fore: “There is no such thing as playing well but losing. As long as a player was and is allowed to give his best within his potential, he is a winner and receives the appropriate recognition from coach and teammates” (Greve, 2016). Another project’s principle states, that players with a

handicap are not considered to have a disability, but rather as handball players with specific needs and therefore diversity is recognised and valued as a life-enhancing quality (ibid.). The results of the evaluation conform to the objectives concerning the attitude and practice of the coaches, namely to treat athletes with and without a disability equally and to focus on the potential and needs of each player or athlete individually. But among the players without handicaps, parents and even players with handicaps a strong orientation towards social dominance becomes apparent. Strong exclusive tendencies and an acceptance of group-based social hierarchies became visible in the data, especially when the focus is on results in competition (ibid.). It can be stated that the project's objective contains inclusive thoughts, but that these are not implemented by all players accordingly, also due to a competitive character of the sports programme (ibid.).

Also the project "FußballFreunde", according to the principles of Special Olympic Unified Sports, aims at setting the focus rather on promoting social skills and characteristics such as "teamwork", "team spirit" and "fair play" and not on sporting competition (Pochstein et al., 2014). Players with and without handicaps highlighted positive aspect of the project, such as joy, equal participation and social improvements like cohesion, self-confidence, fairness, respect, fear reduction and team spirit, recognition of participation and friendly atmosphere (ibid.). On the other hand the evaluation showed that especially for children without handicaps (partners), competition plays an important part and several partners express difficulties in dealing with negative emotions and a lack of technical skills of the players with handicaps (ibid.). Even though within the evaluation many partners clarify that participation is more important than the result in the competition, some negative attitudes towards the athletes with handicaps and thinking in categories became clear (ibid.).

In addition to positive developments through an inclusive sports experience, these results also highlight the negative effects of a competitive character. In contrast to this, in the field of non-inclusive sports there are empirical results on the positive effects of competition for people with and without disabilities, including an increase of self-perception (assuming the athlete considers herself competent), a sense of purpose and responsibility and learning life lessons that are connected with the results of the competition (Daniels, 2007, Cocquyt & Sigmund, 2010, Aytur et al., 2018).

For a better understanding concerning the results of thinking in categories and the importance of winning competitions, it is advisable to take a look into the developmental psychology. Several findings describe under which conditions competition can be helpful for a positive youth development (Collins & Barcelona, 2018; Cote et al., 2008; Daniels, 2007). Daniels (2007) points out that children even at young ages naturally compete and compare skills and that it is extremely important that parents and coaches understand the child's perception of competition to make participation in sports more meaningful. This includes knowledge about prior experiences, maturity and motivation of young athletes. Children need to be ready to participate in competitive sports, which includes the appropriateness of the level of competitiveness, as well as the cognitive maturity for understanding rules and emotional maturity to handle the pressure (Cote et al., 2008; Daniels, 2007). Secondly, motivation plays a central part in the development of a child and the attitude towards physical activity and competition. Whereas in an intrinsic and task-oriented atmosphere competence in youth sports is defined as skill improvement or mastery of a skill, enjoyment of the sport, or feeling of team camaraderie, an extrinsic, ego-oriented and norm-referenced climate promotes the idea that competence is defined by adult approval, social status due to peer comparison, and winning. In a task-oriented climate young athletes can develop their skills without pressure resulting in taking on more challenging tasks and prefer to play teams that challenge

their skills. The natural appearance of peer comparison is therefore separated from defining their competence.

By combining this developmental psychological knowledge about the motivation for achievement and the children's attitude towards competition with further results from the evaluation of the mentioned inclusive sports programmes, the trend towards thinking in categories and the importance of winning competitions can be explained. Even though the inclusive programmes focus on cooperation, personal effort and challenging of own skills, most players are socialised in non-inclusive sports settings (Greve, 2016). Especially players without handicaps experienced exclusive tendencies of sports and competition that originate from an extrinsic, ego-oriented and norm-referenced sports socialization (ibid.).

In summary, it can be concluded from the results of the data research, that peer comparison in competitive sports is natural during the youth development, even when the focused aim on competition can differ from the own competence to social status and winning. Furthermore the results show that this competitive aspect seems to emphasize group-based social hierarchies and thinking in categories among the players in inclusive sports settings, even in inclusive sports programmes that try to set the focus on rather inclusive ideals like team play, equal participation and enjoyment (Curdt, 2018).

Reduction of competitive aspects and alternatives for competition in inclusive sports settings

Since the results of evaluations discussed above show that, despite the goal of being inclusion, the focus is particularly on the reproduction of differences (Curdt, 2018), this chapter displays how competitive aspects of sport can be de-emphasized or replaced.

Fediuk (2014) describes inclusive sports activities as “diverse, varied and eventful movement activities that enable and convey new, cross-sports experiences, open up social fields of learning, improve physical fitness and aim for more participation and co-determination” and at this point completely avoids the competitive character of sports. Cote et al. (2008) mention, that “sport programs for children (i.e. age 6–12) should include interactions between children, and between children and adults, that are based on play and opportunities to try out different forms of sporting activities. ‘Sampling’ and ‘playing’ during childhood are posited as the proximal processes that form the primary mechanism for continued sport participation [...]”.

The research revealed several programmes that present strategies for an enjoyable and playful sports environment rather than a competitive one (Carter et al., 2014; Collins & Barcelona, 2018; Fenoglio & Taylor, 2014). The “Give-us-back-our-game”-approach, for instance, describes a perspective that is upon fun, age-appropriate game forms, child consultation, inclusivity, mutual respect and other elements (Fenoglio & Taylor, 2014). Collins and Barcelona (2018) aim at enhancing the sport enjoyment by “creating policies and sport contexts that maximize inclusive opportunities to participate in and increase physical activity, creating policies and sports contexts that foster prosocial behaviour, teaching sport skills through games and talking to athletes about what they enjoyed during their practices or games”. They furthermore strive for establishing a positive motivation in children or “positive push” by creating a task-oriented climate, rewarding for positive efforts and behaviour of athletes and developing and reflecting on appropriate game and practice goals (Collins & Barcelona, 2018). Even though these programmes are not explicitly designed for an inclusive setting, they include inclusivity as a core value.

The research revealed two models that promote inclusive and enjoyable sports experience, namely the “Easy-Play-Model” (EPM) (Lu & Steele, 2014) and the “6+1-Model of an adaptive physical education” (Tiemann, 2013). Although the “6+1-Model” was originally intended for physical education at schools, it can also be applied to grassroots sports for children (Tiemann, 2016). These models show an alternative approach on inclusive sports by de-emphasizing competitive aspects to accommodate developmental goals of children.

“The Easy-Play Model offers a framework for modifying team sports in order to establish challenging and supportive playing opportunities in a context where competition is optimized” (Lu & Steele, 2014). The optimal competitiveness is intended to ensure that the play environment supports skill development of less skilled players while offering opportunities for high-skilled players to be challenged and this can be attained by a greater task-orientation. The play-easy approach is based on the principle “Play easy on each other and hard for each other” and thereby focusses on the success of developing personal skills in a cooperative and enjoyable environment. The third characteristic, next to optimal competitiveness and a play-easy approach, is self-regulation. This means playing is based on fairness without the help of referees, which includes that players bear the responsibility of following adapted rules and ensure an equal participation for everyone. In this self-regulatory approach there is no score or recordkeeping necessary and players compete in teams which are continually rearranged within the group to ensure balanced games. Due to this characteristic, the EPM is not providing a win-lose outcome, which results in higher attention to participation, teamwork and activity. The “playing” takes a very important part in the model, which is built on four assumptions: “(1) humans have an instinctive nature to play; (2) each individual has the ability to play; (3) play is fun; (4) not everyone enjoys winning when losing is involved”.

The “6+1-Model” also focusses on a cooperative playing approach rather than a competitive character of inclusive physical activity. Nevertheless, both models are not intended to completely remove the competitive aspects, but rather modify sport games by means of various adaptations in a way that very different players in a group can play together with and against each other with equal rights (Lu & Steele, 2014; Tiemann, 2016). The “6+1-Model” includes adaptations with the help of modifications of the rules, the equipment, the task, the environment of training, the social form and the communication (Tiemann, 2013). Tiemann (2016) furthermore describes the great value of playing in inclusive settings, since it always leads to a confrontation with other players and therefore the players must relate to each other and try to understand each other. According to Tiemann (2016), sports and motoric games are applicable in all fields of action in sports. It is therefore also possible to transfer them to sports-specific grassroots sports. Specific changes of varying scope make it possible for people with different potential to participate in games. The concrete modifications and practical examples from inclusive sports programmes will be presented in the next chapter.

In the previous chapter the results concerning positive effects of competitions were presented, including an increase of self-perception, a sense of purpose and responsibility and learning life lessons that are connected with the results of the competition (Aytur et al., 2018; Cocquyt & Sigmund, 2011; Daniels, 2007). These positive effects can still be achieved after the modification or de-emphasizing of competitive aspects. It is even more likely that these effects can be attained with an intrinsic motivation due to a task-oriented, enjoyable and cooperative environment (Daniels, 2007).

At this point it should be noted that while the modification of conditions and the use of cooperative games plays an important part in the process of creating an inclusive sports team, many other factors play decisive roles as well, as the next two chapters show.

Implementation strategies for diverse and inclusive sport teams

In order to gain an overview of all parties involved in establishing an inclusive sports setting, it is useful to look at the conditions for a positive youth development from the perspective of the developmental psychology. “In order to make youth sports a vehicle for positive youth development, each child, parent, coach, and community must work together in promoting a task-oriented environment in which cooperative skills are taught within a competitive arena (Daniels, 2007).” Due to the fact that the present review is primarily concerned with the pedagogical perspective of establishing an inclusive sports setting, the following implementation strategies only refer to the educational process, more precisely the interaction between coaches and children, the interaction among the children, and the parents’ exchanges with their own children and the coach. The role of the parents will be discussed in a separate chapter.

Giess-Stüber and Freudenberger (2016) formulated the following conclusive didactic ideas from their systematic research: “For the coaches, a basic attitude open to diversity, specific methodological know-how and the ability to adapt content to the needs of a specific constellation of children and young people with and without disabilities are indispensable.” The importance of the competence of coaches related to inclusive sports settings has been confirmed in several findings of the data research (Braga et al., 2018; Carter et al., 2014; Doll-Tepper, 2014; McConkey et al., 2013; National Paralympic Committee Germany, 2014). In addition to the literature research, the project “inclusion in extracurricular children and youth sports” provided an expert survey of coaches, volunteers and stakeholders that were experienced in inclusive sports settings (Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016). Among a collection of instructions for the guidance in inclusive sports groups the conclusion of the expert survey yielded several desires, shortcomings, improvement suggestions and necessary requirements for an advanced training aiming at a competent guidance of inclusive sports groups. It was concluded that the needs of the inclusive target group can be addressed more effectively by further developing the methodology and didactics in sport. Particular emphasis was therefore placed on the need for a qualification of coaches in the field of inclusion. Furthermore the expert survey showed the desire that diversity should be considered and addressed as a normal case in trainer courses and inclusion should not be equated with disability. On the basis of their systematic review and the experts’ survey and in the scope of the research project “Inclusion in extracurricular children and youth sports”, 8 modules have been created. These modules address coaches, volunteers and functionaries and are aiming at emphasizing on inclusive openness, stimulating reflection processes among the target group as well as giving advice for the practical implementation of inclusive sports programmes. As mentioned above the project also includes a realization and evaluation of the developed modules. Results from the data search show a different approach for the advanced training of coaches related to inclusion (Braga et al., 2018). In the United States of America the focus is on a fusion of the Adapted Physical Education National Standards and the National Standards for Sport Coaches, which are more consistent with a “narrow” understanding of inclusion (ibid.).

In advance of a brief introduction of the developed modules by Giess-Stüber and Freudenberger, the “Easy-Play-Model” as well as the “6+1-Model” will be reviewed again and possible ways of modification for inclusive settings presented. Furthermore, a look at practical examples of inclusive sport

programmes should provide further information about possible implementation strategies for inclusive sports groups. Before inclusive sports programmes and models are discussed, a brief excursion into developmental psychology will shed light on how to achieve positive relationships between athletes that also support the development of each individual. Considering the fact, that studies found out, that peers played the most significant role for children to feel included in sports and games (N. Holt & Sehn, 2008; Spencer-Cavaliere & Watkinson, 2010), an insight into the achievement of acceptance and tolerance of peers is provided .

According to the study by Cote et al. (2008) the following eight setting features should be implemented in sports programmes to support a positive youth development and the establishment of a strong bond between the developing persons:

- (1) a physical and psychological safety, that can be achieved by an encouragement of secure and respectful peer interactions;
- (2) an appropriate structure of activities, including deliberating play in childhood;
- (3) supportive relationships, that can be achieved by a positive communication and connectedness;
- (4) opportunities to belong, including a meaningful inclusion and the encouragement of healthy relationships;
- (5) positive social norms, like fair play, sportsmanship, cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control;
- (6) support of efficacy and mattering, meaning an empowering and a support of the children's autonomy;
- (7) opportunities for skill building; and the
- (8) integration of family, school and community efforts, that increases communication and lessens conflicts and dissonance.

Spencer-Cavaliere and Watkinson (2010) furthermore recommend using peer-mediated strategies that emphasize the roles of peers over adults in interventions.

These features are also considered in models for inclusive sports and should be a basis for sports programmes for children. In the scope of the "Easy-Play-Model", an "inclusive playing environment is achieved by modifying the rules, the size of the field and the periods of play to accommodate and recognize the continuum of player ability" (Lu & Steele, 2014). The model also suggests a steady rearranged grouping and positioning of players for a balanced game (ibid.).

The "6+1-Model" includes the possibility of modifying the rules, tasks, the environment, material, social form and communication. Depending on the participants in a group, different adjustments can be made. These adjustments can easily be implemented in motoric games that are not sport-specific, as they are not subject to any normed set of rules and standardized techniques. This leaves a lot of space for target group-specific adaptations while maintaining the central game idea, the characteristic structural features and decisive rules of the game. Tiemann (2016) provides practical examples for each type of game modification that are meant for an inclusive sports group of children, e.g. new game roles, differentiated tasks, tasks that include the factor of coincidence or luck, rearrangement of play areas or courts, playing in small groups rather than big groups and, in terms of a modified communication, clear instructions and explicit demonstrations.

These adaptations must also be considered for sport-specific games. For instance, a possible implementation of rule adaptations can be seen in the "Freiwurf Hamburg"-project (Greve, 2016). In terms of inclusive gaming, the standardized handball rules have been extended to ensure equal opportunities. Accordingly, a scoring-limitation has been introduced, that allows only 3 goals per player in one game (ibid.).

For the development of new motoric and playful experiences as well as for the modification of already known exercises and games it requires creativity in order to find solutions that are adapted to the target group (Lu & Steele, 2014; Tiemann, 2016). Regarding this creative process of adaptation, Tiemann (2016, p. 38) concludes the following: "In the process of developing and refining game ideas, it is very important to involve the participants as experts for their own purposes. It is also essential to reflect together with them and, if necessary, to further improve the fit between the respective game variation and the needs of the individuals. Searching together for creative solutions is helpful, so that a common cooperation and competition can take place irrespective of the specific potentials of individual participants."

Adapting to inclusive settings is one thing, but even more important is the simultaneous communication and development of values and ethical principles. The "Easy-Play-Model" promotes the following core values: inclusiveness, enjoyment, cooperation, healthy competition, deemphasized winning and democracy, players at all levels must be welcomed, appreciated and supported, equal opportunities for experiencing optimal challenges, discourage aggressive play (Lu & Steele, 2014). Furthermore the subsequent ethical principles reflect the nature of the EPM: (1) mutual respect, (2) honesty (e.g. admitting and self-identifying fouls); (3) encouragement of other players (4) tolerance, (5) sharing (e.g. fair distribution of playing time, positions and possession of sports objects), (6) support through encouragement, positive feedback or advice to facilitate improvement, (7) courtesy (care for disadvantaged opponents), (8) teamwork and cooperation (ibid.).

The research furthermore indicates another important common value of most inclusive sports programmes, namely an equal participation that starts with eliminating the classification into athletes with and without a disability. Special Olympics Unified therefore introduced the terms 'athletes' and 'partners' (McConkey et al., 2013) whereas "Freiwurf Hamburg"-players with handicaps are not considered to have a disability, but rather as handball players with specific needs (Greve, 2016).

The presented examples of inclusive sports programmes mainly showed the trends of mainstreaming sports making adaptations to achieve an inclusive sports setting. Carter et al. (2015) note that simply opening up existing sporting opportunities maintains the discourse of difference due to a comparison with normative ideals. Carter et al. (2014) evaluated a 'reverse integration' project by the wheelchair sports club 'Cheetahs' which is based in the North West of England. The qualitative study conclusively assumes that "the success arises from the fact that it was neither a 'disability only' nor an 'adapted mainstream' club" (ibid.). The emphasis on the wheelchair sports programme was on fun and engagement and the only criterion for being involved was being a child who wanted to play sport in a wheelchair. This inclusionary starting point "blurred the categories of able-bodied and disabled", as Carter et al. (2014) conclude. Based on participatory values and a "resolute and strategic leadership" of officials and especially coaches, "the Cheetahs provided a legitimate and equitable space in which children and other people learned about the limits and damage generated by ability and disability

attitudes". Another concluding success of this wheelchair programme was the involvement of families, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

The magazine of the German Information Centre for the Sport of Persons with a Disability reports not only on a variety of inclusive sports programmes resulting from an adaptation of mainstream sports, but also on inclusive practical examples in the sense of "reverse integration" sports, such as wheelchair skating, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair basketball or even wheelchair rugby German Information Centre for the Sport of Persons with a Disability. Even though there is a lack of empirical studies on the success of these inclusive sports programmes, the contributions review a rising interest in these sports programmes (ibid.).

The presented evaluations of inclusive sports programmes in the frame of this review already allow derivations for the implementation of a basic attitude open to diversity and the acquisition of specific methodological know-how and the ability of making adaptations in an inclusive sports setting. These aspects can be found in the already mentioned 8 modules of the project "inclusion in extracurricular children and youth sports", which will briefly be presented (Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016). It should be noted that the modules go beyond a pedagogical examination of inclusion and also address structural and operational aspects of an inclusive sports programme.

Module (1) aims at raising awareness for diversity, which is achieved by experiencing and reflecting on different perspectives based on performed role plays, as well as the presentation and discussion of working aids for clubs and associations like the Youth Sports Federation (DSJ) and the National Paralympic Committee Germany. Module (2) gives an overview of different understanding of "disability" as well as on different classification systems of types of disabilities. Subsequently different disabilities and their significance for sports activity are presented and a classification in competition-oriented sports is discussed. Module (3) aims at raising awareness for an understanding of inclusion as a chance. This is achieved by the clarification of the social model of disability (rather than the medical) and a "broader" understanding of inclusion (Giess-Stüber et al., 2014). The title of module (4) is "diverse instruction - vary, instruct and communicate" and it includes the acquisition of possible applications for a supporting communication, as well as giving advice for communication and discussion of disabilities within the sports group. Module (5) is a practical one and seeks to gaining experience in a Paralympic sport (e.g. wheelchair basketball) as well as the theoretical knowledge and reflection on different disability sports that can be adapted into heterogeneous sports groups. Module (6) is concerned with the structuring and planning of training sessions, as well as with the different opportunities of differentiation in heterogeneous groups. Module (7) deals with the modification of rules in sport games, depending on physical abilities of the participants in inclusive settings. The heading of the last module (8) is "appreciating diversity and recognising limits" and addresses inclusion rather on an operational level. In order to receive support in implementing inclusion, the relevance of network structures and cooperation is described in this module and potential municipal network partners are developed within the framework of a collegial consultation. The evaluation of the modules was mostly positive. But the application of the modules as a further education programme for the German Youth Sports Federation was not yet accomplished when the project report was published, due to a lack of interested coaches (ibid.). In cooperation with the German Paralympic Committee and on the basis of the developed modules by Giess-Stüber and Freudenberger, the German Youth Sports Federation (2016) published a manual that contains information and materials from theory and practice to support consultants in DSJ-member organizations in planning and implementing training courses.

The presented implementation strategies primarily address associations' consultants and coaches. Considering the fact that this literature review addresses grassroots sport teams for children under 12, particular attention must also be paid to the cooperation and involvement of parents, as they play an important role in the personal and social development of children in sport (Atchison & Goodwin, 2019; Cote et al., 2008; N. Holt & Sehn, 2008).

Involvement of parents

The literature review showed various results of empirical studies that deal with parental involvement in physical activity of children with disabilities (An & Hodge, 2013; Bassett-Gunter et al., 2017; Reitman et al., 2005; Shirazipour & Latimer-Cheung, 2017; Tymeson, 2013). Those studies include information about psychological determinants of parental support behaviours (Shirazipour & Latimer-Cheung, 2017) as well as parents' needs and preferences regarding physical activity information (Bassett-Gunter et al., 2017). Furthermore, the results reveal advice for parents ensuring the rights of their children for an equal sports participation (Tymeson, 2013). They also reveal a social skills training programme for parents with ADHD-diagnosed children designed to help them promote the display of appropriate social behaviour and better athletic performance in sports settings (Reitman et al., 2005). The inquiry by An and Hodge (2013) furthermore explores the experiences and meaning of parental involvement in physical activity from the perspective of parents of children with a disability.

These results set a basis for understanding the transition that many parents have to go through when their children start participating in an inclusive sports setting. The study "My child may be ready, but I am not" by Atchison and Goodwin (2019) states the essential role that parents play in the transition from separate physical activity programmes to inclusive settings for their children. The study aims at exploring parents' experiences of their children's transition, as well as understanding strategies that are used to address the transition and finally gaining insights in the importance of support to families during this transition. The transition was uncovered as a complex and multidimensional psychological process that included several tensions parents had to face as they negotiated new roles, relationships, routines, and assumptions (ibid.). In an inclusive setting, the role change for parents includes the transition from a parent with no responsibilities beyond transportation to a parent with a participatory role of securing fitness buddies for their children or attending the programmes themselves (ibid.). Results show that the moving out of a separate programme into an inclusive sports programme was negatively anticipated by parents based on past failure experiences that were accompanied by social pressures, parent blaming, othering and other negative effects of social stigmatization (ibid.). The evaluation of the study, however, states a push through this negativity and a transformation in thinking, feelings and actions of parents whose children attended an inclusive sports programme. Confidence and optimism were gained and new strategies adopted, as parents observed the successful participation of their children. Atchison and Goodwin (2019) conclude from the results, that not only the person undergoing the transition but also their parents should be taken into consideration by the development and implementation of transition programmes. In addition, the results conclusively state a need for educational and peer support opportunities before, during and after transitions to ease parent pressures. The transition, furthermore "aimed at parents could include educational supports designed to decrease apprehensions and letting go of old perceptions and utilizing one's strategies (e.g., visiting potential sites), taking on new roles (e.g., requesting support for programme aide training, parent to parent support groups), managing new routines (attending the initial sessions until programmes supports are in place), and addressing new situational challenges such as rules, regulations, norms, and expectations of the new inclusive

community context (e.g., fitting in does not take precedence over being engaged in the program)" (ibid.).

The literature review also yielded several studies and programmes that aim at giving parents a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in children and youth sport (Bach, 2006; Daniels, 2007; Spencer-Cavaliere & Watkinson, 2010; Witt & Dangi, 2018). For instance, the positive support of parental spectators can be described by a sports-person-like behavior, an attentive silence rather than yelling comments, cheering for everyone, encouragement through feedback, praising and empathic behaviour and protective interventions without creating conditions that will lead to potential conflicts (Bach, 2006; Witt & Dangi, 2018). Several findings state that parents as well as coaches have to create a task-oriented sport environment to allow a positive youth development through physical activity (Collins & Barcelona, 2018; Cote et al., 2008; Daniels, 2007). This can be achieved by appropriate expectations of young athletes, a specific and constructive feedback, and acceptance no matter of the results, and the adherence and mediation of the belief that success is based on effort and progress and not scores (ibid.). Daniels (2007) furthermore clarifies the importance of a respectful parent-coach-relationship and the right amount of advice from parents (not too much "high directiveness" and too little "low directiveness"). In addition, Collins and Barcelona (2018) formulate strategies that ensure the development of a positive relationship of coaches and parents. These include a delivery of clear expectations and a consistent and fair behavior of the coach towards the parents, regardless of the abilities of their child. Collins and Barcelona (2018) furthermore mention the importance of being available for parents' concerns, providing of "contact points", keeping parents informed and reinforce their positive behavior. These guidelines for a supportive parental behaviour and a positive parent-coach-relationship also apply to an inclusive sports setting.

The data research reveals a lack of empirical studies concerning parental involvement in inclusive sports programmes. A glance at present inclusive sports programmes allows conclusions to be drawn about potentials and possible improvements of involving parents in inclusive sports settings. In the scope of the inclusive wheelchair programme of the Cheetahs, involved parents explained the importance of playing sports as a family. This reversed integration project allowed children and their parents to explore wheelchair sports together in a playful and enjoyable environment that "made disabilities invisible" (Carter et al., 2015). The evaluations of inclusive sports programmes like Unified Sports, "FußballFreunde" or "Freiwurf Hamburg" also show that parents experienced enjoyment, participation and acceptance of their children, as well as a change of the children's attitudes. Concerning the involvement of parents the evaluations show a general contentment due to the implicitness of cooperation with coaches and associations. Involved parents furthermore displayed shortcomings and desires, like a lack of public perception of the project and the promotion of local networking (Pochstein et al., 2014). In addition, the project's evaluations of Unified Sports and "Freiwurf Hamburg" displayed a production of difference and an orientation towards social dominance even among parents (Greve & Bechthold, 2019; Pochstein et al., 2014).

These results reveal the presumption that not just coaches and consultants of associations and clubs, but also parents should acquire an attitude open to diversity to ensure the success of inclusive sports programmes.

Conclusion

The present systematic review aimed at providing an overview of the recent state of research concerning inclusion and diversity in grassroots sports for children under 12. The research was based on a pedagogical approach and focused on challenges of practice, including didactical considerations for inclusive sports education as well as the reflection on the relationship of coach and children and the interaction among children. Furthermore, the involvement of parents in the inclusive arrangement of the sports groups was discussed.

12 years after the The UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, there is still a lack of empirical studies concerning didactical considerations for inclusive physical activity in grassroots sports. But with the help of presented models and practical examples of inclusive sport settings, all research questions could be appropriately answered.

The results show the significance of de-emphasizing competition in physical activity to support a positive youth development. This can be achieved by a task-oriented environment that promotes intrinsic motivation. This includes a shifting focus from a “winning-at-all-cost” attitude to an achievement motivation that concentrates on cooperation, personal effort and challenging of own skills. The data research revealed several alternative approaches to a competitive sports setting. The “Easy-Play-Model” and the “6+1-Model” as well as the programme “Give us back our game” highlight the importance of playing cooperative games without the necessity of competing and scoring. The models and programmes furthermore provide self-regulatory and reflective processes, creative involvement and co-determination of all participants in inclusive sports settings.

Despite a reduction of competitive aspects and a focus on enjoyment and cooperation, the literature review revealed several other aspects that should be implemented to ensure a diverse and inclusive sports setting. The results showed the common trend of the importance of the coach’s competence concerning inclusion, which according to Giess-Stüber and Freudenberger (2016) includes a basic attitude open to diversity, specific methodological know-how and the ability to adapt content to the needs of a specific constellation of children with and without disabilities. Concerning that last point, the “6+1-Model” provides the options of modifying rules, tasks, the environment, material, social form and communication within sport games.

The data research revealed one empirical study that provides the development, realisation and evaluation of a programme for the advanced “inclusion” training of coaches, volunteers and consultants of clubs and associations (Giess-Stüber & Freudenberger, 2016). This project is the basis for a national manual for an advanced training for inclusive sports setting, which was supported by the German Youth Sports Federation (DSJ) and the National Paralympic Committee Germany.

Alongside the coaches, parents play an important role in influencing and reinforcing physical activity for their children, as the results from the data research confirm. Except for one study that was concerned with the challenges of parents that go along with the transition to an inclusive sports setting, the research revealed a lack of empirical studies considering the parental involvement in inclusive sports programmes for children. But with the help of evaluations from present inclusive sports programmes and studies on parents’ involvement in (regular) sports settings, potentials and improvement suggestions of parental engagement in inclusive sports programmes could be deduced. The positive and supporting behaviour of parents, a good parent-coach-relationship, and parents’ support concerning

transition challenges, diversity awareness and principles of youth development are central aspects on the way to a successful inclusive sports programme.

Results of this literature review will be used for further development of the DITEAM12 project. Although the systematic review successfully contributes to assessing the state of present research, it is not without its limitations.

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Attachment 1. Additional literature

In addition to the systematic search, all partners of the DITEAM12 project provided literature covering the topic inclusion and sport. The following list provides these sources. Some of the articles are also included in the systematic search and are therefore also mentioned in the reference list of the report.

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Attachment 2. Previous practical experiments and projects

This document contains an overview of former projects that were conducted by partners of the DITEAM12 project. The leaders of respective projects were requested to share their project's aims, proceedings and results. These projects might serve as good practice examples for future activities and lead to further implementation of inclusive, diverse sport opportunities for children.

Informa Deporte Psicología: Club Baloncesto Caranrias

This project was a collaboration between a sport psychology department and a sport club.

The aim of the project was to establish a psychology department within the sport club to offer psychological support to families. Further assistance for coaches in educational and sports matters should be provided and sports psychology sessions with different teams of different age groups should be conducted.

The target groups were children and adolescents between 8 and 18 years of age. The project ran for one year and the evaluation afterwards revealed satisfactory results regarding emotional support of players, coaches and families. Positive characteristics, such as confidence and self-esteem were observed in the athletes. Apart from first problems concerning the integration of the psychology department, the athletes and their families used the offers of the psychology department and benefited from the sessions.

Informa Deporte Psicología: The Orotava Educates

The main objective of the project was to promote the personal, emotional and sport-associated well-being of coaches, athletes and families of the municipality's soccer clubs through the promotion of positive values. Furthermore, specific additional objectives were pursued: the promotion of values through sport, the promotion of psychological benefits of the habitual practice of physical exercise, the promotion of psycho-educational skills (communication, leadership, group management) for the trainers in order to enhance the quality of training, and the involvement of families in the sport of their children through a school for parents.

Children and adolescents who joined the project were between 6 and 16 years of age. The duration of the project was 3 months, with one session per week that was held by a psychologist. Throughout and after the project, effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills were observed among the participants, as well as increased self-esteem and the acknowledgement of important values in sports. Integration and inclusion, healthy competition and fair play were understood profoundly by the participants.

The project was implemented in 4 sports clubs, of which 2 reported an excellent predisposition. The remaining 2 sport clubs reported difficulties with the implementation of the project, especially for the coaches. One explanation for these difficulties could be the small size of the town where the project was implemented and the lack of knowledge of inclusive sport offers or integration of psychological support.

Informa Deporte Psicología: Santa Ursula Educates

The objective of the project was to promote the personal, emotional and physical well-being of coaches, athletes and families of sports clubs in the municipality through the development of positive values.

Through training talks and field methods, the coordinators were to be supported in their psycho-educational work (e.g. communication, leadership, group management). For athletes, the focus was put on psychological variables that have an influence on sport. The goal was to create the understanding that sport and physical activity are not a punishment.

The children and adolescents were between 4 and 18 years of age. The project duration was 8 months, with 8 hours of monthly teaching.

The project resulted in excited athletes who showed participative manners in the sessions. The educational service for families was also a great success.

Mi Hijo Y Yo: S.A.D.E.

This project was developed to provide transitional, temporary support, for people with intellectual disabilities. Their focus of the support was put on the emotional-behavioural area.

After an initial evaluation of the adults with an intellectual disability, the preferences of the adults were evaluated and a suitable sport offer was found for him or her. The latter was complicated in most cases, as not all sport environments could handle and admit the target group up to now.

The athletes were between 18 and 40 years of age and the project lasted for one year, with 4 weekly hours of consultation.

Within the project, most of the club leaders worked with enthusiasm in the initiative and showed their willingness to conduct. Unfortunately, the organisation noted prejudices towards people with intellectual disabilities and sport.

Schola Empirica: Innovation of Social Services Aimed at Supporting Parental Skills

The main objectives of the project was to develop an adequate methodology to support parenting skills. Social workers were trained to educate and support parents in their parenting skills.

The project leaders developed a manual in Czech language for the leaders of parent groups (e.g. social workers) to support parenting skills. The manual was initially developed as a part of the Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH) programme, administered by the World Health Organization (WHO), and was implemented in several countries.

Initially, the project involved 50 families with two or more children aged between 3 and 9 years. Later, the age of children was extended to 3 to 14 years. The project ran for one year.

As a result of the project, the children learned to follow rules set by their parents and became more self-confident. The parents, on the other hand, learned to praise and motivate their children and to find satisfying solutions to upcoming problems.