



Sport has long been recognized by Member States of the United Nations as a powerful and cost-effective tool for transmitting values that foster a culture of peace. Beyond physical activity, it serves as a **universal language** that transcends cultural and social barriers, offering a unique platform to instil knowledge and skills that promote mutual understanding, cooperation, and respect.

Sports sessions are structured and demand a more advanced learning process from participants compared to spontaneous play. The playful nature of sport helps to foster positive relationships between educators and beneficiaries, creating a more enjoyable and motivating learning environment for youth. As a **flexible pedagogical tool**, sport proves to be an invaluable asset for achieving a wide range of social objectives, from reducing conflict to strengthening community cohesion

Educators play a pivotal role in leveraging the transformative power of sport to shape the minds of younger generations. As mentors and role models, they are uniquely positioned to integrate sport and its core values into educational programs. However, it is essential that educators recognize sport's transformative role in society and are equipped with the skills and resources to deliver safe, inclusive, and engaging sport-based sessions aimed at instilling values of respect, teamwork, and dialogue and not solely focusing on sporting performance. Without their active involvement and understanding, the full potential of sport in education may remain untapped.

Investing in the **capacity-building of educators** is a win-win approach. By strengthening their ability to use sport as a tool for peace education and values transmission, not only they develop skills and benefit from improved self-confidence, but also become **agents of change within their communities**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on direct observations and sharing of issues and best practices by actors on the field - as part of our bottom-up approach - the following recommendations are designed to support practitioners and stakeholders in harnessing sport's transformative power and core values to educate younger generations.

⁽¹⁾ Udoh Ephraim Jude (2024) "The Relationship between School Sports Participation and Academic Performance: A Comprehensive Review."

⁽²⁾ European Sports Charter, Article 10

⁽³⁾ WHO report - Update on the Status of PE world-wide - Hardm\205

⁽⁴⁾ UNODC

⁽⁵⁾ UNESCO

⁽⁶⁾ Hardman K., Council of Europe Committee for the Development of Sport (CDDS), Report on School Physical Education in Europe.

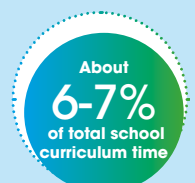
⁽⁷⁾ European Parliamentary Research Service Sport_and_activity_in_the_EU_September2017_web.pdf

KEY FACTS & FIGURES

- Sports **positively impact academic performance** in children and adolescents⁽¹⁾
- The **European Sports Charter** provides that **access to physical, intellectual, and ethical development through sport** shall be guaranteed within the educational system and in other aspects of social life⁽²⁾
- **Lack of qualified teachers and facilities** together coupled with the perception of PE as a non-educational activity **limits sports provision in school curriculums** in parts of Asia and Africa⁽³⁾
- Targeted sport programs can **reduce youth involvement in violence, crime, and substance use**⁽⁴⁾



invest less than 2% of their education budgets in sport⁽⁵⁾



is dedicated to Physical Education in Council of Europe Member States, with time allocation decreasing as students age⁽⁶⁾



only practice sport during school hours⁽⁷⁾



Testimony from the field

Now, I can speak without fear.
Before, I thought that if
I spoke, it would create
conflict or a problem."

Young beneficiary - Colombia



The Champion for Peace's view

Sport is a school of life
with a lot of values. As top-level
athletes, we need to take
the time to instil these values
and equip the next generations
with the tools to cope
in sport and in everyday life

*Florent Pietrus -
European Basketball
Champion and Olympic Medalist*

1. CERTIFYING TRAINING

Recognizing peace educators as a qualified and employable workforce through **official certifications** is essential to ensure:

- **Educators feel valued**, which enhances their engagement, fosters a sense of ownership, and strengthens their commitment to the program's objectives
- **Families feel reassured**, knowing their children are in safe and capable hands
- **Local authorities** acknowledge and **invest** in programs' expansion



KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- Include a **train-the-trainer** model into the program's action plan to ensure **cascade knowledge transfer**
- Tailor training content to match the specific needs and skill levels of the target educators
- Adopt a **local-for-locals** approach, to deliver training in the local language and tailored to the culture
- Cooperate with **CSO's or Sport governing bodies** to provide certifying training both on values transmission and on sports' technical aspects

2. CONSOLIDATING RELATIONS WITH THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Gaining support from the Ministry of Education in the countries where the programs are implemented is crucial if programs are implemented within schools (in the official program or as extra-curricular activities). This requires:

- Developing a well-structured **advocacy plan** targeting both institutional and administrative stakeholders
- Focusing not only on ministerial-level officials but also on inspectors and educational advisors, who serve as vital **information relays** within the system



KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- Appoint trained educators with knowledge of local contexts and procedures as focal points to serve as liaisons between teachers and administrative stakeholders
- Actively involve teachers to avoid their disengagement from their class when activities are led by external educators

3. IMPROVING THROUGH EVALUATION

To document the acquisition of skills, values, and behaviours imparted through the programs, it is vital to explain since the beginning to all those involved that Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) is a tool to enhance outcomes, not to judge or penalize participants. Key stakeholders that should be equipped with appropriate tools and **trained to observe and report behavioural changes** or other relevant developments are:

- **Educators**, as frontline facilitators
- **Individuals with a pedagogical influence** on beneficiaries: teachers, families or caregivers



KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- Focus on the **community level** by adopting a **micro-sociological approach**
- Develop user-friendly tools and mechanisms to secure engagement from key stakeholders
- Ensure the mid- to long-term involvement of external researchers to build trust with stakeholders, gain a comprehensive understanding of the social reality, and minimize selection bias