

# **Guidelines for Children and Youth Sport**

**Approved in April 1998 by the ENGSO General Assembly**

## **Recommendation 1**

### **Links between the sports organisation and the school system.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should, in co-operation with the public authorities, develop links between the sports organisation and the school system at local and central levels. Incentives should be given for co-operation between educational establishments, school sports clubs and local sports clubs. Improved co-ordination of supplies and equipment should be one objective.

## **Recommendation 2**

### **Increase access to sports facilities.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should, in co-operation with the public authorities, ensure that children and young people are able to participate in physical activities by having easy access to sports facilities.

The member organisations of ENGSO should give higher priority to sports facilities for children and young people in their local community. When building new sports facilities, the interests of children and young people should be safeguarded. Children and young people's access to existing facilities should also be increased. There should be some facilities which can be used on an informal basis. This will allow physical activities in the local community of the target group. These facilities should therefore be located near schools and residential areas. (Housing estates and campuses). The member organisations of ENGSO should in collaboration with public authorities, work for a better co-ordination and use of the facilities in the schools and in sport.

## **Recommendation 3**

### **Training and competition Guidelines.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should draw up guidelines on participation in training and competitive sport. Sports competitions must be a motivating factor in sport training and contribute to a permanent interest in sport.

### **Recommendation 3a**

#### **The content of activities.**

Children and young people must be allowed to participate on the basis of their own wishes, skills, abilities and needs. It must be ensured that considerations for health, safety and welfare come before considerations for performance and achievement. Training and competitions must be adjusted to give everyone a real opportunity to participate.

The content of the activities must be of such a nature that everyone is given the opportunity to acquire basic sports skills.

ENGSO must promote all-round children and youth sport instead of early specialisation. Priority must be given to the fun and enjoyment of sport. Everyone with interest and ability must be given the opportunity to improve their standard of performance in sport.

Children and young people should be stimulated to organise play and physical activities themselves.

Schools and sports organisations which offer sport activities for children and youth should ensure that the average time gap spent on competition is considerable less than the average time spent on training each week.

**Children:**

Competitions for children below 13 years of age should normally be held domestically. Interdisciplinary activities involving different sports should be devised for training and educating children.

**Young people:**

The member organisations of ENGSO and ENGSO as such should work towards an agreed joint minimum age limit for participation in international championships (Olympic Games, World Cup, European and World championships). European sports federations and the Olympic movement should be involved in this work.

The sports organisation should plan the activities it offers in such a way that interested young people are given an opportunity to develop and improve their standard of performance in sport.

The member organisations of ENGSO should develop and implement alternative means of competition particularly suitable for young people who want a sport for all opportunity.

**Recommendation 3b**

**Avoid placing too much pressure on children and young people.**

The member organisations of ENGSO must actively try to prevent the danger of exploitation of children, particularly those who demonstrate precocious ability.

The enjoyment of participating in sport must be given priority, and undue pressure must never be used which impinges on the child's right to choose to participate.

**Recommendation 3c**

**Objectives and value basis for children and young people.**

The member organisations of ENGSO give priority to the development of physical, psychological, motory and social qualities rather than personal achievements and performance in competitions. Competitions must be fun. Fun and enjoyment of participation in sport must always be given priority.

## **Recommendation 4**

### **Quality assurance of the training and education of teachers, coaches and leaders.**

All sports activities should be led and directed by qualified and proficient leaders, teachers and coaches. Qualified personnel should have knowledge of children's and young people's physical, psychological, motor and social development.

Those who are responsible for children and young people should be given an opportunity to get the necessary competence and qualifications at an appropriate level. The aim is to quality-assure the sports activities offered to children and young people.

The member organisations of ENGSO should, in co-operation with the public authorities, ensure sufficient training and education of coaches, leaders and teachers of children and youth sport. The public sector should ensure high quality initial and further training of sport teachers.

## **Recommendation 5**

### **All children and young people must be provided with an adequate and appropriate amount of time of physical education and sports activities.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should, in co-operation with the public authorities, ensure that all children and young people are offered physical education and sports training. Programmes of sport, recreation and physical education for children and young people should be made available to all pupils, and appropriate time must be set aside for this.

The member organisations of ENGSO should ensure that the content of physical education should be more practical than theoretical.

## **Recommendation 6**

### **The social possibilities of sport.**

The member organisations of ENGSO must ensure that opportunities for sports activities are developed and implemented for children and young people who are traditionally outsiders.

Special focus must be directed on:

- Drug addicts
- Immigrants
- The physically and mentally disabled.
- The poor in society.

The sports organisation must be an arena in which everyone is included.

## **Recommendation 7**

### **Code of Ethics for Children and Youth Sport.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should ensure that a code of ethics is prepared for children and youth sport in each individual country. The guidelines should be co-ordinated at European level by ENGSO.

Norms and values in children and youth sport must be prepared in accordance with the age and development of children and young people. Children and young people must play a full part in determining norms and values and not merely be asked to accept norms and values designed for them by adults. The guidelines should also take into consideration the ethical attitudes of children, young people and adults in connection with participation in children and youth sport.

The member organisations of ENGSO and the public authorities should contribute to providing education in sports ethics.

## **Recommendation 8**

### **Preventing drop-out from sports activities.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should, in co-operation with the public authorities, work to minimise drop-out from sports activities among young people. Importance must be attached to offering interested young people sports activities in accordance with their own skills, abilities, wishes and requirements. Special attention should be directed at young women and drop-outs from sport.

The member organisations of ENGSO and the public authorities must stimulate children and young people to take regular physical exercise. It must be ensured that there are improved opportunities for continuing the practice of sport after compulsory education.

## **Recommendation 9**

### **Right of co-determination for children and young people.**

Children and young people must be encouraged and given the opportunity to participate in the planning of their own activities.

The sports organisation must ensure that young people are given a real say in the organisation. Sport should function as an arena for practising democracy.

Sport must have a culture in which young people participate in the decision-making process at all levels. Young people must have real influence on their own training, competitive activity and formulation of sports policies. Young people must be urged to take co-responsibility for their own activities.

This kind of inclusion of children and young people has to contain both the planning and execution of events, suited to the requirements of children and young people, and also the administration of special youth budgets. This aim should not be limited to the frame of pure sport specific work.

Self determination should also involve young people as it already does in other youth organisations, having the possibility to elect their own group of people to represent the interest and in this way to learn to take on responsibility at an early age.

The member organisations of ENGSO should offer youth, who do not wish to participate in physical activity, other tasks in the sport clubs.

## **Recommendation 10**

### **Developing of responsibility and leadership.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should develop ways of promoting qualities of leadership and responsibility for young people which could be adopted by society as a whole.

## **Recommendation 11**

### **Insurance schemes.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should ensure that all children and young people who are involved in sport or other outdoor activities are offered adequate insurance schemes covering injuries suffered during sports activities.

The member organisations of ENGSO must oversee the establishment of third party insurance policies for coaches, leaders and teachers, and ensure that all are insured with an adequate sum. This is particularly important in relation to injuries sustained by children and youth in practice- and competition settings.

## **Recommendation 12**

### **Environmental protection measures in the sports organisation.**

The member organisations of ENGSO should work to promote active environmental commitment among children and young people in the sports organisation. Environmental considerations should be given higher priority in connection with the organisation of activities and the extension of facilities.