

Sport as a Mean of Social Inclusion, Including Communication Strategies with Parents

A Toolkit for Physical Education Teacher

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Introduction

The values that sport conveys are deeply consistent with the purpose of establishing inclusive societies, this work focuses on the responsibility of creating an atmosphere that promotes sport as a mean of social inclusion and takes into account the two main educational institutions: school and family.

It is necessary that school and parents work together to reach the goal: they must become allies and teach students the most important civic and social values.

Dialogue is the tool, but it is not always easy to establish the most effective form of communication for a number of factors such as lack of teachers’ training, lack of time, lack of appropriate strategies.

This work has been carried out by analyzing different strategies carried out by Physical Education teachers.



Fame, sport and social inclusion

One problem about sport is that it is, for some people, still considered as an obstacle to success in studies. As we have heard from some students, their parents would not let them do sporting activities because they think sport is not important, or at least, not as important as other subjects. However, experience showed us that sport, as well as other activities such as music, painting..., are useful and vital for many students. First of all, because they like these activities; secondly, because it is also a way to learn with pleasure and finally because their brains and bodies need it.

Schools, under the management of Physical Education teachers, should organize conferences for children and parents to explain the importance of sport. But in order to appeal each and everyone of them, the idea is to invite famous athletes who could talk about their experiences, their story. Fame might be a way to involve parents and children in sporting activities”.

Learning Objective

This activity could point out the mutual taste of parents and children concerning sporting activities and it would also make the parents realize that sport is important

Online Resources

● [“Sport and...”](#)

This website talks about different subjects such as “sport and health”, “sport and education”, sport and crime prevention”. All of these subjects could help the athletes to talk about them.

● [Parent Involvement](#)

This website contains a checklist to evaluate and improve parent-school partnerships.

● [The role of Special Olympics in promoting social inclusion: An examination of stakeholder perceptions](#)

This shows the importance to see sport as a mean of social inclusion.

● [Parent Engagement](#)

This web site contains strategies for involving parents in school health and some examples of ways school staff can connect with parents.



The importance of dialogue

After the conference, Physical Education teachers should take advantage of the presence of the parents to establish dialogue and to create a mutual sporting project. The idea is to point out the taste and desires of both parents and children and to create a zone of confidence and dialogue between the schools and the families.

Learning Objective

Create a strong and confident link between schools and families and involve the parents in the student life of their children.

Online Resources

["Sport and..."](#)

Once again, this website broaches different subjects and is a way to make parents realise the importance of sport and how sport can make good citizens and good persons.

[The role of Special Olympics in promoting social inclusion: An examination of stakeholder perceptions](#)

This shows the importance to see sport as a mean of social inclusion.

[Parent Engagement](#)

This web site contains strategies for involving parents in school health and some examples of ways school staff can connect with parents.

[Parent Involvement checklist](#)

This website contains a checklist to evaluate and improve parent-school partnerships.

Build “Partnership” with parents

The social composition of schools and classrooms is deeply changing that is why it is very important to create an optimum learning environment so that all students can learn well. The concept of inclusive education has become more and more important in recent years. Through an inclusive education, teachers, parents and all the subjects involved in the education system aim at creating a different culture among students to achieve social equity and establish inclusive societies. The success of creating inclusive education depends on agreements between parents and teachers on a common vision, in this way parents and teachers can be resources in support of inclusion. Supporting the inclusion process means accepting diversity and taking an active role in the lives of students. That is why partnerships are very important.

These partnerships should

- Improve the school offer
- Be based on respect and trust
- Make all the families active participants in school life

Effective partnerships could be carried out through:

- Auditing of the existing practices
- Setting goals
- Ensuring effective communication

The initiatives for a partnership must come from the school.

Due to the peculiarity of the subject taught, Physical Education teachers can get in touch with students in a less “formal” atmosphere that might be perfectly suitable for the purpose: they might set up a meaningful dialogue in order to develop awareness of the concept of “social inclusion” through sport. The purpose can be achieved by programming a meeting at least once a year”.

Learning Objective

This step aims at promoting awareness of the concept of the social inclusion

Online Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Increasing awareness of social inclusion and involving all actors</u> This web site is about strategies for preventing and reducing poverty and social exclusion and promoting social inclusion. ● <u>20 Tips for Developing Positive Relationships With Parents</u> This article contains some suggestions for improving connections with parents who could lend significant support in our charge as teachers.. ● <u>Parent and community engagement framework</u> This framework is about schools engaging with parents and communities to work together to maximize student learning outcomes.

Online Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education</u> This is the final version of the guidelines which were discussed in a side event at the International Conference on Education in Geneva, Nov 2008 ● <u>Parent Involvement checklist</u> This website contains a checklist to evaluate and improve parent-school partnerships. ● <u>Family-school partnership framework</u> This website contains some strategies designed to support school communities in developing family-school partnerships.



Create an inclusive environment

“The report of the Council on the broader role of education adopted in November 2004 stressed that education contributes to preserving and renewing the common cultural background in society and to learning essential social and civic values such as citizenship, equality, tolerance and respect, and is particularly important at a time when all Member States are challenged by the question of how to deal with increasing social and cultural diversity. Moreover, enabling people to enter and stay in working life is an important part of the role of education in the strengthening of social cohesion.”

Inclusive Physical Education activities can help young people acquire the civic and social values mentioned in the European framework and promote the following social factors:

- behaving properly
- listening quietly
- staying on the task
- following the rules
- taking turns
- playing cooperatively

All the subjects involved in the education system share the responsibility for the achievement of the above- mentioned results: Physical Education teachers are responsible for providing the enthusiasm, reviewing current practice in order to improve teaching and learning and disseminating relevant information about Physical Education programs and outcomes. Once acquired the information, parents are responsible for supporting programs, encouraging students to participate regularly in Physical Education lessons and share their ideas, showing interest for the students’ work and progress. Progress reports and e-mail messages can ensure effective communication

Learning Objective

The activities carried out in this step aim at motivating students to accept responsibility for learning.

Online Resources

- [P.IN.O.K.I.O.](#)
(Pupils for Innovation as a Key to Intercultural and social inclusion) project this project aims at promoting intercultural dialogue against social exclusion,
- [Key Competences For Lifelong Learning — A European Reference Framework](#)
Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC)
- [Teacher Education For Inclusion](#)
This review is about the skills, knowledge, attitudes and competences needed by teachers working in inclusive settings.
- [Parents’ guide to the Ontario code of conduct](#)
This website contains the Ontario code of conduct that addresses not only to students, but to everyone involved in the education system.



Assess taking into account social skills and involving parents

The term “assessment” is usually referred to as the variety of methods and tools that teachers use to evaluate learning progress, skills acquisition or educational needs of students.

Teachers usually assess for different purposes:

- Students’ learning
- Improvement of teaching
- Communication
- Students’ motivation

There are many tools to be used in order to achieve the different purposes as for example:

- Pre-assessment is usually used to establish a base against which teachers measure learning progress over the duration of a teaching unit/course.
- Formative assessment is the in-progress evaluation of students’ learning, here the main purpose is to give teachers in-progress feedback. Formative assessment is said to be “for learning” because according to the results teachers can modify their teaching technique.
- Summative assessment is used to evaluate students’ learning at the end of a teaching unit.

So, on the one hand, effective assessment can help students to understand their achievement and help teachers improve teaching, on the other hand, it serves as a mean of communication between teachers and parents: through it parents can have a better understanding of the learning progress of their sons and give support and advice.

The Physical Education yearly plan usually includes several sections: school goals, subject objectives, expected outcomes, assessment, subject teacher, facilities, time allocation etc.

When planning, Physical Education teachers should take into account the role of sport as a mean of social inclusion and always include social factors and attitudes such as the level at which students show they are able to follow rules, play cooperatively, show respect for the others etc. in the section “expected outcomes”. These expected outcomes must be clearly stated and communicated to parents during the parent-teacher class committee.

Learning Objective

This activity aims at having students understand the inclusive values the school intends to convey and facilitate the cooperation between teachers and parents.

Online Resources

- [Key messages of the PE KLA curriculum guide](#)
PE is one of the eight learning area, this guide was drawn up to promote the learning and teaching of PE
- [Assessment in Physical Education](#)
This is the chapter 6 of the Physical Education Curriculum Framework and it is states that assessment in PE serves many purposes and contributes to decision making. In order to support this thesis many factors, as for example the different forms of assessment, the teaching – learning – and evaluation process, are taken into account.

Online Resources

- [New Hampshire Physical Education K-12Assessment Document](#)
This document analyses in detail the different purposes of assessment.
- [Using Classroom Assessment to Promote 21st Century Learning in Emerging Market Countries](#)
This paper is about six assessment strategies that should be part of a 21st century learning environment: 1) Rubrics, 2) Performance-based assessments , 3) Portfolios, 4) Student self-assessment, 5) Peer-assessment, 6) Student response systems (SRS)



Promote family sports opportunities

Physical Education teachers, collaborating with community organizations, should organize and promote family sports opportunities as for example interclass football matches.

This activity aims at creating the chance to share the social values that the school intends to convey and engage parents.

Parents can be invited through a variety of communication methods such as newsletters, e-mail messages and monthly calendars of events.

These kinds of events usually take place at the weekend, Physical Education teachers are in charge of the coordination of all the related matters.

Learning Objective

These activities aim at promoting social harmony and social inclusion..

Online Resources

- [Daily physical activity in schools](#)
This guide is intended to assist school authorities in implementing the policy on daily physical activity
- [Parental Role and Influence in the Teaching-Learning of Physical Education: Perceptions of Physical Education Students in Kenya's Universities](#)
This article is about the influence of parents on the adoption and promotion of teaching of PE for their sons.
- [Teach PE](#)
This document illustrates many different types of team sports, offers lesson plan examples, suggests instructional strategies.
- [Physical Activity for Healthy, Confident Kids](#)
This web site contains guidelines for sustainable physical activity in school communities
- [Parent Engagement](#)
This web site contains strategies for involving parents in school health and some examples of ways school staff can connect with parents.

Use a student-centred approach

When planning an inclusive program Physical Education teachers should, first of all, take into account students' needs and motivation, then according to the social structure of the classroom, they should propose suitable activities. To meet each student's needs, teachers should

- offer a wide range of activities
- be flexible and responsive
- change instructional strategies if needed
- adjust instruction when students need to re-focus
- provide feedback and use checklists to support feedback

In order to foster social inclusion, Physical Education teachers should

- enable students to develop respect for other students and for other students' performances
- help students share their ideas

Parents should be involved in the educational programming and support programs. Parents' points of view could be investigated through a survey.

Learning Objective

The activities proposed in this step aim at engaging students and encouraging students to reflect on what they are learning...

Online Resources

[Inclusion in Physical Education: Changing the culture](#)

This article focuses on five key socio-educational cultural changes. The areas for change include (1) program administration, (2) evaluation, (3) instruction and curriculum, (4) long-term planning, and (5) storytelling

[An effective CSTP classroom](#)

This document contains the California standards for the teaching profession, these standards support the creation of classroom communities and curricula in which students with varying backgrounds, learning styles, strengths, interests, needs and abilities are engaged and challenged as learners.

[Student-Centered Teaching And Learning](#)

This document explains what a student-centered teaching and learning approach is and why it works.

[Student-centred teaching methods: Can they optimize students' approaches to learning in professional higher education?](#)

This paper investigates dynamics in approaches to learning within different learning environments



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Twining between schools

The idea is to put two schools in contact and organize tournaments between them. We are talking about social inclusion so it should be a good or normal school twinned with a disadvantaged school or a school for disabled children.

The tournaments should be directed by Physical Education teachers as well as parents who want. It could take the form of a fair and the school could ask the parents to organize a snack after the tournament and bake cakes, bring drinks...

Learning Objective

Once again, it is a way to involve parents in the lives of their children and create social links. Sport is not only about effort, it also has a clear social dimension.

Online Resources

[Sport and social inclusion](#)

This website shows an initiative created in Rennes (France) that helps people in great precarity and teach them different sporting activities. Physical education teachers are involved, and if it is possible in a city, it may also be possible for two schools. Resource available online in French.

[Parent Engagement](#)

This web site contains strategies for involving parents in school health and some examples of ways school staff can connect with parents.



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“Mens sana in corpore sano”

Organize sport-study program to associate sport and studies. During holidays, on a voluntary basis, propose private lessons and sporting activities for students who have difficulties at school. Parents and Physical education teachers would take care of both sporting activities and private lessons. It is a way to promote social inclusion and create a collaboration between parents, teachers and students and tighten the links between them.

Learning Objective

This would show that both intellectual and sporting activities are useful. It is also a way to help the children who have difficulties, while enjoying a good time.

Online Resources

- [Stafford House Study Holidays](#)

This website shows an initiative which consists in the creation of sport study program, during summer or holidays. It is mainly proposed to go outside the country but we could think about doing it within our country.
- [“Sport and...”](#)

This website shows the importance of sports and in which way it can be helpful.
- [Parents’ guide to the Ontario code of conduct](#)

This website contains the Ontario code of conduct that addresses not only to students, but to everyone involved in the education system.



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Create a partnership between a city school and a school near the sea or the mountain

Allow disadvantaged students who have never gone to the sea or to the mountain to go and discover sporting activities such as ski and windsurfing. In exchange, the other students could come for a “cultural trip” to the city.

Both schools would take advantage of this experience, meet new people, learn to accept the differences and the foreigners. This experience could be supervised by the Physical Education teachers, a report made each day could, in its way, involve the parents.

Learning Objective

Create an exchange between two different ways of life and teach students new sporting activities while showing them the importance and the benefits of inclusion.

Online Resources

[“Sport and...”](#)

This website shows the importance of sports and in which way it can be helpful.

[Cottage by the sea](#)

This website shows an initiative that aims to help disadvantaged children by offering them different programs. The aim is to develop their self-awareness, confidence and resilience.



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