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INCLUSION AND DISABILITIES IN AND THROUGH SPORT

Best Practice #1 - North Macedonia

OCNM - Olympic Committee of North Macedonia

No. 101089892 – IDI4Sport – ERASMUS-SPORT-2022-SCP



Key words. Please insert 3 to 5 key words that best describe the best practice

Physical disabilities, without limitations, skiing, winter sports

1. Type of Disability

Please describe the type of disability that this practice is focused on. If there is an official definition of the disability in European or National documents please provide it.

Physical, sensory

2. Organization & Reference

If applicable: Official data of organization, school, club etc. (name, address, email). Please give references such as internet source, homepage etc.

ZGKP Without Limitations is an organization comprising 13 individuals with disabilities who have received training to ski independently or with assistance. In addition, there are 8 trainers who have been trained by foreign experts at the inaugural sit-ski school held in skiing resort of Mavrovo. The school aimed not only to provide skiing training but also to foster greater inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in sports activities that were previously inaccessible in the country. Moreover, it aimed to motivate them to step out of their homes and develop higher levels of self-confidence. Based in Kočani, the organization is dedicated to advocating for the rights of people with disabilities and currently does not have any employees.

You can find their Facebook fan page at <https://www.facebook.com/ZGPK.mk>.

3. Formal/Informal

Please state if the setting refers to formal or informal education (sport clubs etc.).

Informal

4. Practice summary

Describe what and how was done (regulations of the sport/game/competition/physical activity), please state the specific context of the practice and the sport(s)/game/competition involved.

Flying radio-controlled drones is a skilful sport that requires not muscle strength but focus, reflexes, a good eye and practice.

This type of exercise improves cognitive skills and mental strength and is very beneficial for children/people with intellectual or physical disabilities. The idea is for the instructors of the Aero club to teach people with disabilities to fly drones, to show that they can and to encourage them to take up this sport.

The event is not limited only to people with disabilities, because our goal and motive is the complete inclusion of all those interested in these sports activities.

5. Variations implemented

Please state any kind of useful variations (e.g., concerning settings, age of participants, types of disabilities and adaptations to other sports) of the practice.

The practice does not have any specific age limitations, as the assessment is conducted based on the participants' physical fitness levels. This means that individuals of different age groups can engage in the activity.

6. People involved

Please state organizations and people involved, provide types of disabilities participated in this specific good/best practice. If applicable, be concrete about the different roles of the people involved.

Ski Federation of Macedonia and teachers from the University of physical education

7. National guidelines adopted

Please refer to the national guidelines that are met through the practice. Give basic legislation frameworks that can help teachers understand their legal-driven responsibilities towards their students.

The Faculty of Physical Education should be recognized as a valuable training ground for future trainers working with individuals with disabilities. The support for the organized events has been exceptional; however, there is a shortage of personnel and individuals interested in working with people with disabilities. The cost of equipment is considerably high, and project funding tends to prioritize soft skills development rather than the acquisition of necessary equipment.

8. Implications for teachers/practitioners etc.

Please write any useful implications (what teachers/coaches/physical educators should take into account: safety considerations, equipment needed, support needed) that the practice might have. This may include focal points of the types of disabilities included and how these points were addressed, in terms of the participation in sports.

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9. Innovative resources, materials, methods etc. used

Please refer to the resources, materials, methods etc. have been employed. Strategies for creating an inclusive environment, prioritizing accommodations for students with disabilities, forming/refining accessible facilities, equipment, and assistive technology. Please include techniques for adapting sports activities to meet the needs of students with disabilities, such as modified rules, specialized equipment and assistive devices.

During our endeavors, they have fostered partnerships with specialized educators and professors who have actively contributed, as demonstrated by the content shared on the official Facebook fan page. Nonetheless, the majority of the undertakings have not been made known to the public due to the lack of dedicated communication staff.

10. Communication and collaboration strategies

If applicable, describe strategies for collaborating with other educators, parents, and students to ensure that everyone is working together to create an inclusive environment.

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11. Evaluation and/or reflection methods

If applicable, state how teachers planned to know, to what extent basic goals were met. That is, give any kind of evaluation practices, self-reflection methods, and forms of data collection, post-event documentations and follow-ups. Also, report any positive feedback and reinforcement given to students with and without disabilities to encourage and motivate them to continue participating in sports.

It was positive and obtained through questionnaires after the events.

12. Training pathway for teachers for integrating this good practice

Please provide 5 to 15 practical tips to teachers of sports for implementing the proposed good practice. Ensure that tips: 1. refer both to formal and informal settings 2. Contribute to the awareness of educators for the needs of students with disabilities 3. Take into account the environmental/architectural and attitudinal barriers (such as inaccessible sport spaces, equipment needed, support provided), 4. Provide individualized adaptations 5. Provide social and emotional support by encouraging social interaction and peer support 6. Provide positive reinforcement to motivate them to continue participating in sports and to develop their skills and abilities.

It is important to consider that individuals engaging in this type of activity should be prepared for a lack of free time if they have a full-time job, as well as the absence of vacations throughout the year. They will encounter daily architectural barriers when organizing events and administrative obstacles when attempting to bring about changes in sports and shift societal perceptions towards people with disabilities. These efforts will likely face strong resistance, such as refusals for medical approvals, permits, and similar challenges. Furthermore, parents and the environment may impose limitations, while the environment itself may ridicule and hinder progress. Unnecessary assistance may be offered in situations where it is not needed, while essential support may be denied where it is most necessary.

Nevertheless, the greatest reward in engaging in such activities lies in the personal satisfaction derived from witnessing the development of athletes who successfully integrate into society and lead active and fulfilling lives despite these barriers.

Source: [https://www.facebook.com/ZGPK.mk/?ref=page internal](https://www.facebook.com/ZGPK.mk/?ref=page_internal)

Photos: <https://youtu.be/3QrQyVXxe7U>