

The impact of Football training on Children's Life in Sneha Care Home

Since my arrival in August 2013, I coach 16 boys of Sneha Care Home in Football. We practice every day from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm. At first, I noticed that the children already played football very well and with a little more coordination, confidence and better teamwork, they would be able to win upcoming matches easily.

So, apart from the usual passing, kicking and a football game, I started to focus on how they play in their teams, how they treat each other, what problems come up and what their understanding of values actually is.

In the beginning, lots of children cried due to scolding from other players, they got into fights; they stopped playing because they were not happy with the team or complained about not getting passes. That time, we played in two teams, eight to eight.

At the end of every practice, we sit together and talk. I tell the children what I liked and didn't like about the practice, what I noticed and who played very well. Then it is the children's turn. They start to tell the problems they have with other players and complain about scolding, but they also mention very good passes, scores and good team play.

Soon we started to implement a punishment for scolding which the children themselves chose and voted for like in a parliament: Whoever, scolds others will be excluded of the practice for the following day. We made new teams, three from now on. Due to the smaller number of players- now 5 to 6- the players passed more and a much better team spirit came up. They gave their teams a name: Bangalore Football Club, Super Strikers and Super Kickers and we started to do one week of competition, where every day the three teams played against each other to collect points. The team with the most points gets a price at the end of the week.

In the beginning, it was me handling the problems of the players – fights, crying and disrespect, but now they solve them in their teams. They sit together for five minutes before each match to work out a strategy, to improve the team spirit and to talk about anything what troubles their mind. The children became more self confident, they started to appreciate more each other and the way they play (also in terms of cheering) and their respect towards each team

member but also towards the opponent players started to grow slowly. Thus probably the most important: They learned how to deal with problems on their own, without much intervention by elders.

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