

The impact of Throwball on children's life

When I came to Sneha Care Home in August 2013 I did not even know what kind of sport Throwball was. I was quite fascinated, when I saw the first time eighteen girls throwing and catching one ball, jumping and running around, screaming, fighting and giving each other instructions, one louder than the other one. A few of them were quite emotional during one game; others seemed to dream and follow other thoughts in their minds. But one thing was always certain, if they dropped one ball or did not get the chance to catch and throw or somebody left their service or hurt them by mistake, they started crying immediately. That made it on the hand difficult to run through the daily practice, but paved on the other hand also the way for me to become their coach, because they paid me a lot of attention and seemed to be relieved that they got someone who was coaching them.

All of them know that game very well, but there did not exist a little bit of discipline. The first two challenges I wanted to work on was how they play in their teams and how to make them understand for what we can use our daily hour of practice. I had the feeling that they did not understand what “training” and “practicing” means and that exercises are helpful for improving their skills in throwing and catching a ball.

Throwball is a Team sport, so I wanted them to play with each other in one team and not against each other, we chose a team captain, agreed that the child who behaves badly towards others must sit on the edge for a while or will be completely excluded from the practice for the following day. At the end of each practice we sit together and talk.

Few girls were afraid of catching the ball or were not able to do the service. So after finishing our daily throwing – and catching exercise we concentrate each day on a different problem, like practicing the service or catching without body contact and double touch. We developed a routine of first practicing an individual area before playing two sets of Throwball per day.

It was difficult for them to pick up new exercises and new games, to improve their fine feeling for the ball and their skill of combination I set up a few new games. That brought diversity in our training and enhanced their skills to cope with the ball. The different games helped them to increase their flexibility toward new things. Within a few months they picked up new exercises and games easier and developed a bigger self-confidence towards new and

unknown things. They started to play with more self-confidence and became braver as well.

Sometimes I arrange small competitions over three or four days to arouse their ambition again, which unfortunately gets lost sometimes. It is not always easy to find a good balance between having fun and practicing throwball seriously. I figured out that small competitions are a good motivation for them to start thinking about their own mistakes and improvements. From time to time they started thinking more critical about themselves and they realized that it's better to encourage their team than scolding each other. The small competition enhanced their skills and concentration. Nevertheless we are doing two or three times a week, very physically demanding exercise, for example running, relay etc. to give them the chance to concentrate completely on only one thing and to forget everything else, like school or small fights. The attitude of a few children towards comments from my side changed within the months as well. They got an open ear for my advices and for any suggestions from their team members also.

To sum it up briefly, I have the feeling that their team spirit became stronger and that the girls improve their ability in combination and movement a lot. They became more self-confident, so that our daily hour of practice is a joy for everyone.

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