Module: Sports & Safe Communities
Positive Youth Development through Community Sports

6 - 10 May 2017
Safe communities

As a community sports coach you are aware of the importance of constructing a sense of safe community, both on the sports field and within the wider community. Young people, as well as you, need the feeling of being welcomed and feeling safe. This is an essential part of their development and an avenue to enabling us to positively challenge them.

Exploring challenges

Within Community Sports Development it is our challenge to recognize the potential of young people and include that into our working practice. We know that this can be challenging. In this module, one of the challenges you will further explore is the multiple face of sports: it has both positive and negative elements. For example, competition can be essential in exploring ability and skills. However, it can also exclude and marginalize. The young people you work with have lives that interconnect with families, schools and their own neighbourhoods. These can also be both supportive and limiting in relation to the choices they can make. It's also obvious to all working in this field that young people bring their energy, their own unique insights, but also they can struggle with their own sense of self and be subject to negative peer pressure. These internal and external perceptions are also challenges for ourselves as community sports coaches and our organizations.

Creative and effective

Much of your work within Community Sport development, particularly if it is allied to positive youth development, brings you into a world of challenge and change. However, your training and experience may be limited in terms of how you can work creatively and effectively on this.

By attending this training you will:

- Extend and develop your knowledge and understanding of positive youth development and safe communities through sports
- Improve your capacities in relation to your professional contribution within positive youth development
- Use sport development practices to enable safe communities
- Learn through examples of best practices and worst cases based on the experiences of your European colleagues
- Attend a field visit to a project related to community building and positive youth development through sports.
- Explore new outdoor sport & development activities in the beautiful coastal area of Northern Ireland
- Exchange and contribute your experiences to the learning of others
- Find ways to improve your effectiveness in your work as Community Sports Coach

Including:

Belfast tour, Field visit to Community Sports Project, and Outdoor experiential learning at the North Coast.
Change management

These challenges and the changes they imply do not happen at some magic moment. They require a process, including a clear focus on the ‘why’ and the ‘who’, building relationships (with youth and different stakeholders) and dealing with conflicts (of interests). This training unit has been designed to build your capacity and knowledge to work creatively with change within your differing sports development contexts. This will be based on an exploration of various models that can be adapted to your own specific practices. This can relate to how you work with young people and your organisations.

In summary, by undertaking this training, you will improve your capacities to:

- Recognize and reinforce a sense of a safe community, both on and off the field
- Recognize the safety-challenges that youth may experience within their communities
- Recognize and improve collaboration with other stakeholders
- Recognize and deal with conflicts (please note: this is not an ‘how to deal with aggression/violence’ training)
- Translate this learning and experience within your own activities as a Community Sports Coach, both on and off the field
- Understand and choose appropriate approaches and tools related to your sports activities

Our approach to all of this is to use a variety of methods that includes experiential learning, theory, best practices, and exchange of perspectives and experiences of your European colleagues.

Special training context

This training unit has been designed for Community Sports Coaches and their organisations. The design team comes from organisations who have long established and internationally recognized expertise in working within sport, youth and community change. The location of this training is in Northern Ireland. This will provide you with an experiential learning process that will give you an insight in the realities of communities which have had times not being safe. But which are now actively seeking transformation. As you will discover sport is also an important part of this process. We fully expect, while in some sense a very different social and cultural context, there are also direct and meaning full connections to all of our communities within Europe. And you will also discover that the youth in these communities dream the same dreams and struggle the same struggles as the youth in other communities in Europe.
Three learning-by-doing modules

International Sports Alliance – in collaboration with its partners: the University of Bedfordshire, Oikos and Unify Solutions – has developed three Sport for Development modules that put you, as a Community Sport Coach, at the centre and strengthen your capacity so that you are better capable of providing meaningful sport activities to young people. All these modules focus on sport as a tool. A tool for life skill development, building safe communities and entrepreneurial skills. In addition, the overall aim is to develop a European exchange platform of knowledge, skills and experiences.

The practicalities

Training Dates
The training will run from Saturday the 6th of May (5 pm) to Wednesday the 10th of May (noon) 2017.

Location & Travel
Saturday the 6th of May to Sunday afternoon will be based in Belfast, accommodation to be confirmed. From Sunday to Wednesday the location will be at the Corrymeela Community Centre at Ballycastle, a worldwide well known Peace and Reconciliation Centre at the beautiful north coast of Northern Ireland.

Costs
The training is subsidized by the Erasmus+ fund. Therefore we can offer you this training for only 250 euro’s, including accommodation (training facilities and bedroom) and all meals. You can get a travel fund if you have to travel over 100 km one way. Please contact us for further information.

Information
For more information please contact the Oikos Office in the Netherlands: jvdsar@stichtingoikos.nl or +31 30 2361500. We will try to help you as soon as possible.