



INCLUSION

A GUIDING PRINCIPLE

For Right To Play, inclusion means that sport and play activities are delivered in ways that promote full participation of all children regardless of identity (i.e., race, gender, disability and religion). Right To Play sport and play activities, which are created to address broad areas of development, are effective tools for reducing isolation, exclusion, fear, poor self-esteem and feelings of powerlessness. We believe that through specially-designed games and sports, attitudes towards marginalized children will change.

RIGHT TO PLAY'S APPROACH

Right To Play addresses the global need to promote inclusion by using sport and play to engage, educate, and support children and youth. Our innovative methodology is founded on a unique understanding of social learning and child development needs and our activities are carefully designed and delivered to foster a joyful and inclusive experience. Our approach is rooted in the recognition that sport and play can be used to change what communities think and feel about marginalized populations, as well as what socially excluded people think and feel about themselves.

Right To Play has used sport and play successfully to provide individuals that often experience exclusion, such as girls, persons with disabilities, children living with HIV and AIDS, and former child combatants with an opportunity to socialize and develop relationships with others. Our programs have demonstrated that interaction between participants leads to greater mutual understanding and sensitivity - key elements in reducing stigma and discrimination and combating social exclusion. Our programs have also shown that sport and play can rebuild the self-confidence and self-esteem of marginalized individuals, enhance their human and social capital, connect excluded groups to community services and supports, and shine a spotlight on the structural causes of their exclusion while also providing solutions.



In December 2007, Right To Play Ethiopia was recognized as the Best International NGO for its efforts in raising the profile of persons with disabilities and supporting them. For this contribution, Right To Play was awarded a special prize by UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA), and the Federation of People with Disability (EFPD).

Right To Play's vision is to create a healthier and safer world through the power of sport and play

TRANSLATING “INCLUSION” INTO PRACTICE – RIGHT TO PLAY’S RESOURCES

Right To Play integrates training on strategies for inclusion into all of our specially-designed resources and programs, with a particular emphasis on gender and persons with disabilities. All of our programs are delivered by local coaches and leaders who are carefully selected and thoughtfully trained. They understand that the healthy development of children and youth must be kept at the centre of all sport and play experiences, especially when activities are competitive.

Abilities First® is a new and innovative training program designed to help Right To Play leaders promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all sport and play activities as well as in everyday life. **Abilities First®** helps leaders adopt inclusive practices in all that they do. The training provides leaders with opportunities to closely examine their personal attitudes and values and identify myths and misconceptions about persons with disabilities that lead to stigma and discrimination. By demonstrating and participating in inclusive activities and games, leaders provide accurate and clear modeling to children and youth about how to promote respectful inclusion of persons with disabilities. The training program also includes a focus on the rights of persons with disabilities and the community’s role in creating a more equitable and accessible world.

In 2008, 7,725 children with disabilities participated in Right To Play sport and play programs and 123 coaches with disabilities implemented Right To Play programs. Participation in sport and play has resulted in many positive social, psychological and physiological benefits.

“**Look After Yourself, Look After One Another**” is the philosophy of Right To Play. All of our activities aim to develop respect among children and youth, for themselves and for others. We emphasize the value and dignity of all individuals, without discrimination based on health status, gender, literacy, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, language, social or economic status, or ability. This philosophy is the basis for our **Live Safe Play Safe®** HIV and AIDS education and prevention resource which emphasizes the critical importance of addressing HIV-related stigma and discrimination. It is also a key element of our **Abilities First®** resource which focuses on reducing disability-related stigma and discrimination. Through games and discussions, children and youth learn about the negative impact of stigma and discrimination, where stigma comes from, and what they can do to fight stigma in their communities.

“I learned how to live with affected and infected people without discriminating against them, but helping them” – *Right To Play participant, Rwanda*

Gender inclusion is also very important to our approach. When being trained to implement Right To Play’s resources such as **Live Safe Play Safe®**, **Red Ball Child Play®** and **Early Child Play®**, our leaders discuss the current barriers to female inclusion in sport and play in their communities and brainstorm the benefits of increasing female involvement. Leaders also strategize ways to promote increased involvement of females in their communities in regular sport and play.

COOPERATION

Inclusion is everyone’s responsibility. Cooperation and collaboration with other organizations, agencies, and community groups is therefore essential. Right To Play is proud to work with local and national partners to implement our activities. When appropriate, trainers refer leaders and children to partner organizations that provide other relevant resources and services.

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