

COURSE CURRICULUM

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & LEARNING OUTCOMES

INTRODUCTION

Acquiring pedagogical knowledge is crucial in carrying out high-quality practices that strengthen the relationship between the kids in the group and between you - as a Playmaker - and kids. Pedagogy is the cornerstone of learning and through this module you will learn about:

- aspects within kids' and youth well-being,
- relational contact,
- establishing trust, and
- acknowledgement as a tool for guiding behavior.

The module will look at pedagogy and the impact of a pedagogical approach on participant motivation. Feeling equipped, welcome and acknowledged in a community is crucial for motivation and thus the module will assess how you can best support kids in participating in the activity.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course, focus is on meaningful participation in social communities.

Social communities are part of our everyday lives and our participation in them has great influence on our lifetime learning cycle. This course will provide you with perspectives on how new kids as well as “old-timers” (that is, the kids who have been part of your practice longer), progress towards becoming experienced members of a sports community.

Completing and gaining insight in this module will equip you with knowledge on how to best support kids in being a part of a community.

Gaining such insights will ensure your understanding of how new kids in a community become acquainted with the tasks, vocabulary and organizing principles of the community within the setting of a practice.

You will thus be taught of key concepts within an inclusive and acknowledging approach to meeting youth and furthermore of the barriers that the kids might experience when entering an unfamiliar setting:

- Activity barriers – being a sports novice
- Language/vocabulary barriers – the “language” of the zone
- The silent knowledge – zone “know how”
- Community roles – how kids feel as if “they fit in”

Generally, the module will thus touch upon central topics within pedagogical concepts working with kids individually and in a community, leading you to gain insight and competencies within topics such as:

- The significance of trust
- Facilitating meaningful communities
- Being a role model

CHAPTER 2: STRUCTURED CONTENT

LEARNING IS NOT ONLY SOMETHING YOU DO AT SCHOOL

We learn throughout our lives: learning is not only something you do when you start school and then stop doing again at the time you finish. Think of the first time you took the bus by yourself. Maybe you can't remember, and that's okay, but then maybe you can remember what it was like being a child who was dependent on your parents to take you places because you weren't able to go there by yourself.

I remember as a child, taking the bus to school every day. In the beginning I was followed by a teacher who would take us kids from the neighborhood to school every morning, and then come get us again in the afternoon. By the time I turned 10, I was allowed to go alone. Somehow it didn't seem that frightening, taking the bus alone at the age of 10 in the big city, because I had done it so many times before with my friends and people I trusted. I was familiar with the procedure. Go to the bus stop, wait for the bus to arrive, enter the bus and show my bus pass to the driver, sit down and wait for my stop, press the stop button to let the driver know I wanted to get off, get off and walk to school.

Think about it: do you think I could have learned that if I had never been on a bus, never seen the bus stop, never walked the path from the bus stop towards the school? Do you think I would have been able to do that if no one had ever shown me?

This is similar to learning how to be part of a social community. You can tell kids how to

participate, you can explain and describe the rules of a game, but the question is – is that enough for them to feel that participation is meaningful? Is it enough for them to feel comfortable and safe when participating? Learning how to participate in a social community, such as your practice, necessitates a social component in the learning, which is why interacting with others while learning is key in kids' progression towards experiencing themselves as valid members of a social community.

In this context, being a valid member is not the same as possessing a plastic card that gives you access to a fitness center. Instead it is about feeling a sense of belonging and feeling comfortable in participating in the community. Different elements contribute in this progression towards feeling as a valid member, trustful relations, zone know-how and language, and courage to engage in sports activities, all influence kids' experiences of themselves as valid members, and thus have motivational influence on their participation in your sports community.

WE LEARN FROM OTHERS

Because social communities are made up of the people who participate and interact in them, these other people become learning resources. Our interactions with others contain great possibilities for development. Maybe you learn from someone who knows more about something than you do, or someone who has more hands-on experience with something. It could be that one of your friends has more experience being a Playmaker than you do, and you learn from watching and interacting with that friend. Or it could be playing a football match - 22 people running around on one field, each bringing something unique to the game. After that match it is certain that you've learned something new, about yourself, about the game or about something else, *but the social interaction with the other players on that field was the thing that enabled that specific learning you took away*. Having access to places where you can be inspired by others is important for learning, because when we engage in a social community then we can see the specific things in that community that are important to learn and then, the other people in that context help us learn by responding to our behavior – they become some sort of human indicator of progression. We always learn, from each other (and our surroundings).

WHAT IS IT THAT NEEDS TO BE LEARNED IN A SPORTS COMMUNITY?

As a participant in a community, you possess this knowledge about the invisible rules. Knowledge about the ways we talk to each other and the ways we treat each other is difficult to describe, because, as we become more and more familiar with a specific community, we also become more and more accustomed to the norms that guide our behavior in that community. For example, if you're an experienced basketball player, then you know all the rules. You know that there's a rule about how many steps you're allowed to take, you know that there are rules about the amount of points you get depending on from where you score. Besides these obvious rules that guide the game, there are also invisible rules about how you're together at your basketball practice – maybe you've fostered a culture in which everyone praises each other for every little thing they do, or maybe you make a lot of jokes. Either way, possessing this knowledge and acting accordingly is what members of a community do, and it is exactly this that can be

difficult for a newcomer to do.

THE INVISIBLE RULES AT YOUR PRACTICE

How are we together, when we are together? Yeah that's a weird sentence. What it means is, How do we treat each other when we interact with one another, and how do we know to treat each other that specific way? What kinds of invisible rules guide our behavior towards each other in the community? Being aware of the way we engage with other people can help us help others be part of the community. Every community is unique with its own invisible knowledge, or "know-how". You behave differently depending on where you are and whom you're with. When at home, you might not behave the same way as you do when out with friends, or at school or work. When you familiarize yourself with a social community, you slowly become more experienced in that community, and as your experience grows so does your expertise in acting in accordance with the know-how of the community. The know-how steadily becomes automated and invisible because it is something you do and say without being aware of it.

If you are aware of the "rules" the children and you yourself act according to at your practice, then you will also be better equipped to influence and guide those behaviors and act as a role model. Or help new kids feel comfortable in entering and becoming part of the community at your practice.

The way we act towards each other is a big part of the invisible knowledge. How do you speak to each other at your practice? How do your bodies speak to each other? Can you laugh at each other? Is it accepted that you tease each other playfully? Do you listen respectfully when others speak, or do you interrupt? Do you shake hands with everybody at the beginning of practice?

If you are aware of, and familiar with, the specific rules that guide behavior at your practice, then you can better support both new kids and the experienced kids in building good relations – a skill relevant in all aspects of life.

Learning the know-how is not something that happens overnight, and it is definitely not something you can be told to do. Rather it is something you can show. Being a role model who leads by example is a big part of being a Playmaker and also a big part in guiding kids' behavior.

Reflection question: Think about your practice and imagine you have to describe the invisible rules of that community to someone new to it, what would you say?

TRUSTFUL RELATIONS

There are other aspects of being part of a community besides awareness about the invisible know-how, because relations, trust and motivation all contribute in driving participation. Some kids might show up to practice every week just because all of their friends do, and they enjoy the company of their friends. Others come back each week because they like the sport. And then there might be others who have found new friends at your practice, and they come to uphold those friendships. Whatever reasons the kids might have for showing up and participating in

your practice, them being there is a sign that it means something to them. They see value in it – just as you do.

When we engage ourselves in communities, we invest ourselves and hope for meaningful outcomes. Just as our motivations for participating differs, so can our expectations for outcome, but what is central, is the community and the people who are part of it, because we learn from each other and from interacting with each other. And if we invest some of ourselves in the community, then an inevitable part of that investment is trusting the other people in the community to treat the trust we place in them with respect.

But what is trust and why is important in social communities?

Trust is a feeling, and it is very much an individual feeling. It is about feeling comfortable enough to fully express and be one's self. It is about feeling a sense of belonging and feeling appreciated. It is a process. It is something we can put in others and it is something we can provide for others. A community with trust at its core, is a community where the participants feel and experience that they can be themselves and that they fit in. Being a Playmaker also holds the responsibility of establishing and providing trustful communities where you yourself and the kids feel at home. So the presence of trust in the community is important, especially for the kids in feeling that they belong. How we make other people feel safe and comfortable and eventually trust us and others in our social interactions is not a one size fits all model. Instead, it is about getting to know every individual, see them as who they are and let them teach us how we best can be something for them. As humans we do this in our interactions and relations to other people, especially those we care about, but as a Playmaker you must do it just a little more explicitly, because you are the role model, the facilitator, the example. Showing an interest in the kids at practice, shows that it matters to you if they are there or not, and it is a way of getting those good relation going.

In summary - every little action and word can contribute in making kids feel safe and comfortable in a community, which in the long run is something that can be turned into to motivation for continuous participation and kids taking ownership in the community.

Motivation drives participation. If the kids have no motivation for participating, then they don't participate. But as a Playmaker you can help encourage kids' motivation. Good relations to others in the community, feeling equipped and finding one's place in the community, entail knowledge about the zone know-how. Feeling as a valid member of community influences the way we participate in that community, and in the process of learning how to be a valid member we use each other as resources and learn from every interaction. Interaction with others is key in kids' progression towards experiencing themselves as valid members in a community.

CHAPTER 3: INDIVIDUAL PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

FIRST INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY: GUIDING AND ENCOURAGING SPECIFIC TYPES OF BEHAVIOR

Purpose: To reflect on what motivates children

Tools: A video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVShA7g4Joc> (in English)

Duration: 20 minutes

The woman in this video is entertaining and humorous while she give us insights into how she had to fail in order to succeed in encouraging and motivating behavior.

Though the video is aimed at parents, there are parallels to what you are doing with the kids at your practice. Because every child is different, and every child responds to different things. Being able to see each child as an independent being gives good relational responses and contributes in establishing that trust and sense of belonging in a community.

For instance, not everybody is equally competitive. And it is not everybody that likes being the center of attention. Being able to assemble a diverse group of children and lead them and learn them about life, about sports, and about friendship is important when facilitating a community. And it is important in creating and preserving good social relations. And it is important on the way to reaching that common goal: a social community made up of good relations and where the kids feel safe and that they can be themselves.

Activity:

- As you watch the video, try to relate the different types of personalities that are presented to some of the kids you know. Can you think of situations where they have showed you who they are, what types of words can you use to describe them? And more importantly, think about how you act towards them, how your behavior shows the other children how to behave towards that child (those invisible rules) and how you can use your knowledge about that specific child to guide, motivate and support them.

- What are the kids' keywords?

SECOND INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY INSPIRATION FOR BUILDING A GOOD COMMUNITY

The teacher in this very short video gives an example of an exercise that can be used as an activity in building a good community.

Watch the video and think about:

- Could this type of exercise be meaningful at your practice?
- What types of benefits do you see in doing this activity at every practice?
- What types of limitations do you see in doing this activity at every practice?

- What could an exercise like this help bring forth/establish/keep?

THIRD INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY INSPIRATION FROM A SUPER COOL TEACHER MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN KIDS' LIVES

The woman speaking in this video is a great and inspirational speaker, and though she talks about the importance of good relations in kids' academic development processes, much of what she's saying is transferable to your practice.

Watch the video, with your practice in mind and listen for those things that can be related to your practice.

- If you need help relating it to your practice, try and think of the word coaching every time the word teaching is spoken.

QUIZ

Pedagogy & Motivation

