



# (Re)Introducing Girls to Sport and Physical Activity

This guide provides 10 'girls in sport' elements for delivery partners to consider, situated in each of the quadrants of the youth sport compass.

## DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED

- 1.** Focus on competence: Girls that are more skilled and perceive themselves as (highly) competent have higher levels of participation. Thus, ICOACHGIRLS should focus on developing girls' fundamental movement skills to support their perceived competence.
- 2.** Provide non-competitive activities: Although some girls thrive in competitive settings, others can experience competition as a barrier to participation. Providing non-competitive activities can support girls to start and/or maintain participation in sport and physical activities.

## MOTIVATIONAL

- 3.** Provide high support: Girls who are supported by various people (e.g., parents, peers, teacher, and coaches) have more positive perceptions towards sport and physical activity, and are more likely to participate.
- 4.** Offer a variety of activities and variations: Allowing girls to sample various activities increases the opportunities for girls to discover what they enjoy and feel competent in.
- 5.** Use role-models: Girls can feel isolated in the context of sport and physical activity, so it is important to have positive female role models that can inspire girls

## CARING

- 6.** Promote friendships and social connections: Girls are more likely to continue in sports and physical activity when they believe it to be a way of developing and maintaining friendships
- 7.** Help coaches to understand girls' needs: A successful program to promote girls' participation in sport and physical activity needs coaches that acknowledge girls have different needs compared to boys, have knowledge about these needs and act accordingly.

## SOCIALLY SAFE

- 8.** Create a positive, inclusive and welcoming environment: Unsurprisingly, girls like to feel welcome and encouraged. It is very important for girls that everyone can participate and is seen and treated as equal
- 9.** Provide girls only opportunities: because boys tend to be encouraged to participate in sport more regularly, their competence is likely to be higher – thus girls may get sidelined and be excluded within mixed environments
- 10.** Be aware of issues related to body image and act accordingly: Girls' body image and menstruation can be internal barriers to participate in sports and physical activity. Many girls do not participate due to body image concerns.



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