

# PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN SPORTS

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# EPIDEMIOLOGY

- LACK OF DATA WORLD WIDE
- USA ESTIMATES
  - 27 MILL IN TEAM SPORTS
  - 60 MILL IN ORGANISED SPORTS
  - 44 MILL IN MORE THAN ONE
- GLOBALLY:
  - **≈ 1 BILLION** KIDS IN SOME KIND OF “ORGANIZED” SPORTS



# LACK OF SOLID DATA

- LACK AND DIVERSITY OF DEFINITIONS
  - ORGANISED SPORT IN WELL DEVELOPED COUNTRIES vs “ORGANISED” SPORT IN NON-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
- VIRTUALLY ALL DATA PUBLISHED FROM WELL DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
- NO UNDERSTANDING OF GLOBAL SITUATION
- HUGE GAP IN DEVELOPING AND NON-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES



# EFFECTS OF SPORTS

- BENEFITS WELL KNOWN AND USED

BUT...

- EMPHASIS ON COMPETITIVE SUCCESS
- INCREASING PRESSURE
- EXCESSIVE FOCUS ON EARLY INTENSIVE TRAINING



# CHILD PROTECTION



# PRE- PARTICIPATION EXAMS IN SPORTS

- LACK OF UNIVERSAL GUIDELINES
- PRESENT GUIDELINES ONLY IN WELL DEVELOPED REGIONS
- REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES IN REAL LIFE – IS IT FEASIBLE
  - CROATIAN REGULATIONS
    - NO AGE-SPECIFIC EXAMS
    - NOT ENOUGH MEDICAL SPECIALIST



# INJURY PREVENTION

- FITNESS TRAINING
- SPORT SPECIFIC TRAINING
- PROTECTIVE GEAR
- BURN-OUT AND OVERUSE INJURY PREVENTION
- TEACH 'EM FAIR PLAY



# AGE-SPECIFIC TRAINING

- NO EVIDENCE THAT EARLY SPORTS SPECIALISATION HAS ANY INFLUENCE ON BETTER ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- SPORT SPECIALISATION POSTPONED
- IN YOUNGER AGE SPORTS DIVERSIFICATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED
  - EXCEPTIONS – GYMNASTICS, FIGURE SCATING AND SWIMMING





# GENDER-SPECIFIC

- MENSTRUAL DYSFUNCTION
- EATING DISORDERS
- BODY IMAGE
- GENDER EQUALITY – PATRIARCHAL SETTINGS



# OTHER SPECIFIC

- ETHNICAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITIES
  - RAMADAN
- HIGH ALTITUDE
- LOW/HIGH TEMPERATURE
- LOW/HIGH HUMIDITY
- POOR NUTRITION
  - STARVATION
  - OBESITY



# DOPING PREVENTION

- THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF GROWING USE OF DOPING BY YOUNG RECREATIONAL ATHLETES
- NORWAY: AMPHETAMINS+STEROIDS+SLEEPING PILLS



# PHYSICAL ABUSE

- CULTURE OF PAIN
- NO PAIN - NO GAIN
- PAIN BECOMES “NORMAL” AND ACCEPTED



# EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- ONE OF THE MAJOR CAUSES OF ADOLESCENTS DEPRESSION SYNDROMES
- EXPOSED TO SACASM AND RUDENESS
  - OTHER KIDS
  - COACHES
  - PARENTS WITH HIGH EXPECTATIONS
- CHILD NEGLECT



# SEXUAL ABUSE

- THE BEAST IS OUT THERE, BUT NOBODY KNOWS THE EXTENT
- NO DATA
  - ALL RESEARCHES IN WELL DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
    - COURT REPORTS
    - MEDIA REPORTS
    - POOR INSTITUTIONAL REPORTING
- LACK OF EDUCATION



# SOCIOECONOMICAL INEQUALITIES

- LOW SEP CHILDREN ARE LESS EXPOSED TO SPORT AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN WELL DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
- NO INFRASTRUCTURE IN LESS DEVELOPED
- CHILD BECOMES PRODUCT, INVESTMENT AND POTENTIAL WAY OUT OF POVERTY FOR WHOLE FAMILY



# SEXUAL ABUSE

- BJD SURVEY:
  - 10,3% OF SURVEYED YOUTH REPORTED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
  - 7 % REPORTED PHYSICAL SEXUAL CONTACT





# THE PRESENT

- GROWING CONCERN REGARDING CHILD PROTECTION ONLY IN PAST 15 YRS
- BUT LACK OF
  - RESEARCH
  - NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICIES
  - UNDERSTANDING
- IOC ACTIONS FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN 2007
- UN 2011 – SPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE INTERNATIONAL GROUP



# PROTECTION OF CHILD IN SPORT

- GLOBAL AWARENESS!!!
  - GLOBAL RESEARCH GATHERING DATA FROM DIFFERENT SETTINGS
  - FAIR AND OPEN ACCESS TO DATA
- UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM
- GLOBAL ACTIONS (POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL)
- BUT WITH RESPECT OF LOCAL CONDITIONS



# EDUCATION

- COACHES
- PARENTS
- YOUNG ATHLETES
- BUT ALSO ALL STAKEHOLDERS INTERESTED IN THE PROTECTION OF THE CHILDREN



**IT'S A LONG JOURNEY..**

# BEFORE WE CAN DANCE A VICTORY DANCE...



**BUT, AT LAST AND LEAST, WE  
ARE SET TO START..**

**THANK YOU!**



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