



NORGES
IDRETTSFORBUND



CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN SPORTS

THE PROVISIONS ON CHILDREN'S SPORTS

Adopted by the General Assembly of NIF in 2007.
Revised by the General Assembly of NIF in 2019.



93 per cent of all children and young people participate in organised sports during their childhood.

First and foremost, participation in children's sports has important intrinsic value for the children. In addition, children's sports aim to provide experiences and skills that provide the basis for a lifelong enjoyment of sports.

What?

The Children's Rights in Sports and Provisions on Children's Sports have been adopted by the General Assembly of the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF). They clarify the recommendations on how to develop positive activities for every child as an individual. Children's sports are defined as sporting activities for children up to 12 years of age.

The first guidelines for children's sports were adopted in 1976. The provisions were first adopted in 1987 and were later revised in 2007, 2015 and 2019, and they regulate competitions offered to children. This is done by facilitating a natural progression in how far children should travel, what competitions children are permitted to take part in, and how awards, ranking and results lists should be used. There are also separate provisions on how to sanction or punish any violations of the provisions.

The Children's Rights in Sports are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and were adopted in 2007, and later revised in 2015 and 2019. They express the values that should form the basis for children's sports in Norway. The rights should be seen in context with the provisions, but they describe to a greater degree the factors that are important for ensuring that children feel safe, experience achievement and have an influence on their own activity. In short, these rights are focused on promoting and safeguarding children's best interests.

Why do we have provisions and rights?

These rights and provisions are unique in a global context, and are designed to help children have a positive experience every time they participate in training, competition or other activities. When participating in sports, children should experience a friendly environment, feel safe, want to try new things and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Children are children and not small adults. All sporting activities and competitions should be open to any child wishing to participate. Such activities should be developed and adapted for children, so that they are encouraged to learn new things and are motivated to continue playing sports for as long as possible.

How?

Safe and fun children's activities require good club environments that focus on the children's needs. The key to creating a good environment is ensuring that everyone knows and supports each other, they can call each other by name, they stay active, get to try new things, and experience security, achievement and challenges.



Photo: Eirik Forde

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN SPORTS

The Children's Rights in Sports apply to all children, without discrimination and without regard to the gender, ethnic background, beliefs, sexual orientation, weight/physical development or disabilities of the children or their parents.

1. SAFETY

Children have the right to participate in a training environment that is safe and secure, without pressure or exploitation. Children under the age of six should be accompanied by an adult to help avoid accidents and prevent injuries.

2. FRIENDSHIP AND ENJOYMENT

Children have the right to participate in training and competitive activities that are designed to help develop friendships and feelings of solidarity.

3. ACHIEVEMENT

Children have the right to experience achievement and learn many different skills. They should also have opportunities to experience variation, practice and teamwork with others.

4. INFLUENCE

Children have the right to express their own opinions and to have their opinions considered. They should have the opportunity to participate in the planning and implementation of their sports activities together with their coaches and parents.

5. FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

Children have the right to choose which sport or how many sports they wish to participate in. Children have the right to determine how much they wish to practise their sport.

6. COMPETITIONS FOR ALL

Children have the right to choose whether or not they would like to participate in competitions. Children transferring from one club to another in the same sporting discipline have the right to compete in competitive sports for the new sports club, as soon as the transfer is completed.

7. ON THE CHILDREN'S TERMS

Children have the right to participate in training and competitive activities that are suitable for their age, physical development and level of maturity. Sports clubs and groups must work together to offer children a coordinated and diverse range of sporting activities in their own local environment.

8. EVERYONE MUST BE ALLOWED TO PLAY

All children have the right to participate in sports, regardless of their family's financial situation or involvement. Children have the right to be in an inclusive sporting environment without pressures related to equipment or cost.



THE PROVISIONS ON CHILDREN'S SPORTS

1. Children's sports are defined as sporting activities for children up to 12 years of age.
2. The Provisions on Children's Sports regulate competitions in children's sports. One of the intentions is to reduce the time and costs spent on travelling to and from activities. Sports clubs are therefore encouraged to follow the same principles for training and other activities in children's sports.
3. For competitions in children's sports, the following applies:
 - a) Children may participate in local competitions and sporting events in the year they turn six, and primarily in their own sports club.
 - b) Children may participate in regional competitions and sporting events in the year they turn nine.
 - c) Children may participate in open competitions and sporting events in Norway, the Nordic countries and the Barents region in the year they turn 11.
 - d) Children from the Nordic countries and the Barents region may participate in competitions and sporting events in Norway in the year they turn 11.
 - e) Results lists, tables and rankings in competitions can be used for children in the year they turn 11, if appropriate.
 - f) Children cannot participate in championships such as Norwegian Championships, European Championships, World Championships and equivalent competitions up to and including the year they turn 12.
 - g) All children must receive prizes at sporting events if prizes are given.
4. Sports clubs that organise children's sports must appoint a specific person (either elected or employed) who holds the responsibility for children's sports in that club. See further details under the section on *the person responsible for children's sports*.
5. Individual sports federations may decide their own set of rules that expand on these provisions within the framework of their particular sport(s). This includes defining local and regional competitions in 3a) and 3b) and, under special circumstances, making adjustments regarding age limits and geography in 3c) and 3d). The rules must be approved by NIF's Executive Board or those given authorisation by NIF's Executive Board to grant approval.
6. Sports federations are obliged to adopt sanction provisions for violations of the Provisions on Children's Sports in their own match and competition regulations, including the authority to impose fines on sports clubs and to deprive athletes of the right to participate in competitions. Any sanctions must be in accordance with section 11-2 of NIF's laws. In the event of repeated or serious violations of the provisions, the case must be reported to the NIF Adjudication Committee.

Each sports federation is responsible for ensuring that the provisions and rights are made known, implemented and enforced in their sports and disciplines.



DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This overall development plan for children's sports aims to give children the greatest possible variation in activities and the opportunity to develop basic movement skills. The development plans used by individual sports federations and the practical implementation by coaches should follow this development plan:

UP TO 6 YEARS

Play and varied activities should be employed to stimulate the child's development and strengthen basic movement skills.

7-9 YEARS

This age group should be given good opportunities to explore and practise various physical activities or sporting exercises with different movement patterns, so that they get a broad experience of motion. This creates a good foundation to develop a range of movement skills at a later stage. Activities can be within one or more sporting disciplines, but each sport has the responsibility to offer a varied programme that is adapted to the child's level of development.

10-12 YEARS

Within this age group, sports should be planned to offer a variety of activities and a high activity level to ensure good basic skills. Specialisation in one or more sports should ensure a strong technical foundation that can be developed later within the child's chosen sport.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN'S SPORTS IN A SPORTS CLUB?

The person responsible for children's sports must:

1. Ensure that the club has sound procedures in place for giving coaches, volunteers and parents information regarding these rights and provisions.
2. Ensure that the club's board and subsidiary groups actively support these rights and provisions.
3. Make sure that the club arranges parents' meetings once the activity has started; get to know the parents and make sure that they understand what being a member of the club entails.
4. In clubs with multiple sporting disciplines: Ensure that all the sports and groups work together in a coordinated manner and develop a diverse plan of activity for all the children in the sports club.
5. In specialised sports clubs: Ensure broad variation within the activities of the club to stimulate diversity and holistic development.
6. Strive to keep the costs of the club reasonable to ensure broad participation, especially from groups of people with limited financial resources and from families where parents are unable to participate in volunteer work.
7. Strive to include all children wishing to participate in children's sports regardless of their background.

The person responsible for children's sports has the opportunity to increase their competence regarding the Provisions for Children's Sports and Children's Rights in Sports by:

- Participating in various activities offered by the regional confederation of sports where the rights and provisions related to children's sports are on the agenda, such as meetings, gatherings and seminars.
- Completing the e-learning module "The core values in children's sports", which is available at ekurs.nif.no

Certificate of good conduct

All sports clubs in Norway are required to obtain a certificate of good conduct from the police for anyone with responsibility for children under the age of 18 or responsibility for people with intellectual disabilities.

You can find more information (in Norwegian) at:

www.idrettsforbundet.no/klubbguiden/politiattest



Gjensidige

Sports insurance for children

All children who are members of teams affiliated to the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) or who participate in organised activities in clubs or teams are insured through Gjensidige children's sports insurance. For more information (in Norwegian), visit: www.idrettsforbundet.no/klubbguiden/forsikring/

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www.idrettsforbundet.no/tema/barneidrett

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