

# Equality in Sport

Sports Beyond  
Every Stereotype



## *Introduction*

As part of the Milano Cortina 2026 Gen26 Education Programme, this document aims to explore sporting values as a lens through which to examine equality and rights.

The Olympic values of **excellence**, **respect** and **friendship**, alongside the Paralympic values of **courage**, **determination**, **inspiration** and **equality**, help us recognise that all people should be equal in terms of rights and opportunities.

These values teach us the importance of treating everyone with respect and ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender or ability. Our goal is to promote a culture of respect and equality.

### **THIS EDUCATIONAL TOOLKIT IS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS:**

- 1.** The first focuses on core teaching content (page 5)
- 2.** The second presents practical outreach activities, or “active citizenship challenges”, which can be implemented in the classroom or with interest groups (page 81)

*This is the first edition of this important toolkit addressing the vital topic of Gender Equality. We welcome your valuable feedback and suggestions to help make future editions even more comprehensive and dynamic.*

To send tips and ideas, contact: **[edu@milanocortina2026.org](mailto:edu@milanocortina2026.org)**  
Thank you in advance!

## Acknowledgements

The Olympic and Paralympic Games are far more than a competition: they are a global celebration of human potential that can inspire cultural transformation. They promote *respect, inclusion* and *mutual support*, encouraging the development of a society where everyone can express their true value.

Through sporting competition and the pursuit of excellence, both female and male athletes send powerful messages that encourage a more *open* and *inclusive* society – one where differences become assets and sport serves as a means of creating a better, more united world.

Let us grow together as a true *team* through sport, each playing our part!



*Diana Bianchedi*

Chief Strategy, Planning & Legacy Officer at Fondazione Milano Cortina 2026

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Part 1

# Teaching Content



Terre des hommes  
Proteggiamo i bambini insieme



# Gen26 Education Programme



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# Introduction

## A Winning Combination

**The Milano Cortina 2026 Gen26 Education Programme** promotes equality through Olympic and Paralympic values.

This collaboration – in preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 – shows young people the importance of sport in promoting the values of respect, fair play, equality and inclusion.

The Gen26 Education Programme aligns with Terre des Hommes Italia, an organisation that has worked to protect and promote children's rights worldwide since 1960, and the **IN**difesa campaign in their commitment to combat discrimination and violence and achieve gender equality, beginning with sport.



Since 2012, through the **IN**difesa campaign, Terre des Hommes Italia has been dedicated to safeguarding the protection and rights of girls and young women. The initiative seeks to raise awareness of gender equality among younger generations and challenge discrimination and violence.

Drawing on Terre des Hommes Italia's expertise in promoting human rights and inclusive education, this toolkit provides valuable resources to foster cultural change and awareness in schools.



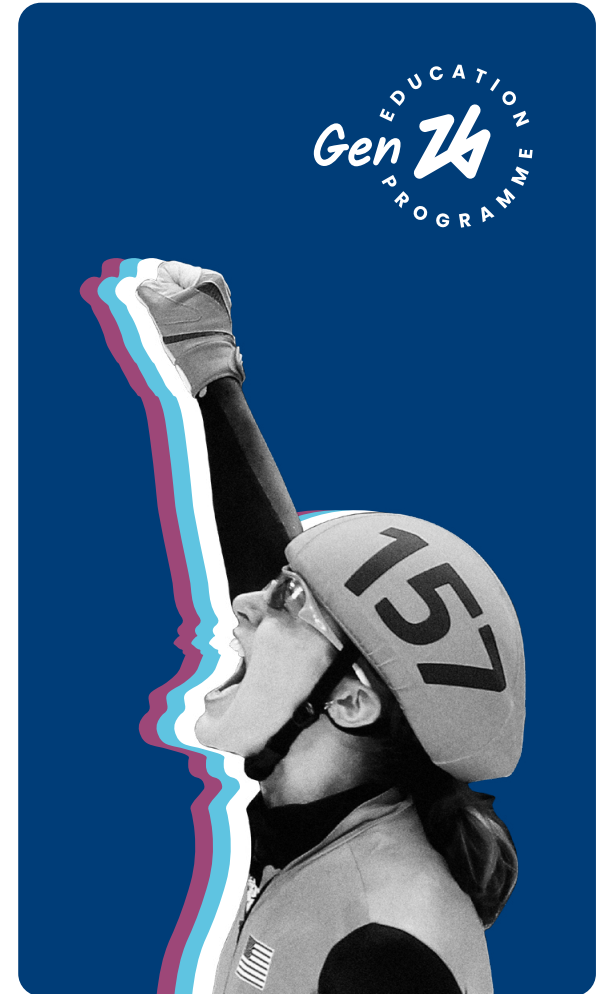
## *The Context*

### Milano Cortina 2026's Gen26 Education Programme

The Programme aims to inspire new generations through Milano Cortina 2026's sporting activities and **values, including respect, determination, sustainability, commitment and inclusion.**

To create a lasting legacy for both the country and the global sporting movement, the Milano Cortina 2026 Gen26 Education Programme seeks to build a **community of young sports enthusiasts throughout Italy.**

The Milano Cortina 2026 Gen26 Education Programme comprises of a series of initiatives in schools and universities. Its goal is to engage young people on the journey towards the 2026 Winter Games by promoting sporting values, encouraging participation in sport and offering unique, life-changing experiences and opportunities.



# Goals

## Gen26 Programme

Before, during and after the Games.



## The Value of the Project

### The Toolkit: "Equality in Sport. Beyond Every Stereotype"

**Gen26, the Education Programme for the** upcoming Winter Games, harnesses the inspirational power of the Olympics and Paralympics to encourage future generations to engage in sport. It demonstrates how sport can be used as a tool to transform individual lives and improve entire communities.

Terre des Hommes' contribution focuses on the key themes of the **Indifesa campaign**, which aims to combat **discrimination and violence** while promoting **gender equality** and **youth participation**.

The goal is to empower young people to become genuine agents of change in our society.

**Sport plays a vital role in the development of girls and boys**, with athletes serving as role models of respect, equality and inclusion for younger generations.

**Our vision remains focused on inspiring people through sport:** this is our most meaningful legacy.



## *The Key Concepts*

### Olympic and Paralympic Values

#### THE OLYMPIC VALUES

*EXCELLENCE, RESPECT,  
FRIENDSHIP*

**The Olympic motto:**

*"Citius Altius, Fortius – Communiter"*  
**"Faster, Higher,  
Stronger – Together"**



#### THE PARALYMPIC VALUES

*COURAGE, DETERMINATION,  
INSPIRATION, EQUALITY*

**The Paralympic motto:**

*"Change starts with sport"*



## *The Theme*

### The Importance of Equality and Rights

**“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.**

They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

“Without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

**Source:** Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Senate of the Republic

## *The Theme*

### The Importance

#### **ADDRESSING THE GENDER GAP**

Stereotypes remain deeply ingrained in society, often leading us to unconsciously categorise activities – including sports – as either masculine or feminine.

This mindset contributes to significantly lower participation in sport among females compared to males, a pattern that emerges from an early age.





*Gender  
Equality*



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# The Theme

## Key Concepts in Gender Equality

1

What is **gender**?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "sex" refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that distinguish men from women, while "gender" refers to socially constructed roles: the behaviours, activities and attitudes that a particular society considers appropriate.

2

What is **privilege**\*?

Privilege describes the exclusive advantages or special rights enjoyed by certain individuals or groups, often without their awareness.

These benefits can stem from various factors, including economic or social class, gender, sexual orientation, culture, country of origin, physical or intellectual ability, and membership or non-membership in dominant groups.

\***Source:** Gender (who.int)

# The Theme

## Key Concepts in Gender Equality

3

What is **intersectionality**?

Building on Kimberlé Crenshaw's definition, intersectionality is a crucial concept that explains how different forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, homophobia) interact with and influence each other, creating unique and complex forms of inequality. For example, the lived experience of a woman from Burkina Faso may differ significantly from that of a woman from England or a man from Peru.

4

What is a **stereotype**?

A **stereotype** (a concept first theorised by Walter Lippmann) is a generalised and simplified belief about a group of people.

Gender stereotypes might include the assumption that women are naturally more emotional and less rational than men. These perceptions can restrict individual choices and shape social expectations and behaviours.

5

What is the difference between **equality** and **equity**\*?

Equality means providing everyone with the same legal opportunities without discrimination (for example, universal voting rights regardless of gender).

Equity goes further: it recognises that different people need different support to access the same opportunities. This concept acknowledges that equal treatment alone is insufficient when people start from disadvantaged positions.

\*Source: Article 3 of the Italian Constitution: Basic principles | [www.governo.it](http://www.governo.it)

## *The Significance*

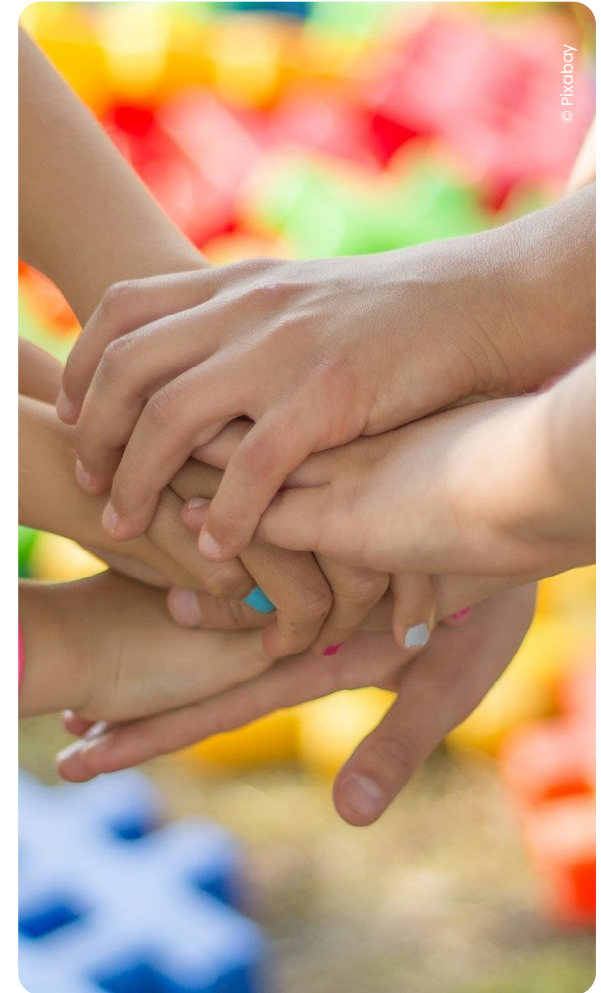
### **What Does Gender Equality Mean?**

Gender equality means recognising that women and men should have the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. This doesn't mean they should be identical or treated identically, but rather that their rights and opportunities should not be determined by their gender at birth.

Those working towards gender equality understand the importance of considering all forms of privilege and discrimination.

This approach is essential because true substantive justice can only be achieved by addressing all forms of inequality, including those beyond gender.

It's crucial to recognise that women's experiences can vary significantly based on factors such as sexual orientation, ethnicity and physical ability. Therefore, we must strive for an equality that acknowledges and accommodates these intersections, ensuring inclusivity for all.



## *The Impact*

### **Gender Stereotypes in Daily Life**

Stereotypes and privilege profoundly affect people's lives, shaping perceptions, opportunities and experiences across all areas: from toy selection to educational choices, from career paths to social interactions.

From an early age, children are exposed to gender stereotypes that establish expectations about what is “appropriate” for boys and girls. These expectations aren’t rooted in inherent biological differences, but rather stem from socio-cultural norms.

The categorisation of certain sports as “suitable for boys” or “suitable for girls”, for instance, originates from historical and cultural perceptions embedded in gender roles. Sports requiring physical strength, aggression and competitiveness (such as rugby or boxing) are considered “masculine” precisely because these qualities are viewed as male traits. A child who is a boy is encouraged to develop these characteristics, while a girl is often discouraged from expressing them.

Conversely, activities such as artistic gymnastics, ice skating or dancing are viewed as sports that emphasise grace, decorum and elegance – characteristics traditionally attributed to girls.



## *How Do Stereotypes Affect Sport?*

### **Participation Barriers:**

Girls and boys may feel discouraged from participating in sports considered “inappropriate” for their gender, thus missing opportunities to pursue activities they might truly enjoy.

### **Limited Access:**

Female athletes generally encounter fewer opportunities for competition, sponsorship and media coverage.



© Stefano Carboni, Terre des Hommes

## *The Significance*

### **What Does Gender Gap Mean?**

The term “gender gap” refers to the disparity between males and females in society and highlights the unequal conditions that women experience in every country.

The gender gap in sport is significant because it extends beyond the sporting arena, connecting to broader issues of equality, representation and wellbeing.

The ultimate aim is to create an equitable and inclusive sporting environment where all athletes can compete based on their abilities rather than their gender, with their individual characteristics equally recognised and valued.



## The Data

### The Gender Gap in Sport

FROM **ISTAT** DATA PUBLISHED IN **2021**,  
IT EMERGES THAT:



**39.8%**

of **men** play sport regularly  
or occasionally



Among **women**, the figure  
is only

**29.6%**

**Source:** Sport, Physical Activity, Sedentary Lifestyle (istat.it)

A **2019 CENSIS** SURVEY  
ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THAT:

In Italy, **women** occupy only

**19.8%**

of coaching roles

**15.4%**

of management positions

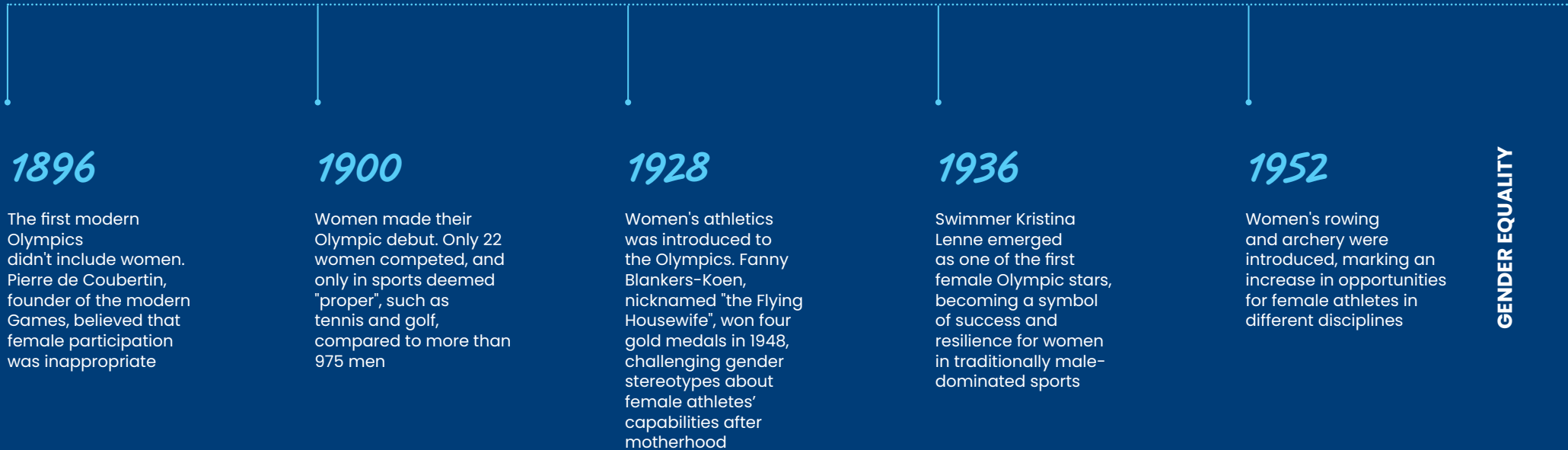
**12.4%**

of Federation management positions

**Source:** Women: The Gender Gap Exists in Sport Too | CENSIS

# History

## Women's Participation in the Olympic Games



# History

## Women's Participation in the Olympic Games



1960

Wilma Rudolph, having overcome polio, won three gold medals in athletics, becoming a global icon for women in sport

1984

Joan Benoit won the first-ever women's Olympic marathon, symbolising the breaking down of physical and cultural barriers for women

1991

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) ruled that all new sports introduced to the Games must include women's events

2012

For the first time, every national delegation included female athletes. Women competed in all sports, including combat sports such as boxing

2020

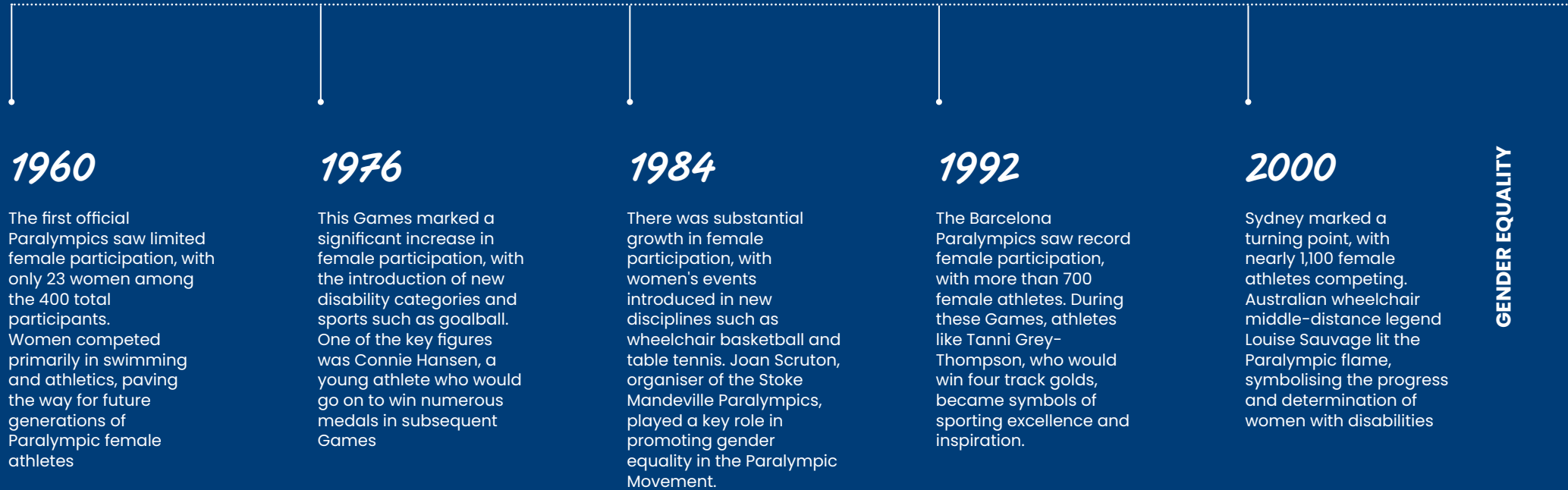
Gender parity was nearly achieved with 49% female participants; new disciplines were introduced, including sports like skateboarding and surfing, which promote gender inclusion and diversity

2024

Paris 2024 was the first Olympic Games in history to achieve full gender parity, with the IOC allocating an equal number of quota places to male and female athletes

# History

## Women's Participation in the Paralympic Games



# History

## Women's Participation in the Paralympic Games



2008

At Beijing, women made up about 35% of athletes. South African swimmer Natalie du Toit became the first amputee to compete in both the Olympics and Paralympics in the same year, proving that some barriers between Olympic and Paralympic sports could be broken down

2012

London marked unprecedented female participation, with nearly 1,500 women competing. British cyclist Sarah Storey won four gold medals, becoming one of the most decorated Paralympic athletes in history

2016

Italian fencer Beatrice "Bebe" Vio became an international icon, winning gold in the individual foil and bronze in the team event, establishing herself as a symbol within the international Paralympic movement

2021

Postponed for a year due to the pandemic, the Tokyo Paralympics saw women make up almost 40% of participating athletes. British swimmer Ellie Simmonds, already a five-time Paralympic champion, continued to be a symbol of resilience and excellence as she competed in her fourth Paralympics

2024

Paris 2024 includes both a record number of female athletes and the highest-ever number of women's medal events

GENDER EQUALITY

## *The Data: Beyond the Playing Field*

Women in the Olympic Movement

TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

HEADS OF MISSION

COACHES

*TOKYO 2020*

**+32%**



**+20%**



**+13%**



*RIO 2016*

**+29%**



**+11%**



**+11%**



**Source:** International Olympic Committee

## The Data: Beyond the Playing Field

Women in the Olympic Movement

### TECHNICAL OFFICIALS

BEIJING 2022

+38%



PYEONGCHANG 2018

+31%



### HEADS OF MISSION

+21%



+14%



### COACHES

+10%



+9%



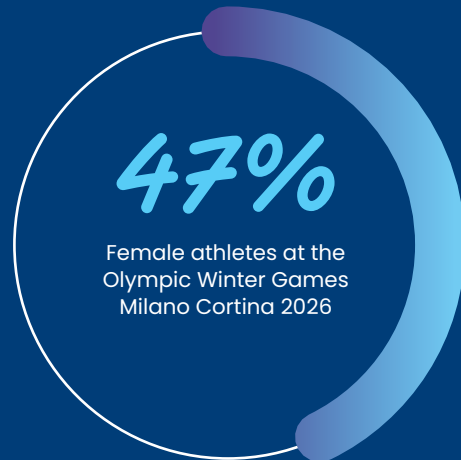
Source: International Olympic Committee

## The Data

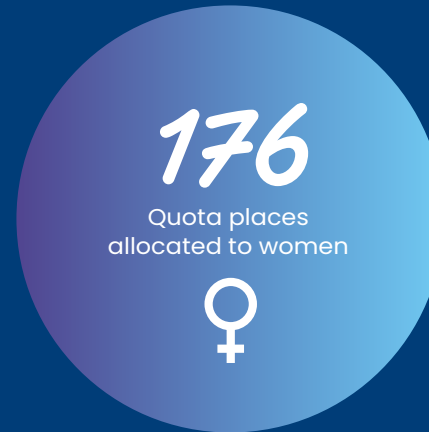
Source: Fondazione Milano Cortina 2026

### Women's Participation in Milano Cortina 2026

At the Paralympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026, there will be **39 medal events** for men and **35** for women, with **five** mixed **events**



These Olympic Winter Games will feature the highest number of women's events in history.



#### Past Games

**Pyeongchang 2018 Paralympics:**  
no Italian female athletes participated

**Tokyo 2020 Paralympics:**  
in the Italian delegation, women made up more than half of the team

**Beijing 2022 Paralympics:**  
there were four Italian female athletes



## *The Stories*

### *Lindsay Vonn*

An emblematic figure in addressing these issues is **Lindsey Vonn**, one of the most decorated and successful Alpine skiers in US history. Vonn has competed in several Alpine skiing disciplines, including downhill, super giant slalom, giant slalom and special slalom.

Born on 18 October 1984 in St Paul, Minnesota, Vonn demonstrated extraordinary talent from a young age. She made her Olympic debut at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games, and between 2008 and 2013 won **four** Alpine Skiing **World Cups**, as well as several Olympic medals, including gold in the downhill at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games.

Despite her successes, Lindsey Vonn has had to confront the gender disparities present in her sport.



© Getty Images

## *The Stories* *Lindsay Vonn*

Female athletes often struggle with unequal treatment compared to their male counterparts in terms of media visibility, financial rewards and access to resources.

In 2019, Lindsey Vonn announced her retirement from competitive Alpine skiing, ending an extraordinary career that helped bring attention to gender gap issues in winter sports.

Since retiring, she has continued to be an active voice for gender equality in sports, emphasising the need to create equal opportunities and conditions for all athletes to work and compete.

**Sources:** Lindsey Vonn – Wikipedia

Lindsey Vonn talks about her connection to Cortina and reveals why Sofia Goggia will be at the top at the next Olympics  
EXCLUSIVE (olympics.com)



## *The Stories*

### *The Rahimi Sisters*

In 2012, the Afghan Boxing Federation announced that Shabnam and Sadaf Rahimi, aged 19 and 18 respectively, would represent Afghanistan in qualifying tournaments for the London 2012 Olympics – the first Games to feature women's boxing as an official discipline.

Despite their father's initial opposition and threats of kidnapping and death, the Rahimi sisters continued their training, earning respect from many Afghans who recognised the challenges of boxing. The women's team was established in 2007 to encourage Afghan women's participation in sport.

**Source:** <https://donnexdiritti.com/2012/01/05/pugillesse-afghane/>





## Best Practices

### Everyone Can Make a Difference: Words Matter

1. Whenever possible, use gender-inclusive terms to avoid implicit exclusion.  
For example, use *"people"* instead of terms like *"men"* that could be interpreted as male-only; alternatively, specify *"men and women"*.
2. Avoid expressions or phrases that reflect gender stereotypes or biases, such as:  
*"This is a real man's sport, you need to have the attributes..."* *"This is a tough man's sport, only a real man can do it."*
3. Respect and use people's preferred nouns and pronouns, recognising and supporting their gender identity.

### HANSA MEHTA

Hansa Mehta, an Indian delegate to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from 1947 to 1948, fought tirelessly for women's rights in India and internationally. She is credited with changing the phrase "All men are born free and equal" to "All human beings are born free and equal" in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### ARTICLE 1

**"All men are born free  
and equal in dignity and rights."**



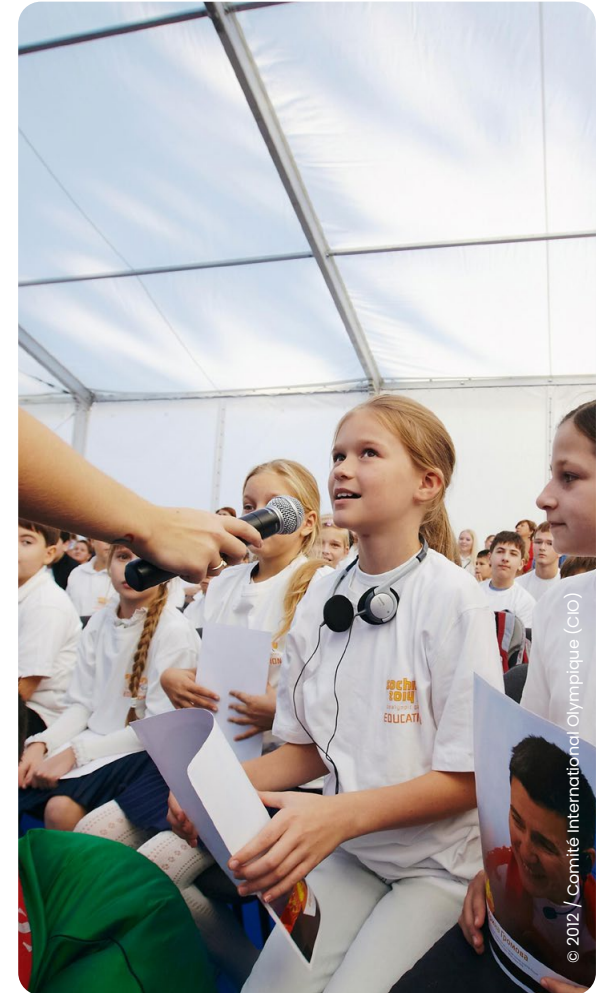
**"All human beings are born  
free and equal in dignity and rights."**

## *The Theme*

### **Countering All Forms of Violence**

In a society where violence is often culturally legitimised, it's crucial not only to focus on its most obvious manifestations, such as male violence against women, but also to understand and counter all forms of violence and abuse that may affect various members of society – including violence against children, the elderly, and violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Addressing violence in all its forms is essential to building a more just and safe society. A holistic approach helps us better understand the links between various forms of violence whilst creating the foundation for more effective prevention and intervention strategies. To ensure lasting change, we must educate people about the dynamics of violence whilst promoting a culture that refuses to tolerate any form of abuse.



## *The Theme: Abuse*

### THE FOUR FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE

When we talk about abuse, we refer to:

**1.**

**PHYSICAL  
ABUSE**

**3.**

**NEGLECT OR  
OVER-PROTECTIVE CARE**

**2.**

**SEXUAL ABUSE (BOTH CONTACT AND  
NON-CONTACT)**

**4.**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ABUSE**

## *The Theme*

### Types of Abuse

**1.**

#### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical abuse occurs when adults responsible for a child's care cause or allow physical harm to occur, or place the child at risk of such harm. The severity can range from mild to severe, potentially leading to death.

**2.**

#### **SEXUAL ABUSE (BOTH CONTACT AND NON-CONTACT)**

Sexual abuse encompasses any sexual activity between an adult and a child who, due to psychological or emotional immaturity and their dependent relationship with the adult, cannot make informed choices or fully understand the meaning and implications of the sexual activities involved. This includes direct sexual contact, erotic touching, and non-contact acts such as exposing a child to sexual activities.

## The Theme

### Types of Abuse

3.

#### NEGLECT

Neglect occurs when responsible adults fail to adequately provide for a child's physical and mental needs, which can vary according to the child's age and developmental stage.

**There are three main types:**

- ***Basic neglect:*** care falls below the minimum required for the child's age and needs.
- ***Developmental neglect:*** care is inappropriate for the child's developmental stage.
- ***Over-protection:*** excessive care becomes harmful to the child's development.

4.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Psychological abuse comprises ongoing behaviours and communications that damage a child's psychological wellbeing.

This includes: ***forced isolation; threats; humiliation and discrimination; blame; indifference and rejection; and exposure to domestic violence.***

## *Types of Abuse*

### **Gender Discrimination**

A distinct category of abuse relates to gender-based discrimination and violence. These forms of abuse are characterised by motivations directly linked to the victim's gender. Like all spheres of life, sport is affected by these discriminatory practices.

Here are some examples:

---

#### *"Mansplaining"*

"Mansplaining" (a combination of "man" and "explaining") describes situations where a man explains something to a woman in a condescending or patronising manner, presuming she has less knowledge than him, regardless of her actual expertise or experience in the subject.

In sport, mansplaining might occur when a coach needlessly explains basic techniques to an experienced female athlete, or when male sports commentators dismiss technical analyses offered by their female colleagues during broadcasts or discussions.

A notable example occurred during the Rio 2016 Olympics, when NBC commentator Dan Hicks attributed swimmer Katinka Hosszú's victory to her coach and husband, rather than acknowledging her own skill and dedication.

# Types of Abuse

## Gender Discrimination

### *Objectification of the female body*

Objectification of the female body occurs when a woman's body is reduced to a mere object of sexual desire, ignoring her other qualities or skills. Such objectification is prevalent in media coverage of women's sports, where athletes' physical appearance often receives more attention than their sporting achievements. Women's sports uniforms may also be designed and discussed in ways that perpetuate this objectification. One striking example was when the newspaper "Hoy" published a group photograph of the Spanish women's volleyball team with the headline "Fresh Meat", prompting widespread criticism and accusations of sexism.

### *Harassment*

Harassment encompasses any unwanted behaviour that aims to, or results in, violating someone's dignity – particularly when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

In sport, sexual harassment can include unwanted sexual comments, physical advances or assault, potentially from coaches, teammates or support staff. A prominent example is the case of Larry Nassar, former USA Gymnastics team doctor, who was convicted of harassing numerous young female athletes under the pretence of medical treatment.

### *Rape Culture*

Rape culture describes an environment where sexual violence becomes normalised through prevalent attitudes and practices that trivialise, minimise or glorify sexual assault.

This culture becomes evident when male athletes are shielded from the consequences of sexually aggressive behaviour due to their status or perceived value to their sports team or organisation. The case of Brock Turner, the former Stanford swimmer convicted of sexual assault in 2016, illustrates this perfectly. The judge's initial lenient sentence, justified by citing Turner's athletic potential, was widely condemned as a classic example of rape culture.

## *Types of Abuse*

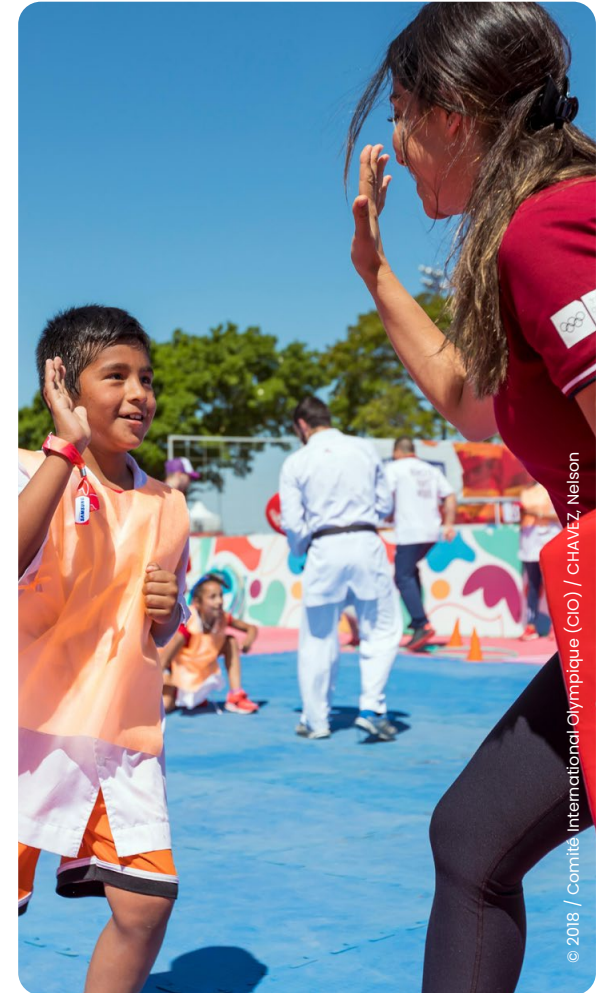
### **Safeguarding in Sport**

Safeguarding in sport encompasses organisational policies, activity monitoring, and codes of conduct designed to prevent harassment, gender-based violence, and all forms of discrimination.

More broadly, we must address child protection in sport, as many athletes are minors whose rights must be protected.

Child protection comprises principles, policies and practices designed to ensure the welfare, safety and appropriate development of children and young people involved in sporting activities.

This concept is founded on the premise that sport should provide a safe, positive environment where young people can enjoy physical, social and emotional benefits while being protected from abuse, neglect or exploitation.



© 2018 / Comité International Olympique (CIO) / CHAVEZ, Nelson

# Reflections

## Abuse in Sport

Historically – and indeed still today – there have been attempts to normalise certain abusive behaviours under the guise of sporting discipline. This has led many who experience abuse to feel they lack the right to report it.

It is therefore essential to build new awareness, through training and education at all levels (for children, parents and coaches), that anything making sport a negative experience must be challenged. Abuse and violence in sport remain serious and persistent problems, involving various figures within sporting establishments, including coaches and management. These harmful behaviours – encompassing physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse – can thrive in environments characterised by stark power imbalances and extreme competitive culture.

Coaches' positions as authority figures can deteriorate into abusive dynamics without proper oversight. They play a crucial role in athletes' careers and may contribute to an environment where silence and complicity prevail over reporting abuse. The pressure to excel, combined with fears of losing opportunities or sponsorships, can force athletes to endure unacceptable situations in silence.



## The Data

Source: Nielsen – ChangeTheGame

### Abuse of Minors in Sport

According to recent research conducted by Nielsen on a sample of about

**1,400** YOUNG PEOPLE BETWEEN  
THE AGES OF 18 AND 30



39% of respondents experienced some form of **abuse** within the **sporting environment** while still underage.



56% of those who report being **victims of acts of violence** did not ask for or receive help, with this percentage rising to **62%** for *girls*.

*The predominant feelings are shame and fear of not being believed.*



## The Data

### Abuse of Minors in Sport



of traumatic experiences involve forms of psychological violence. Specifically, respondents report:

"I have been *humiliated* or made to feel *inadequate*".

"I was *yelled at, insulted, threatened,* or verbally *abused*".

"I have been *ignored* or *excluded* and/or *not sufficiently praised*".

"I have been *criticised* for my physical appearance".

"I have been *reprimanded, humiliated* or *excluded* because of my performance".

**Source:** Nielsen – ChangeTheGame

## *The Stories*

### *The Larry Nassar Case*

The Larry Nassar case, which rocked US gymnastics, demonstrated how abuse can persist through the silence and shame imposed on victims.

Hundreds of young female athletes were abused by someone meant to protect them. Similarly, investigations into Australian swimming uncovered a lengthy history of physical and psychological abuse, revealing how sporting authorities had ignored or minimised certain behaviours.

The impact of abuse on athletes can be devastating and enduring, affecting their mental health, physical wellbeing and sporting careers. Anxiety, depression and eating disorders are common among abuse survivors and many athletes ultimately abandon their sport due to these negative experiences.

Tackling abuse and violence in sport demands profound cultural change and collective action. All stakeholders, from athletes to supporters, must collaborate to create a sporting environment that prioritises respect, integrity and safety, ensuring sport remains a source of health, joy and personal development.



## *The Stories* *Gracie Gold*

Gracie Gold was one of America's most promising figure skaters, winning medals at National Championships and securing team bronze at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. After those Olympic Games, she publicly disclosed her struggles with various mental health challenges – depression, anxiety and eating disorders – stemming from pressures within the sporting environment.

Gracie chose to take a break to address her challenges and focus on self-care. When she returned to competition, she shared her story, including through the documentary "Weight of Gold", to highlight the "pressure to be perfect" and raise awareness about the psychological difficulties many athletes face. Her message particularly emphasises the importance of speaking up: "There are Olympic events for so many sports, but there's no Olympic medal for who can suffer in silence the longest."

**Sources:** Gracie Gold – Wikipedia

Gracie Gold: Unleashing my "old" competitive me (olympics.com)

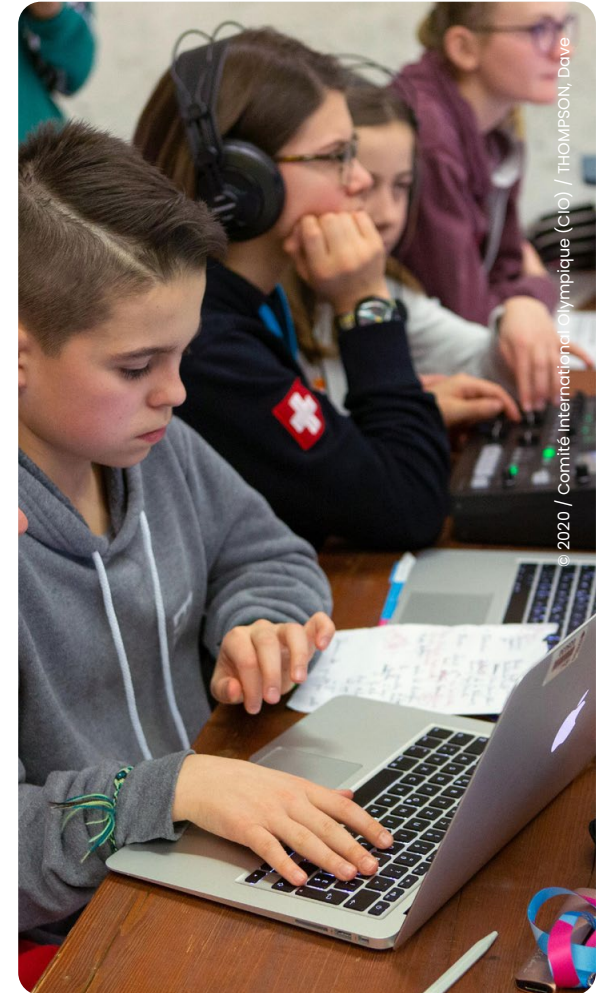


## Best Practices

### "Zero Tolerance" Policies

In response to numerous abuse cases that have emerged in recent years, sports organisations worldwide have intensified their efforts to create safe environments for all athletes. These efforts include implementing zero-tolerance policies, comprehensive training programmes, and support services to protect athletes from all forms of abuse. A zero-tolerance policy ensures that any abuse allegations are treated with utmost seriousness and receive immediate attention. This approach encompasses both strict penalties for perpetrators and a system where victims can safely report incidents. The International Olympic Committee has substantially strengthened its guidelines, requiring all affiliated bodies to adopt similar measures and adhere to strict standards of conduct.

Education for coaches, support staff and athletes about recognising and preventing abuse has become fundamental to modern sports policies. These educational programmes cover various topics, including abuse warning signs, safe intervention strategies, and maintaining a healthy, respectful sporting environment. Awareness campaigns target both sports insiders and the wider public, fostering a culture that refuses to tolerate abuse. Critical to these policies' success is victim support, including access to psychological counselling, legal assistance and other forms of help. Confidentiality and victims' rights are prioritised, ensuring people can come forward without fear of retaliation or stigma. These services help victims recover and continue their sporting careers in a safe environment.



## *Best Practices*

### **The Sports Decree**

The Sports Reform, introduced by Italian Legislative Decree 39/2021, aims to promote gender equality and protect minors, whilst combating all forms of violence based on gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and all forms of discrimination. The reform requires all sports clubs and associations, both professional and amateur, to implement organisational models and codes of conduct to protect minors and prevent harassment, gender-based violence and discrimination.

---

### *Everyone Can Do Something*

Maintain open communication with trusted adults to share experiences and concerns.

Show care and empathy towards peers, offering support to those showing signs of distress.

Report any potential abuse to a trusted adult, whether it affects you directly or concerns someone else.

Remember that you should never feel obliged to endure uncomfortable situations without speaking to someone about them.

**Source:** Official Gazette

## Best Practices

### Supporting Victims of Violence

When someone experiences gender-based violence, they need to receive appropriate and sensitive support.

**Listening:** take time to listen carefully – showing patience and willingness to understand is essential.

**Reassurance:** believe them unconditionally and make it clear that there is never any justification for violence – responsibility lies solely with the perpetrator.

**Understanding without judgment and avoiding unsolicited advice:** avoid judgmental questions or statements (like "why don't you leave?" or "why don't you change clubs?"). Don't offer unsolicited advice – let the person guide you to what they need and make their own decisions.

**Support and solidarity:** show that you're there for them. Abuse often leads to isolation, making your presence and support vital.

**Information and legal support:** help them understand it's not their fault. Provide contact details for counselling services and local anti-violence centres.

**Confidentiality and privacy:** assure them of complete confidentiality, especially if they're considering leaving or reporting – times when they may be particularly vulnerable.

### NATIONAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

1522

Anti-violence helpline:  
multilingual service,  
available 24/7 throughout Italy  
(toll-free)

112

Carabinieri

113

Police

118

Medical Emergency

## The Theme

### Gender Equality: A Goal for Everyone

Gender equality isn't just a women's issue – it's a societal goal that requires everyone's commitment. Patriarchal structures limit opportunities for all genders. Working towards gender equality means improving society for everyone.

Traditional patriarchal norms often impose rigid behavioural standards on men, restricting their emotional and social expression. The pressure to conform to traditional roles can cause stress and anxiety, preventing them from exploring a wider range of personal and professional possibilities.

Promoting gender equality means creating a world free from toxic masculinity. Breaking these patterns can lead to more fulfilling relationships, better sharing of family responsibilities, and improved quality of life.

In sport, men often face intense social pressure to be physically dominant and competitive. This can lead to discrimination against those who prefer sports considered less “masculine” or who aren't interested in high-level competition.

To promote gender equality, men can take action by educating themselves and others about its importance, challenging stereotypes and modifying everyday conversations to reflect respect and equity.

In daily life – at school, in sport or during recreational moments – men can support their female friends and colleagues by paying attention to group dynamics, ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities to express themselves and progress.





*Disability*



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# The Key Concepts

## The Definition of Disability

### UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The CRPD is an international treaty that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006 and came into force in 2008. Italy ratified the Convention through Law 18 on 3 March 2009.

The Convention's primary aim is to promote, protect and ensure that all persons with disabilities can fully enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others, whilst promoting respect for their inherent dignity. The CRPD's preamble acknowledges that disability is an evolving concept, arising from the interaction between people with impairments and behavioural and environmental barriers.

### Article 1 of the CRPD

Article 1 outlines the Convention's fundamental purpose: to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for persons with disabilities, whilst fostering respect for their inherent dignity.

*"Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."*

This emphasises that disability emerges from the interaction between environmental, spatial and relational barriers that prevent equal social participation.



## *The Key Concepts*

### **The Definition of Disability**

#### **Article 30 of the CRPD: Participation in Cultural Life, Recreation, Leisure and Sport**

Article 30 is vital in ensuring that people with disabilities can enjoy their leisure time as they choose, accessing cultural, recreational, leisure and sporting opportunities without discrimination, just as others do.

The States Parties (those states that have ratified the convention) must take appropriate measures to ensure accessibility to cultural materials, theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourist services. People with disabilities must be able to develop and use their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, both for their own benefit and for the enrichment of society. States must ensure access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities in accessible formats.

Furthermore, it is essential that people with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in specific sports and recreational activities, and that children with disabilities have equal access to play and sports activities within their school setting. States should promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in sports at all levels, ensure access to sports training services and facilities, and encourage their participation in mainstream sporting events.

These efforts are essential for creating an inclusive society where everyone can participate equally in cultural and sporting activities.



© Diego Ibarra Sanchez

## *The Key Concepts*

The Definition of What Disability is NOT

### Myths and Stereotypes About People with Disabilities That Need to Change

**1.**

THEY CANNOT LIVE  
INDEPENDENTLY

**2.**

THEY ARE HELPLESS

**3.**

THEY CANNOT LEARN

**4.**

THEY WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO  
TO WORK

**5.**

THEY MUST BE CARED FOR

**6.**

THEY CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS

**7.**

THEY CANNOT MARRY OR  
HAVE CHILDREN

**8.**

THEY REMAIN CHILDREN  
FOREVER

# The Key Concepts

## The Definition of Inclusion

**Inclusion** is a fundamental concept in building an equitable and just society.

It means creating an environment where all individuals, regardless of their abilities, can participate fully and equally in all societal activities.

It requires systemic changes that remove barriers and promote active participation for everyone.

To fully understand the meaning of Inclusion, it is also important to clarify the concepts of **Marginalisation** and **Integration**, both of which are social conditions that still occur too frequently in our society.

*Marginalisation* ▶ *Integration* ▶ *Inclusion*

### *Marginalisation*

The social exclusion of people with disabilities, who are isolated and denied opportunities to participate fully in community life.

### *Integration*

The inclusion of people with disabilities in existing settings without making meaningful changes, often leaving barriers in place.

### *Inclusion*

The removal of barriers and creation of environments that welcome and value diversity, ensuring equal opportunity and active participation for all.

# The Key Concepts

## Barriers to Inclusion

Barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities are numerous and fall into four main categories: physical/environmental, attitudinal, institutional and communicational. Each of these barriers contributes to limiting the full and equal participation of people with disabilities in society.

### 1. PHYSICAL/ ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS

These barriers include tangible obstacles in the environment that prevent or limit the mobility and accessibility of people with disabilities. For example, buildings without access ramps or lifts, pavements without wheelchair ramps, and inaccessible public transport are significant impediments. Even adverse weather conditions, such as snow or ice that has not been removed, can constitute physical barriers.

### 2. INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Negative attitudes and prejudices can prevent people with disabilities from being fully productive and successful. These barriers manifest through prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination. For example, assuming people with disabilities are less capable or independent, or believing they constantly need assistance, are attitudes that contribute to their social exclusion.



## The Key Concepts

### Barriers to Inclusion

#### 3. INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

These barriers refer to policies, practices and regulations that prevent people with disabilities from accessing services and opportunities equitably. In educational settings, this may include the lack of inclusive programmes or appropriate classroom support. In the workplace, institutional barriers can include reluctance to hire people with disabilities, to create suitable workplaces and opportunities, or the absence of inclusive hiring policies.

Complex bureaucratic procedures for obtaining benefits and lack of access to healthcare services also represent significant institutional barriers

#### 4. COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

Communication barriers concern the difficulties people with disabilities face in accessing and understanding information.

For example, the lack of information materials in accessible formats such as Braille, large print or audio, websites that are not accessible for people who are blind or have mobility impairments, and the absence of sign language interpreters or subtitles in media are all forms of communication barriers.



© Olympic Information Services OIS

## *The Theme*

### **Disability and Sports Inclusion**

Access to sports for people with disabilities is extremely important because:

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#### *It provides numerous benefits for physical and mental wellbeing*

Sports not only help maintain good physical health but also help improve mental wellbeing. Regular physical activity can reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and improve overall mood.

---

#### *It enables integration and counteracts the risk of social isolation*

Participating in sports activities provides opportunities for socialisation and building social networks. This is especially important for people with disabilities, who may face greater risks of social isolation.

---

#### *It boosts self-esteem, determination and resilience*

Through sports, people can develop greater self-confidence and learn to overcome their limitations. Sports challenges help develop a sense of self-determination and other qualities that can be transferred to other areas of life.

## The Data

### Disability and Sports Inclusion

According to the Istat “Aspects of Daily Life” Survey, in 2021 only **11%** of people with severe disabilities played sports, while the percentage rose to **23.4%** for those with mild disabilities and **40.8%** in people with no disabilities.

Among people with severe disabilities, **15.4%** of males and **7.9%** of females engaged in physical activity.

The south is the most disadvantaged area in Italy in this respect, with only **13%** of people with disabilities participating in sports, compared to the national average of **20%** and **26%** in the northeast.

**Sources:** Understanding Disability – Press Note (istat.it)  
Sport and Disability, the ISTAT study: “Improve perception of quality of life” – la Repubblica



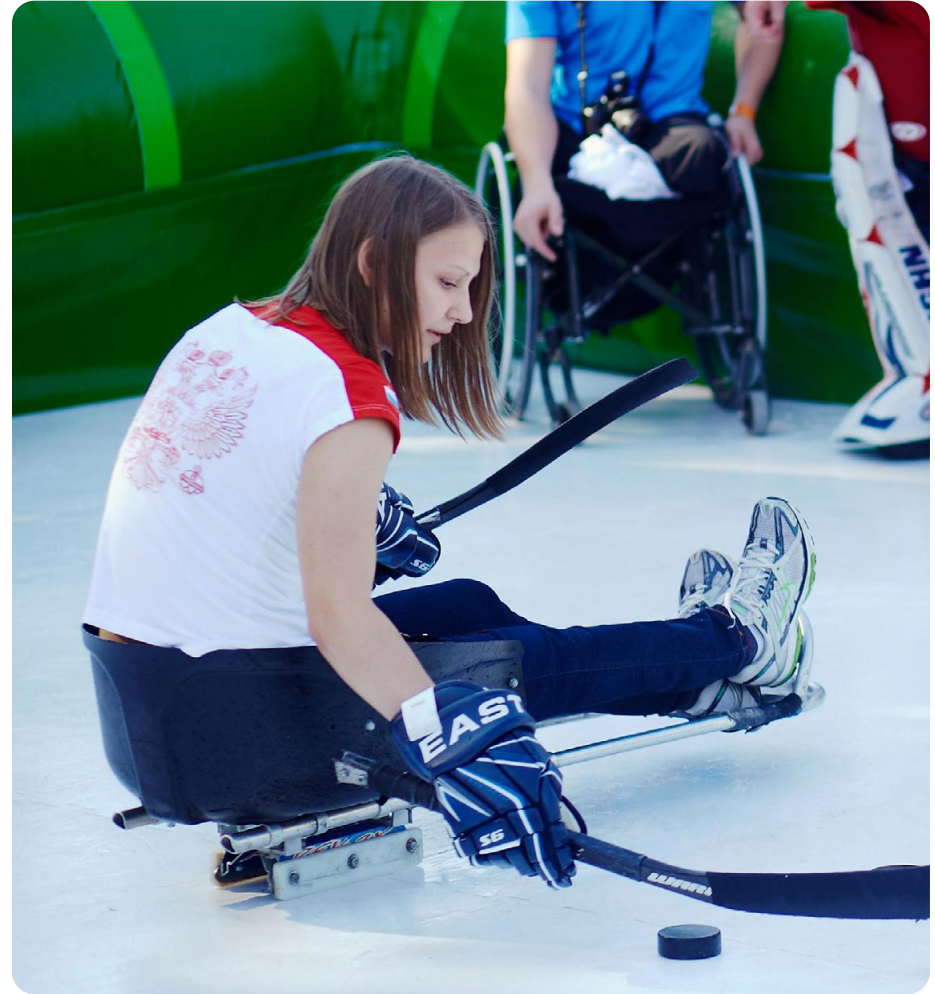
## *The Theme*

### **Women with Disabilities in Sports**

Women with disabilities stand at the intersection of two deeply entrenched systems of inequality: sexism and ableism. These athletes face even more discrimination that limits both their access to and enjoyment of sporting opportunities on one hand, and their personal fulfilment and recognition of their personal and athletic abilities on the other.

Sports facilities are often not designed to be inclusive, and this problem is amplified for women, whose sporting opportunities are historically limited compared to those of men.

Women with disabilities receive only a fraction of the media coverage given to their male counterparts. Moreover, the portrayal of their sporting performances and their representation often follows stereotypes, failing to do justice to their personal stories, skills and capabilities.



## *The Stories*

### *Martina Vozza*

Born on 3 April 2004, Martina is visually impaired, and at age five was taken by her parents to an association that introduces children with disabilities to skiing.

For her, sports were initially just fun but soon became both a passion and competitive pursuit.

In 2022, in Beijing, Martina was the youngest Italian Paralympic athlete.

At the ESPOT 2023 World Championships, she won the silver medal in the downhill and super-giant events.



## *The Case*

### **The Paris 2024 Paralympics**

The Paris 2024 Paralympic Games included **22 sports**, three of which were open to athletes with intellectual disabilities (athletics, swimming, and table tennis) and several others reserved for the visually impaired (judo, goalball, 5-a-side football, etc.).

Over the **11 days** of competition, **549 events** brought together **4,400 male and female athletes** from **184 delegations**.



## Best Practices

### Everyone Can Do Something

1. When interacting with people with disabilities, put the person, their character and way of life at the centre, just as you would with anyone else: get to know them, taking the time needed and setting aside any stereotypes.
2. Relate to people with disabilities by respecting their pace (which may differ from yours), and when faced with environmental, communication or informational barriers that may make their social participation challenging, don't be afraid to ask the key questions: "how can I help you? How can we overcome this barrier?"
3. Accessibility is the prerequisite to inclusion, equal treatment, equity and non-discrimination. Inconsiderate behaviour or disregard for others' needs can also create barriers that may hinder the lives of people with disabilities.



# Best Practices

## The Right Words

| AVOID                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Abnormal/subnormal: incorrect and inappropriate adjective when describing a person.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Blind.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Affected by, suffering from, victim of: these terms assume that a person with a disability has a reduced quality of life, is suffering or considers themselves a victim.                                                                                     |
| Forced into a wheelchair: describes the person only in relation to an instrument designed to enable freedom, not confine them.                                                                                                                               |
| Defect, birth defect, defective, deformed: avoid these terms when describing a person with disabilities as they imply that the person is somehow incomplete or below average compared to an anachronistic idea of completeness, norm, average or perfection. |
| Handicapped.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| USE                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Specify the disability (if necessary), always putting the person at the centre, e.g., person with visual impairment, person with intellectual disability, motor disability, etc. |
| Alternatively, blind person is acceptable.                                                                                                                                       |
| Specify the disability (if necessary), always putting the person at the centre, e.g., person with visual impairment, person with intellectual disability, motor disability, etc. |
| The person uses a wheelchair, the person moves around in a wheelchair.                                                                                                           |
| Specify the disability (if necessary), always putting the person at the centre, e.g., person with visual impairment, person with intellectual or motor disability, etc.          |
| Person with disabilities.                                                                                                                                                        |

## Best Practices

### The Right Words

#### AVOID

Normal: the term implies a reference to an anachronistic and outdated idea of "normality."

Midget.

Paraplegic/tetraplegic: avoid referring to an individual as a paraplegic or quadriplegic.

Deaf or deaf-mute: avoid these terms as they are often used inaccurately and may be offensive to some.

Spastic: it is disparaging to refer to someone as spastic.

Cripple: this word is disparaging and invokes a negative image of a distorted body.

#### USE

Person.

The scientific term is person with achondroplasia.

Person with paraplegia/tetraplegia.

Person with hearing impairment or person with deafness. A person with a hearing disability can be a deaf person or a hearing impaired person – the two terms are not synonymous.

Person with spasticity or coordination difficulties.

Person with physical disability, person with motor disability.



# Bullying



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Bullying

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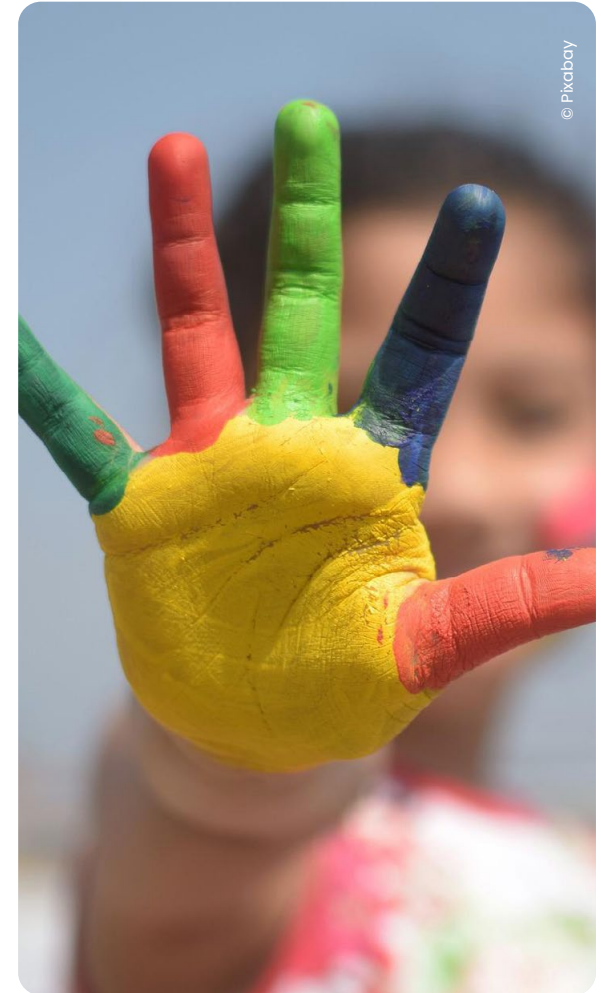
## *The Theme*

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

**Bullying** is a set of aggressive and domineering behaviours directed at those perceived as weaker. The term comes from the word "bully": someone who engages in acts of violence (verbal or physical) to assert their superiority with the aim of hurting, excluding, or denigrating another person.

**Cyberbullying** is when such aggressive and intimidating behaviour occurs online. The perpetrators are convinced they are more important, more attractive, stronger, and more dominant.

The victim feels helpless, weak, and afraid to talk about the abuse they are experiencing. Fearing revenge or further taunts from bullies, they do not ask for help, becoming withdrawn, introverted and tense. This affects their family life, relationships with friends, school and sports.



## The Theme

### Bullying and Cyberbullying

To understand exactly what **bullying** consists of and, more importantly, to be able to recognise it, we need to distinguish three ways in which it can manifest:

*Direct physical bullying:* when the bully hits (with kicks, punches, pushes, slaps, etc.) someone, or steals or damages others' belongings.

*Direct verbal bullying:* when the bully threatens, insults or blackmails someone.

*Indirect bullying:* when the bully carries out actions aimed at excluding and isolating a person, spreading false information about them; this is the most difficult type of bullying to understand and recognise, as it operates in an underhanded and silent manner.

**Cyberbullying** can take many forms, including:

*Body shaming:* messages intended to demean a person for their physical appearance.

*Cyberstalking:* harassing, persistent and intimidating messages that make the recipient fear for their safety.

*Denigration:* messages and sharing content intended to damage someone's image and/or relationships.

*Identity theft:* unlawful appropriation of someone's data and use of their accounts.

*Revenge porn:* unauthorised distribution of images and/or videos of a sexual nature concerning another person.

## The Data

### Bullying and Cyberbullying

The latest report produced by the **Indifesa Observatory in 2023** shows that:

**1/2** → Have experienced **BULLYING**

**7/10** → Report feeling unsafe when browsing **ONLINE**

What **concerns** teenagers **most**:

**60%** → **REVENGE PORN**



**35%** → **STALKING**



**40.6%** → **IDENTITY THEFT**



**32.4%** → Alienation from **"REAL LIFE"**

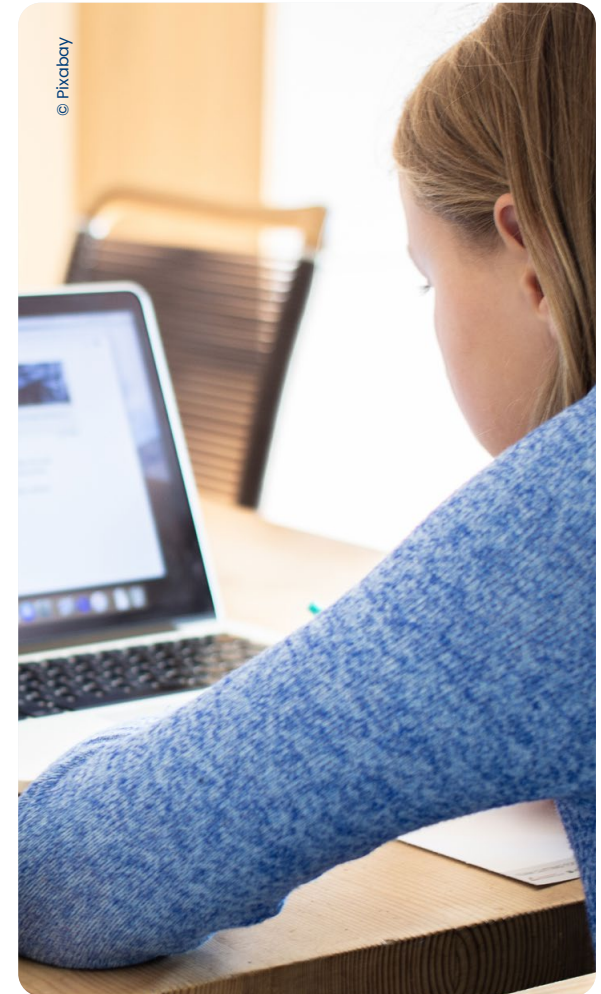


## *Reflections*

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

When discussing **bullying and cyberbullying**, there is a risk of focusing solely on the "victim" and the "perpetrator"; however, we must not forget the crucial role of the "bystanders". These are the people who can make the difference, taking action to stop the bullying, restrain the bully, and support the victim.

Otherwise, a silent and passive attitude can be interpreted as tacit consent to bullying, effectively enabling an escalation of violence.

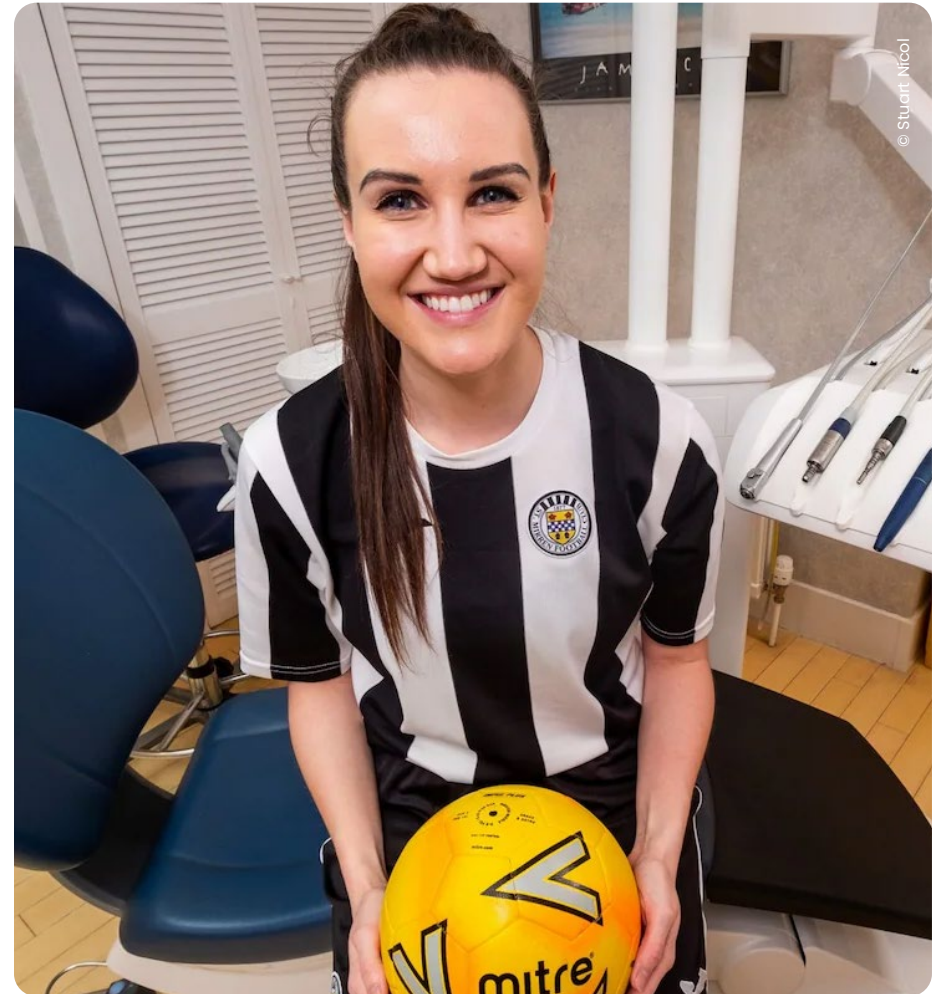


## *The Stories* *Jane O'Toole*

In 2020, the captain of St Mirren women's football team dislocated her kneecap during a match. Instead of rolling around in pain on the pitch, Jane O'Toole punched her leg until it went back into place, continuing to play. Such a reaction should command respect and admiration. Instead, sexist jokes and comments about her physical appearance such as "she should do the same to her chin" and "am I wrong or is she cross-eyed" circulated on Italian social media.

This incident exemplifies how cyberbullying and body shaming extend to the sporting environment.

**Source:** Body shaming toward female athletes: 1 in 4 comments is about physical appearance | iO Donna



## Best Practices

### Italian Law 71 of 2017

In 2017, a law came into effect that aims to combat **Cyberbullying** and protect young people. Guidelines for preventing and combating this phenomenon have also been published to develop knowledge and awareness related to the indicators, characteristics and ways of handling **Cyberbullying** situations.

**Further reading:** ORIENTATION LINES [miur.gov.it](http://miur.gov.it)

### Everyone Can Do Something

- Take action and promote *respect and inclusion*, while also paying close attention to behaviours and communications that occur online.
- Never think that a bullying or cyberbullying situation does not affect you just because it is not directed at you personally – remember that the role of the bystander is *crucial*.
- Try to maintain a *critical attitude* towards what you encounter online, be it news, information or people.
- Build friendships where you can support one another, developing *solidarity* and *empathy*.



Part 2

# *Active Citizenship*

## **Games and Challenges**



**Terre des hommes**  
Proteggiamo i bambini insieme

# *Introduction*

## **Active Citizenship**

**"Active Citizenship Challenges"** are educational activities to be carried out in secondary and high schools, made available to Fondazione Milano Cortina 2026's trainers.

The activities aim to encourage young people to reflect on relevant issues.





# Section 1

## Let's Break the Ice

The activities in this section are fundamental to starting a training session, either in the classroom or at a sports club.

These activities are designed to immediately engage the participating children and young people, developing their interest in the theme of active citizenship.

*Activity 1*  
**Breaking Down Barriers**

*Activity 2*  
**Imaginary Ball**



## Breaking Down Barriers

### Activity 1

#### Activity:

Icebreaker.

#### Target age:

Middle and secondary school.

#### Objective:

Identify and actively overcome gender stereotypes in sports through physical activity that symbolises breaking down barriers.

#### Recommended duration:

20 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- sheets of paper or cards to write examples of gender stereotypes;
- durable adhesive tape;
- a rope or ribbon to create a starting line;
- obstacles to place along the way; and
- mats or cushions for safe landing, if needed.

#### Instructions:

1. Write on each sheet of paper a prejudice or gender stereotype related to sports. For example: "women can't be strong", "men don't dance", etc.
2. Secure the sheets on exercise blocks or light objects that can be easily knocked over or moved.
3. Place these blocks around the room to create barriers, forming a kind of obstacle course.
4. Ensure you have a safe starting area and a safe area where participants can finish the activity.
5. Participants line up at the starting line and, one at a time, choose an obstacle/barrier they feel drawn to or feel they should face.
6. At the signal, the participant runs toward the obstacle, reflecting on how they intend to overcome it (e.g., jumping over, moving it or knocking it down in a symbolic way).
7. After overcoming the obstacle, the participant shares a brief reflection on how we might overcome that prejudice in real life, then sets aside the obstacle symbolising the action of breaking down the barrier.

## Imaginary Ball

### Activity 2

#### *Activity:*

Icebreaker.

#### *Target age:*

Middle and secondary school.

#### *Objective:*

Reflect on the importance of respect and active listening.

#### *Recommended duration:*

25 minutes.

#### *Materials needed:*

None required, played with an imaginary ball.

#### *Instructions:*

1. Organise the class into groups of five participants for an imaginary volleyball tournament.
2. Groups must simulate a game without using a real ball.
3. During the game, whenever a player wishes to "hit" the ball, they must clearly announce "mine". If no one says so, the other team earns a point; if two players speak at the same time, the point is awarded to the opponent.
4. You must make at least three passes before you can score a point.
5. The game continues until one of the teams reaches five points.
6. At the end of the tournament, lead a reflection on the dynamics of the game, emphasising the importance of mutual respect and listening.



## Section 2

### Exploring Olympic and Paralympic Values

This section is dedicated to exploring the core values of the Olympics and Paralympics. The proposed activities aim to develop understanding and experience of these values through practical activities and shared reflections

*Activity 3*  
Front Page Values

*Activity 4*  
Olympic and Paralympic Values Manifesto

## Front Page Values

### Activity 3

#### Activity:

Active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Secondary school.

#### Objective:

Exploring Olympic and Paralympic values.

#### Recommended duration:

50 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- copies of a sports newspaper for each group;
- posters or large sheets; and
- coloured markers.

#### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that each group will explore one of the Olympic and Paralympic values through analysis of sports newspaper coverage.
2. Assign each group one value and distribute the necessary materials.
3. Each group begins by searching for articles within the sports newspaper that discuss topics related to their assigned value, focusing on key words and significant examples.
4. After identifying the articles, the groups analyse and select relevant information to create their poster.
5. Groups create the poster using the materials provided, incorporating the articles, keywords and significant examples that represent their assigned Olympic or Paralympic value.
6. Once completed, the posters are displayed in the classroom and the groups prepare to present their work.
7. During the presentation, each group showcases their poster, highlighting the topics covered and explaining how their selected articles reflect their assigned Olympic or Paralympic value.

# Olympic and Paralympic Values Manifesto

## Activity 4

### Activity:

Section 2 active citizenship challenge.

### Target age:

Secondary school.

### Objective:

Exploring Olympic and Paralympic values.

### Recommended duration:

30 minutes.

### Materials needed:

- large paper or poster board;
- coloured markers;
- scissors and glue; and
- recycled magazines or materials for creative work.

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that each group will develop a poster to inspire their peers to embody Olympic and Paralympic values, both inside and outside of sports.
2. Groups discuss internally which values to focus on and how to convey them in a clear and engaging way.
3. Each group plans their poster, deciding which images, text and colours to use to convey their message in a way that appeals to and is suitable for an audience of young people. Groups begin to create the poster using the materials provided.
4. After completing the poster, groups present it to the rest of the class, explaining their creative choices and the meaning behind their message.



## Section 3

### Gender Equality

This section addresses the issue of gender equality in sports, with the aim of raising awareness of existing inequalities and promoting a more equitable and inclusive environment.

#### *Activity 5*

The Race of Privilege

#### *Activity 6*

Inequalities Between the Lines

#### *Activity 7*

Discover the Champion

#### *Activity 8*

Guidelines for Safe Sport: "Good Practice Handbook"

#### *Activity 9*

Gender Equality in Action

## The Race of Privilege

### Activity 5

#### Activity:

Section 3 and 4 active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Secondary school.

#### Objective:

Visually understand how different types of privilege affect opportunity. Reflect on social and personal disparities. Stimulate discussion on how these privileges or disadvantages affect people's daily lives.

#### Recommended duration:

30 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- card in various colours with specific instructions;
- a spacious area where participants can line up and move forward or backward; and
- a sheet of paper or a whiteboard to note down observations and reflections of the group.

#### Instructions:

1. Ask the participant(s) to line up at the starting line.
2. Randomly distribute the cards to the participants (three cards each).
3. Each participant carries out the directions on the card.
4. Give the go-ahead and start the race.
5. Invite participants to share their thoughts on the activity and how it relates to the reality of privilege in society.

# The Race of Privilege

## Privilege Race Cards

### Activity 5

#### 1. GENDER

- Pink: "you are a woman in a male-dominated field – take 2 steps back."
- Blue: "you are a man in a male-dominated field – take 2 steps forward."

#### 2. WEALTH CLASS

- Dark green: "you were born into a wealthy family – take 5 steps forward."
- Light green: "you were born into a poor family – walk like a crab."

#### 3. PHYSICAL ABILITIES

- Orange: "you have no physical disabilities – walk normally."
- Yellow: "you have a physical disability – hop on one leg."

#### 4. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- Purple: "you are heterosexual – take 2 steps forward."
- Red: "you are part of the LGBTQ+ community – take 2 steps back."

#### 5. INTELLECTUAL AND COGNITIVE ABILITY

- Cyan: "you have good mental health – walk normally."
- Magenta: "you face mental health challenges – hop sideways."

#### 6. CULTURAL BACKGROUND

- Brown: "you belong to an ethnic minority – take 2 steps back."
- Beige: "you belong to the ethnic majority in your country – take 2 steps forward."

#### 7. EDUCATION

- Gold: "you had access to high-quality education – take 3 steps forward."
- Silver: "you had limited access to education – before you start, count to 20."

## *Inequalities Between the Lines*

### **Activity 6**

#### ***Activity:***

Section 3 active citizenship challenge.

#### ***Target age:***

Middle and secondary school.

#### ***Objective:***

Reflect on the different media coverage that women's sports receive compared to men's sports.

#### ***Recommended duration:***

50 minutes.

#### ***Materials needed:***

- copies of several sports newspapers (one for each group);
- sheets of paper or notebooks for note-taking; and
- pens or pencils for writing.

#### ***Instructions:***

1. Distribute a sports newspaper to each group and explain that the objective of the activity is to analyse how male and female athletes are represented in the featured articles, with a focus on women's sports.
2. As they read the paper, group members take notes on how both male and female athletes are described, the words used, the images featured, and the general tone of the article.
3. After reading and analysing the newspaper, group members discuss their observations and notes together; you can propose guiding questions to facilitate the discussion.
4. Once the internal discussion is completed, the groups meet with the rest of the class to share their observations and conclusions.
5. Each group has the opportunity to present their analyses, highlighting differences in the treatment of male and female athletes, and discuss any disparities in the representation of women's sports.

## *Inequalities Between the Lines*

### Guidelines

To facilitate discussion within the groups, here are some *guiding questions*:

1.

What is the general tone of the article regarding the representation of men's and women's sports?

2.

Which sports receive the most coverage and which are marginalised or ignored?

3.

What images or descriptions are used to represent male and female athletes?

4.

Is emphasis placed on athletic performance or are personal aspects of the athletes also discussed?

5.

Are there obvious differences in how male and female athletes are treated? Think about language, space devoted or tone of the article.

## Discover the Champion

### Activity 7

#### Activity:

Section 3 active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Middle and secondary school.

#### Objective:

Promote awareness of inspiring female athletes from different parts of the world and with various backgrounds through dynamic and interactive play.

#### Recommended duration:

30 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- cards with names and clues about female athletes (without directly revealing who they are);
- timer or stopwatch; and
- a large space where participants can move freely.

#### Athletes to be included may be:

- an American Paralympic sprinter known for her incredible speed;
- a Japanese tennis player noted for her powerful shot returns and for being a voice for social change;
- an Italian Paralympic fencer who has won numerous medals in major international competitions; or
- an Indian boxer who broke cultural taboos to become one of the best in her sport.

#### Instructions:

1. Prepare cards with clues about various female athletes, without revealing their names. Clues may include descriptions of their achievements, personal challenges and details that don't immediately identify the person.
2. Divide the class into teams of four or five students.
3. Each team receives a set of cards with clues.
4. In turn, each team chooses a card and has a limited time (e.g., two minutes) to discuss and guess which athlete it is.
5. If the team guesses correctly, they earn one point. If they don't guess, the correct answer is revealed and no points are awarded.
6. The game continues until all cards have been used.

## Guidelines for Safe Sport: "Good Practice Handbook"

### Activity 8

#### Activity:

Section 3 active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Secondary school.

#### Objective:

Reflect on the issue of abuse in sport, share their own experiences and empathise with those of their peers.

#### Recommended duration:

50 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- sheets of paper or sticky notes;
- pens or coloured pencils; and
- space for writing or displaying papers (whiteboard, poster board).

#### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that the goal is to create a rulebook of best practices for preventing abuse in sports, based on personal experiences and observations.
2. Divide the class into groups and distribute the necessary materials.
3. Each group begins by discussing and sharing personal experiences or observations about practices in sports that promote or reduce the risk of abuse.
4. Next, the groups brainstorm and write their points for the rulebook on the sheets of paper, taking into account the guidance provided.
5. After writing the points, the groups organise and discuss the order of the points and draft the final version of the rulebook.
6. Each group presents their rulebook to the class, explaining the reasoning behind each point and sharing the discussions they had during the creation process.
7. At the end of the presentations, a general class discussion opens to compare the various rulebooks and reflect on the importance of good practices in sports to prevent abuse.

## Gender Equality in Action

### Activity 9

#### *Activity:*

Section 3 active citizenship challenge.

#### *Target age:*

Middle and secondary school.

#### *Objective:*

Facilitate dialogue and reflection on inequalities related to gender.

#### *Recommended duration:*

30 minutes.

#### *Materials needed:*

- free classroom or large space;
- "I agree" and "I disagree" signs; and
- prepared statements to create debate.

#### *Instructions:*

1. Prepare a clear space in the classroom by placing "I agree" and "I disagree" signs at opposite ends of the room.
2. Explain to participants that you will organise an interactive debate on sports and gender equality, using the provided statements.
3. Read one statement at a time and ask students to move toward the sign corresponding to their opinion. They can also remain in the centre if they are neutral.
4. After each statement, allow participants to discuss briefly with each other and try to convince those on the other side: what solutions do they propose?
5. At the end of the discussion time, make a brief summary of the arguments that emerged.

# Gender Equality in Action

## Guidelines

## Activity 9

Statements to *read to the class* for debate:

1.

It is only fair that male athletes receive higher salaries than their female counterparts, since men's sporting events generate more revenue.

2.

Gender equality in sport is a goal to be pursued by public institutions and major sports committees, we cannot make any difference.

3.

Women's participation in contact sports, such as rugby or boxing, should be limited to preserve their health and physical integrity.

4.

Mixed training sessions cannot be arranged because biological differences between men and women significantly affect athletic performance.

5.

Gender equality is a utopian and unattainable goal.

6.

We should start adopting gender-inclusive language in every context, both in sports and life.



## Section 4

### Disability and Inclusion

This section aims to raise awareness about disability and the importance of inclusion in sports and society.

#### *Activity 10*

Overcoming Barriers

#### *Activity 11*

The Parliament of Inclusion

## Overcoming barriers

### Activity 10

#### Activity:

Section 4 active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Middle and secondary school.

#### Objective:

Introduce the concept of "normality" and how it varies among people, and to make participants aware of the importance of inclusiveness.

#### Recommended duration:

30 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- sticky notes;
- markers;
- whiteboard or wall to attach sticky notes; and
- sheets of paper.

#### Instructions:

1. Ask participants to reflect individually for two or three minutes on what "normality" means to them.
2. Each participant writes on a sticky note a sentence or word that describes what is normal for them.
3. Collect sticky notes on a whiteboard or wall and discuss them for five minutes, highlighting different perceptions of normality.
4. Briefly explain the concept of inclusiveness and barriers to access.
5. Ask participants to describe a situation in which they felt excluded on a piece of paper.
6. Gather the pieces of paper together and draw out five stories to read. For each story, identify what the exclusion barrier was and how it could be overcome.
7. Lead a short group discussion focused on how we can move beyond the concept of normality to promote inclusion.
8. Ask participants to reflect on how they can act as facilitators in their daily lives and sports activities.

## The Parliament of Inclusion

### Activity 11

#### Activity:

Section 4 active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Secondary school.

#### Objective:

Promote discussion and awareness of disability and gender in sports by involving participants in the creation of a rulebook of concrete proposals.

#### Recommended duration:

50 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- sheets of paper; and
- pens.

#### Instructions:

Participants will imagine that they are members of a small parliament with the goal of writing a rulebook of proposals to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities and counter the gender gap in sports.

The activity is divided into five stages:

1. Group formation for internal discussion: divide participants into small groups of four or five people.
2. Each group will be given a specific theme to work on and present to the others, covering rules for federations and sports clubs, initiatives for schools and organisations, and individual actions that each athlete can take.
3. The groups note their ideas on how to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities and reduce the gender gap in sports for presentation to other groups in the parliament.
4. After each presentation, Parliament discusses the proposals, providing feedback and suggestions for improvements.
5. Creation of the Final Rulebook: selection of proposals – Parliament votes on the proposals it deems most effective and important.

# The Parliament of Inclusion

## Guidelines

Groups can structure their proposals using some *guiding questions*, such as:

- \_\_\_\_\_ What rules could be introduced by sports federations to promote inclusion?
- \_\_\_\_\_ What activities or programmes could schools organise to raise students' awareness of these issues?
- \_\_\_\_\_ What actions can individual athletes take to support equality and inclusion?

Sample *final rulebook*:

1.

### Rules for Federations and Sports Clubs:

- Promote specific training programmes for coaches and officials on the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Ensure equal opportunities for athletes with and without disabilities to access and participate in sports competitions.
- Introduce incentives for sports clubs that achieve inclusion and gender equality goals.

2.

### Initiatives for Schools and Organisations:

- Organise awareness days and workshops on disability and the gender gap in sports.
- Implement inclusive sports programmes that include the active participation of students with disabilities.
- Collaborate with local associations to promote inclusive and equal sports events.

3.

### Individual Actions for Athletes:

- Each athlete commits to supporting and promoting inclusion and equality through positive behaviours and concrete actions.
- Participate in awareness and education campaigns on disability and the gender gap in sports.
- Become role models for other athletes, promoting the importance of inclusion and gender equality.



# Section 5

## Bullying and Cyberbullying

This section focuses on understanding and preventing bullying and cyberbullying, providing tools and strategies to address and counter these problems.

### Activity 12

Let's Talk About Bullying!

## Let's talk about bullying!

### Activity 12

#### Activity:

Section 5 active citizenship challenge.

#### Target age:

Middle and secondary school.

#### Objective:

Promote greater awareness about bullying among young people by exploring emotions, boundary signals between play and bullying, and possible actions to contain the risks.

#### Recommended duration:

30 minutes.

#### Materials needed:

- sheets; and
- pens.

#### Instructions:

1. Divide the participants into subgroups of 4-5 people each.
2. Each subgroup explores one of the following themes:  
*Theme 1:* emotions in a bullying situation;  
*Theme 2:* boundary signs between playing/joking and bullying.  
*Theme 3:* actions to contain bullying risks.
3. Each subgroup develops a list of concrete actions and shares it with the rest of the group.

# Let's talk about bullying!

## Activity 12

### Guidelines

Guidelines for *reflection*:

#### 1. Emotions in a bullying situation

##### Discussion

Participants will discuss the emotions that arise in a bullying situation, considering the different roles involved.

- **Bully:** why do they act this way? What emotions might they experience (anger, insecurity, need for power)?
- **Victim:** what are the predominant emotions (fear, sadness, loneliness, helplessness)?
- **Bystanders:** how do those who witness bullying feel (anxiety, guilt, indifference)?

##### Sharing

Each subgroup shares its reflections with the rest of the group.

#### 2. Boundary signals between game and bullying

##### Discussion

Participants will identify the signs that distinguish a harmless game or prank from bullying. Some points to consider.

- **Intention:** is the game fun for everyone or does someone feel targeted?
- **Repetition:** is it an isolated episode or does it occur frequently?
- **Reaction:** does the targeted person laugh and participate, or do they appear uncomfortable and upset?

##### Sharing

Each subgroup presents the identified signals and discusses how to recognise them.

#### 3. Actions to contain bullying risks

##### Discussion

Participants explore actions each person involved can take to curb bullying risks.

- **Bully:** how can they reflect on their behaviour and seek help to change?
- **Victim:** who can they turn to for support? How can they communicate their discomfort?
- **Bystanders:** what actions can they take to support the victim and stop the bully (intervene, talk to adults, etc.)?

##### Sharing

Each subgroup shares the strategies discussed to address and prevent bullying, highlighting the importance of mutual support.



## Contact Details

You can contact the Education team at the following email address: **[edu@milanocortina2026.org](mailto:edu@milanocortina2026.org)**



To request an accessible version of this document, send an email to Milano Cortina 2026 Editorial Services:

**[editorialservices@milanocortina2026.org](mailto:editorialservices@milanocortina2026.org)**

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