



# TEENS IN SPORTS WELLNESS CLINIC

## REPORT

**SUPPORTED BY**





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Teens in Sports Wellness Project was organized by Re-Imagining New Communities in partnership with The True Athlete Project as part of an output of the 2025 Peace Practice Alliance Program by the Euphrates Institute. The project was implemented at Beacon of Hope, bringing together 24 children for a one-day holistic wellness and sports mentorship experience.

The initiative sought to strengthen young people's mental wellness, emotional regulation, and resilience through sports-based learning, psychosocial education, and mentorship, while fostering safe spaces for expression, participation, and growth.

By the end of the program, participants demonstrated increased self-awareness, emotional confidence, teamwork, and motivation. Facilitators gained valuable insights into common stressors affecting children, informing future psychosocial and sports-based interventions. Overall, the program successfully reinforced sports as a powerful platform for mental wellness, inclusion, and youth empowerment, leaving children better equipped to grow both as athletes and as emotionally resilient individuals.



# Introduction

The introductory activity “The Story of my Name” fostered pride in identity and created an immediately warm and inclusive atmosphere.

Grace was introduced as the Safeguarding Officer, reinforcing the program’s commitment to child protection and emotional safety.

Together, they agreed on shared group values:

Time  
management

Respect

Safe space

Active  
participation

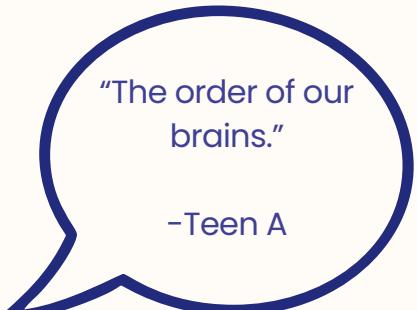
No wrong  
answers

Teamwork

Sharing from  
lived-  
experience

# Mental Health

The mental health session, facilitated by Mr. Albert, a certified psychologist, began with an engaging discussion on how sports make participants feel. Children expressed emotions such as "jumpy," "excited," "happy," "great," "good," and "free."



"The order of our brains."

-Teen A

Reverend Steve joined the session, encouraging participants to view the day as "a time for learning and relearning."

Albert led a foundational discussion on mental health, explaining the distinction between feelings (internal experiences) and emotions (external expressions), using emojis to make the concepts relatable and accessible.



# 1. Understanding stress

When asked “What is stress?” children described it as tension, fear, anxiety, pressure, discomfort, and having too much work. They also recognized that stress can sometimes be helpful.

During a sticky-note reflection activity, participants identified personal stressors, including:

**Bullying and unjust punishment**

**Family conflict**

**Public speaking**

**Exams and poor grades**

**Long days and tight schedules**

**Lack of food**

**Injuries and sickness**

**Losing sports competitions**

# Reflections



"The time I am happy is when playing football because I am excited. The time I am sad is when I am sick because I worry and feel pain."

Teen B



"I am happy when playing, and the time I was sad is when I got punished for something I did not do. I felt everyone was unfair to me."

-Teen E

"The time I was happy was when I passed the exam. It made me feel excited and proud. The time I was sad was when I was abused, I felt discriminated against, and I isolated myself."

-Teen D



## 2. Emotional Regulation

In emotional regulation, Albert emphasized the importance of recognizing emotions and understanding the consequences of unregulated reactions.

In the “Wall of Strength” activity, children identified coping mechanisms they use during stress, including”



The group explored positive, negative, and neutral coping strategies, noting that behaviors like eating or sleeping can be helpful when balanced but harmful if overused. Negative coping mechanisms identified included gambling, drug use, bullying, and excessive nightlife.

Albert reinforced the concept of resilience – the ability to bounce back from adversity through personal strengths and support systems.

# Key Insights from the children from the Session:

Seeking support is not weakness.



Building mental strength is a continuous process and reflects self-awareness and self-respect.



Emotional regulation is essential because actions have consequences.





# Outdoor Activity

Under the guidance of Coach Ishmael, children engaged in outdoor activities including:

- Football
- Volleyball
- Tug-of-war

Participants were later divided into small groups to reflect on assigned topics. Core messages reinforced during these activities included:

“Managing the mind is as important as managing the body.”

“It’s okay to feel, but we choose how we act.”

The sessions highlighted that peak sports performance depends equally on physical fitness and mental wellness, including focus, discipline, resilience, and emotional balance.





# MENTORSHIP SESSIONS



## Asset-Based Community Development

During the mentorship session with Sahlim Charles, the children were introduced to the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) model as a practical tool for understanding and strengthening their sporting journeys. Through guided discussions and participatory mapping, the children collaboratively drew maps of their communities, identifying existing assets. Rather than focusing on what their communities lacked, the session encouraged the children to recognize and value the resources already available to them.

As a result, the children became more aware of their surroundings and gained a renewed sense of confidence in their ability to grow as athletes using local opportunities. The exercise shifted their mindset from one of limitation to one of possibility, equipping them to view their communities from an advantage-based

perspective and empowering them to take initiative in utilizing community assets to enrich their sports capacity and personal development.





## Self-awareness

The teenagers were also introduced to the concept of self-awareness as a foundational life and sports skill. The children described self-awareness as being conscious of who they are, how they feel, and what is happening in their environment.



Through guided reflection and discussion, the facilitator emphasized that self-awareness supports positive relationships by helping individuals understand their emotions, recognize how their actions affect others, and respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. The session enabled participants to make clear connections between self-awareness, emotional management, teamwork, and respectful communication - skills that are essential both in sports settings and in everyday life.

## Disability Inclusion in Sports

Ms. Dorothy, a visually impaired sportswoman, delivered an inspiring mentorship session, sharing how sports shaped her life before and after losing her vision. She emphasized sports as tools for career growth, physical wellness, confidence, and empowerment.

Children were introduced to Goalball, a sport designed for visually impaired athletes, and explored the specialized equipment used in the sport.



## Sports and Wellness

Ms. Claudia led a stress management session that was lively and insightful. Through a fun “do something funny” activity, children examined how energy flows within a team and learned that mental wellness means maintaining balance and confidence even during adversity.

She highlighted the mental benefits of sports, including:

- Reduced stress
- Improved focus
- Enhanced teamwork
- Increased confidence through endorphin release

Claudia introduced intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and shared stress-management strategies such as taking breaks, seeking therapy, and developing emotional awareness. The session concluded with a 4-2-6 breathing exercise and a symbolic release of stress through a safe burning activity.





# Key insights included:

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Do not let identity depend solely on sports

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Take breaks to avoid burnout

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Manage stress intentionally - therapy, breathing, and emotional awareness.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”





# Outcomes and Achievements



Strengthened teamwork, creativity, and emotional openness.



Strengthened social bonds through sports and mentorship.



Improved children's understanding of mental health, stress, and emotional regulation.



Identified shared stressors to inform future support.



Provided inclusive role models, fostering resilience and hope.



# Key Learnings



Safe spaces enable genuine emotional expression among children.



Sports are an effective tool for mental health education.



Mentorship from persons with disabilities promotes inclusion and resilience.



Storytelling and lived experiences deeply resonate with children.



# CONCLUSION

The Teens in Sports Wellness Project successfully created a supportive, engaging, and transformative environment where children developed skills in emotional regulation, teamwork, stress management, and resilience.

By combining sports, psychosocial learning, mentorship, and play, the program ensured that every child felt valued, empowered, and motivated to continue growing – both in their sporting journeys and personal well-being.





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