

**“PROGRAM FOR THE PREVENTION OF ADDICTIONS  
THROUGH SPORTS”**

## **Introduction**

It is difficult today to conceive of a society free of addictions, unless profound changes occur in the social environment.

According to studies conducted worldwide, the first contact with addictive substances, whether they be legal (alcohol and tobacco) or illegal (marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, paste ["paco"], ecstasy, etc.), occurs at an increasingly younger age.

Young people cannot find their place in today's society and addictions frequently occur as a tangible manifestation of material or spiritual privation. This is exacerbated when society as a whole is convulsed with recurring crises, while many of its members remain excluded from any possibility of belonging to a collective project that gives meaning to their efforts and to their lives.

Prevention must be approached through programs geared toward the use of free time, with a view toward the specific circumstances of addictions, taking into account the social demand and the need of each child or young person. It is necessary to listen closely to what young people are saying and to develop organized responses to avoid unproductive leisure time, which is the worst scenario in terms of quality of life.

## **Practicing Sports as a Protection Factor: "Sports as a School of Life"**

Approaching sports as a protection factor is a valuable tool; it is low cost from the budgetary standpoint and produces very high yields socially.

The central premise of our project is that, through sports, young people can establish their own identity and direct their energy toward propelling their own project forward.

Based on our experience, we believe it is necessary to work based on what is possible. Responses must be tied to the everyday reality and concrete needs, and aim to channel energy positively by means of proposals for personal betterment and to improve the immediate environment. This means galvanizing the participation of neighborhood organizations and approaching as an effective therapeutic outlet that also encourages integration.

We make a distinction between highly competitive sports, where athletes are under strong pressure due to the level of professionalism involved, and amateur sports where young people come together to have a good time. Playing sports improves self esteem and teaches discipline, establishes boundaries, and fosters motivation.

Playing sports is a protection factor with regard to drug use, as it occupies free time and promotes healthy recreation.

## **Project characteristics**

The program's targets population consists of approximately 3,000 children and adolescents between 6 and 18 years of age, within a defined programmatic area (González Catán, Virrey del Pino, Pontevedra), whose basic needs are not met and who are high risk from the health and social standpoints.

The work is organized around three core areas:

The **social-health** component includes:

- A social-medical evaluation recorded in a medical history.
- Establishment of integrated social networks involving schools, area NGOs, the church, and government entities (health, social development, education).
- Monitoring of the children's and youth's family group in order to provide assistance to families experiencing adverse situations of various sorts that jeopardize the participants' attendance and ability to remain with the Sports: School of Life program.
- Referrals to specific direct social services such as food supplementation, clothing and shoes, provision of medications, and medical attention.
- Nutritional supplement, either breakfast or lunch, depending on the participant's program shift.

The **preventive component** includes:

- Training the team of professions, physical education teachers and field assistants in early detection, risk situations, and addiction prevention.
- Conducting prevention workshops with parents, teachers, and neighborhood organizations.

The **sports component** includes:

- Introduction to sports school in six disciplines: soccer, handball, volleyball, track and field, basketball, and swimming.
- Children and youth attend twice a week for three hours, depending on their school shift. Each day they rotate through three disciplines.

### **Program Objectives and Characteristics**

- The main program objective is to bring about positive lifestyle changes, in the understanding that playing sports is a protection factor for children and youth in the community in that it promotes healthy recreation and use of free time.
- The program aims to provide opportunities and alternatives not available to children and youth in the target area.
- Another aim is to provide for the establishment of integrated social networks. This initiative involves schools, local NGOs, the church, and official entities (CPA, education, and the sports secretariat of La Matanza municipality, among others).
- The project operates on the premise that sports serve as a protection factor in general and against the consumption of toxic substances in particular. This is truer still where multiple risk factors are present. Playing sports occupies free time through healthy activities.
- The program views sports as:
  - § an effective tool for high impact social change
  - § positive for identity-development among participants
  - § a way to reduce exposure to risk factors

§ a way to encourage the incorporation of clear values and rules of the game, including:

- respect for clean playing
- adherence to schedules
- care of the body
- personal hygiene
- respect for teachers, referees, and peers
- care of equipment and the sports center  
[Polideportivo]

- Playing amateur sports encourages children and youth to join together to have fun. It is an activity that improves self esteem, increases discipline, establishes boundaries, and improves overall attitudes toward life.
- Sports are regarded as a low-cost strategy for change that yields high personal and social benefits.
- The main premise is that playing sports contributes to strengthening identity among young people.
- Playing sports is believed to have the potential to partially neutralize the attractions of a postmodern culture marked by individualism and consumption.
- In addition to identifying and reducing risk factors, prevention efforts build on the strengths of each community, neighborhood, family, group, and individual to address risk situations and to generate or foster protection factors.
- Protection factors are defined as characteristics, events, or situations relating to the individual or to his or her sociocultural environment that empower the subject or community to face adversity or to reduce the possibility of developing a particular psychosocial symptom such as, for example, drug use, when risk factors are present.

## **Impact Measurements after 12 Months of Program Implementation**

Activities were conducted with:

- schools
- other community organizations
- physical education teachers
- parents of the participants
- participating children and youth.

Cross-referencing of the information obtained elicited the following:

- § Total number and percentage of school children
- § Number and percentage of children in a regular school program
- § Number and percentage of grade repetitions
- § Level of age discrepancy relative to grade
- § Number and percentage of parents working, and type of employment
- § Schooling level of parents
- § Use of free time by children: extracurricular activities, use of mass media, types of TV programs viewed, Internet games used, etc.
- § Averages and deviations in weight and height for the population
- § Averages and deviations in weight and height percentiles for the population
- § Means and deviations for motor and coordination skills

Motivational groups were also conducted for participating youth.

In addition, certain participants were selected for monitoring during the activity year and observations were recorded on individual forms filled out by physical education teachers.

An instrument was designed for field observations, which were conducted on different occasions and with various age groups during program implementation.

Absences and drop-outs were monitored. In the latter case, a survey was designed and applied to a representative sample of cases, with the goal of examining the causes behind the suspension of the activity.

Physical education teachers and interns conducted a socio-emotional evaluation of all the youth.

The anthropometric evaluation was undertaken twice during the program.

### **Data analysis from the clinical histories and social survey**

- A database was analyzed comprising 2519 clinical histories, 1139 girls and 1380 boys
- Of the registered database, 92% were attending school, while 8% were not in school

- Of this total, 79% attended school regularly and 21% attended irregularly
- A total of 58% of students were overage by one year, 20% by two years, 6% by three years and 2% by four or more years.
- In terms of age distribution, more than 75% of the total children and youth were between the ages of 7 and 14, 20% were distributed among the ages of 6, 15 and 16, and the remaining 5% were 17, 18, or older.
- 91% of the participating youth were not involved in extracurricular activities, and the remaining 9% were involved in such activities.
- 2% of the youth were engaged in some type of remunerated employment.
- 21% of the youth spent their free time on line, 10% went to the central square [*la plaza*], 15% went out with friends, 6% hung out on the corner, and the remaining 44% watched television.
- The youth's favorite electronic games on-line were GTA<sup>1</sup>, Counter Strike,<sup>2</sup> and Age of Empires<sup>3</sup>.
- In response to the question on the activity of the head of household, 64% said housewife. The remaining responses were distributed among employee, self employed, engaged in odd jobs ["changas"], and unemployed.

#### **Analysis of height and weight data**

- A comparative analysis of height and weight data broken down by participant age and gender using the charts from the Argentine Pediatrics Society does not show significant deviations from the mean.

#### **Analysis of the social-emotional survey**

The data was gathered during the month of November (final stage of the program), from participants who began the activity in April/May.

---

<sup>1</sup> GTA (Grand Theft Auto) is a game involving chases with auto thefts and races (Ubbi web line)

<sup>2</sup> Counter-Strike is a game in which the players divide themselves into terrorists and counter terrorists. The missions involve planting bombs, kidnapping, and murdering, using all allowed weapons. Each group has an arsenal of real weapons available to it (Ciudad Internet web line).

<sup>3</sup> This is a history of New World Adventures between 1500 and 1850, in the midst of the conflict between eight nations battling for control of the continent.

Social-emotional Survey			
		Yes	No
<b>Relationship with the teacher</b>			
	Independent	77.,9%	22.1%
	Cooperative	91.2%	8.8%
<b>Peer relationship</b>			
	Cooperates with peers	90.8%	9.2%
	Participates in group activities	93.2%	6.8%
	Isolates self	11.2%	88.8%
<b>Self control</b>			
	Receptive to proposals from peers	94.6%	5.4%
	Controls anger when there is a difference of opinion	90.5%	9.5%
	Accepts and enjoys success	94.9%	5.1%
	Accepts failure	80.3%	19.7%
	Does not accept failure	14.6%	85.4%
<b>Attitude toward the activity</b>			
	Is able to recognize his or her mistakes	92.5%	7.5%
	Is able to question	29.8%	70.2%
	Is indifferent	11.9%	88.1%
	Works independently	83.4%	16.6%
	Interprets and follows instructions	91.2%	8.8%
	Has leadership qualities	31.2%	68.8%

<b><i>Responsibility and autonomy</i></b>			
	<b>Assumes responsibility for the task</b>	90.2%	9.8%
	<b>Accepts the rules of the games</b>	90.8%	9.2%
	<b>Practices good hygiene</b>	88.8%	11.2%
	<b>Is organized</b>	76.6%	23.4%
	<b>Is disorganized</b>	31.2%	68.8%



## **Field observations**

### **Synthesis of observations of the groups**

During the project, 18 observation sessions were conducted, and the descriptive findings are included at the end of this document.

The observations were carried out during various activities undertaken by the young people. The sports-related activities included:

- Track and field
- Handball
- Basketball
- Swimming
- Soccer

Observations also were conducted at different times during the sessions:

- At the end of one activity and transition to another (for example, athletic conditioning to swimming)
- snack
- dressing
- departure of the morning group of children

The parameters applied during the observations were:

### **Relationship with the teachers**

- The relationships with the teachers were very good overall
- A logical adaptation process took place, in which the teachers inspired growing interest through the activities they taught. This was clearly visible in the behavior of the young people.
- Behavioral problems were overcome gradually through constant care and attention by the teachers and the rest of the program's professional staff.

At the outset of the program, the relationship with the teachers was characterized by:

- Distrust
- Shyness
- Dependency
- 

During the year-long process, the relationship changed to one that was:

- Respectful
- Attentive to the instructions transmitted by the type of approach
- Increasingly autonomous
- More attention devoted to learning the activity

Towards the end of the program, it was characterized by:

- A high level of autonomy
- Trust
- Considerable affection

## **Relationships among the young people**

The relationships among the young people gradually evolved into friendships as they came to accept each other and bond. Conflicts diminished and they learned to respect each other's uniqueness.

The process was as follows:

At the outset of the program, the relationship among the participants was characterized by:

- Indifference

As the activity progressed throughout the year, the relationship became one of:

- Stronger ties among peers

Towards the end of the program, the relationship was characterized by:

- Group cooperation

## **Relationship to the task**

The relationship to the task changed remarkably. The participants gradually acquired new competencies and motor skills, in addition to learning how to play as a team. They became increasingly interested in all sports-related activities; they seemed happy, engaged, and attentive to instructions.

The process evolved as follows:

At the outset of the activity, the relationship to the task was characterized by:

- Insecurity
- Shyness
- Psychomotor difficulties
- Physical coordination problems
- Difficulty following instructions

As the activity evolved, there were gradual improvements in:

- Motor skills
- The ability to follow instructions

At the end of the activity, the participants were:

- Independent
- Demonstrated improved physical control
- More confident, as seen in the respect for the organization of each activity.

## **General comments**

- Group integration gradually increased to highly satisfactory levels
- The overall level of conflict was very low
- The mood of the young people improved noticeably: it was clear that they were very happy and enjoying the activity
- A high level of ownership, communication, cooperation, and learning was achieved.

## **Follow-up on control cases**

Control cases were selected at random, based exclusively on the criteria of age, gender, and membership in different shifts and groups.

An evaluation form was used for case follow-up.

## **Final synthesis and recommendations**

- Participation in an organized activity with clear rules and nonnegotiable standards provided an organized framework for the young people whose impact transcends the time actually spent on the activity and transfers to other aspects of daily life.
- This frame—well defined boundaries, a particularly careful approach to the young people that included the physical space and the ongoing accompaniment of interns during transitions, and the rules of the games themselves—all contributed to changes in the participants' behavior and internal organization.
- An approach in which everyone takes care of everyone else creates a climate of "contagious effect" that is propagated by every member of the system. This was clearly reflected when the teachers' payment schedule was modified. The discontent spread and distorted the working environment. Nonetheless, the care of the young people was maintained through a tremendous coordination effort. It is possible to assert that during the integral development of the experience, the work method clearly generated a virtuous circle.
- The age of 9 years seems to be the point of greatest interest due to the high level of receptivity, predisposition, and positive attitude toward work proposals. This evolutionary moment of latency is backed by psychological and social theory. All of the teachers and interns reported that these groups most enjoyed the assigned tasks and were most predisposed to incorporate changes into their routines.
- Working with the body and the recognition of the importance of taking care of it led participants to adopt health living habits, such as hand washing and paying attention to the quality of food.
- Participating children and young people obtained systematic, concrete training in the various sports included in the program: soccer, handball, volleyball, basketball, track and field, and swimming.

- These new learnings associated with playing sports confer a social status that is valued by the participants as well as the community in general. This was evident during the Bonaerenses Youth Tournaments.
- A teaching-learning process with the methodological features that gave the program its identity ensures the development of new skills and positive attitude changes.
- The decision to offer opportunities for change to children and youth living in adverse conditions ensures the development of their latent potential and personal resources.
- Attentive observation and care of the young people at many levels created a climate of trust conducive to safe and friendly management in the sports center.
- The unspecified primary prevention activities, such as the sports school carried using program guidelines, seem to be adequate and relevant for the prevention of addictions insofar as they reinforce positive aspects in participants such as self confidence, increased self esteem, and better physical coordination.
- This attentive care of the body and health is a basic antidote to the use of toxic substances.
- Specific addiction prevention activities produced numerous antibodies among the participants, as they were upset at having to discuss such issues during the time period allotted for sports.
- It might be possible to conduct this specific addiction prevention activity in a more structured way, setting aside specific times and days for it, to avoid objections related to less time for the selected activity.
- Considering the absenteeism and dropout rates, it would make sense to have a permanent system of intakes and dropouts so that the programs can function in a consistent fashion.
- Although after a cursory reading, the absentee and dropout rates may seem high, it is important to point out that over half of the young people registered stayed with the program and that it succeeded in mobilizing much of the community.
- A high level of parent participation was observed. Nonetheless, a constant that is frequently present in social policy and participation was also noted here: participation is restricted to a group of those with the greatest need. In future endeavors, it would be useful to design strategies to approach other families of equal or greater vulnerability and displaying more resistance to participation.
- School participation was also important. Program technical teams paid visits, requested reports, conducted interviews, asked questions, and created opportunities for reflection, which created an interesting dynamic effect in the establishments.
- The participation of community organizations was also interesting. In future experiences, developing a network should be part of the central working

objectives, so as to strengthen community participation and work toward decentralizing the activity so that it is held closer to where people live.

- For future experiences, it would be important to continue to decentralize the experience, strengthening neighborhood organizations that potentially could take over the activity, above and beyond the program's current external funding.
- During the final phase of the program, an initial experience with a decentralized activity was carried out in Barrio Los Ceibos. It was a great success from the standpoint of the response (600 participants who do not attend the program due to difficulties in access).
- In such a disadvantaged community, it would seem essential to sustain the activity over time. This would make it possible to solidify the successful outcomes obtained in terms of new behaviors and habits among the participants and to avoid new frustrations.
- A recommendation that emerges from the evaluation relates to the usefulness of designing government policies that incorporate comprehensive strategies that facilitate equal opportunity for excluded populations at high social and health risk. This recommendation is based on the effectiveness of this type of program.

# Program for the Prevention of Addictions Through Sports

## **SEDRONAR**

April 2006



# Description of the Program for the Prevention of Addictions Through Sports



# What is the Program?

- The program took place in 2005 in González Catán, La Matanza district, Buenos Aires province.
- It dealt with a sports-training school, targeted at 3000 students between the ages of 6 y 18.
- It included 6 sports: soccer, handball, volleyball, track and field, basketball and swimming.
- The participants attended twice a week for 3 hours. Each day they rotated through three sports. They received supplemental nutrition.





Entrance of Polideportivo Cristo Caminante

## **What premises were the Prevention Program based on?**

- Sports is a protection factor that diminishes the exposure to risks in general and to substance abuse in particular.
- The external rules and goals of sports are internalized by the participants.
- Sports acts as an efficient tool in social and individual change.
- Activities carried out in a atmosphere of care; shelter and freedom favors the construction of personal identity and improved self-esteem.
- It promotes the incorporation of values and rules, that include personal care and hygiene, respecting and obeying the rules.
- The activity proposes a healthy use of idle and free time, and a positive attitude towards life.



A street de G. Catán



Barrio Los Ceibos

## **In what kind of context did the Program develop?**

- The municipality of La Matanza is the largest district in the greater metropolitan area of Buenos Aires.
- 1,500,000 persons live there. 65% live below poverty level; 23% is indigent.
- There are grave environmental problems: lack of drinking water, poor sewage and garbage collection; 40% of the streets are not paved.
- Minimal education of parents
- High percentage of drop-outs.
- Almost total inexistence of pre-school establishments.
- Scarce opportunities for sports, social or cultural life.
- Few recreational activities.
- Few options to overcome poverty and marginality.

# Objectives and characteristics of the program

## What were the objectives y characteristics of the Project?

- The program proposed its central goal as to modify life skills in a positive way, understanding that sports acts as a protective factor for children and young people.
- The program offered opportunities and options to which the children and youth of the area did not have access.
- It proposed to offer the formation of integrated social networks. This initiative took place with the participation of schools, NGOs, the Church and official organizations (addiction prevention centers, education, Secretariat for Sports of the municipality de La Matanza, among others).
- The project's premise is that sports acts as a protective factor in general and against the consumption of toxic substances in particular, even more so in the context marked by risk factors. Sports participation involves free time, promoting healthy leisure time.

The program recognized sports as :

- an efficient tool of high impact social change
- encouraging the strengthening of personal identity of the participants
- a factor that diminishes the exposure to risk factors
- promoter of incorporating values and rules in the form of play

Including:

- the respect for fair play
- meeting schedules
- taking care of the body
- personal hygiene
- respect for teachers, referees and team mates
- care of equipment and installations

- Amateur sports encourages children and young people to get together to have fun. It is an activity that improves self-esteem, self-discipline, imposes limits and improves the general attitude to life.
- It considers sports as a strategy for change that has a low cost, but high social and personal benefit.
- The central axis is that, through sports, it is possible to contribute to building identity among young people.
- It considered sports to have the potential of neutralizing the appeal of postmodern culture marked by individualism and consumerism.
- Prevention is not limited in its objectives to identifying and reducing the risk factors, but also means stimulating the strengths that each community, each neighborhood, each family, each group, each individual to confront risk situations and creating and stimulating protection factors.



## Gauging the Program's Impact Where and with whom did it work?

- In 15 schools: with leaders, teachers and parents.
- In 10 community organizations (orphanages, soup kitchens, and nurseries), with the representatives and members.
- In the Polideportivo:
  - With 10 coordinators
  - With 35 physical education professors
  - With 45 trainees
  - With 750 parents
  - With 3000 participants

## How was the information obtained?

With qualitative and quantitative methods:

- 2750 clinical histories
- 2750 social surveys
- 725 socio emotional surveys
- 45 interviews.
- 45 field observations (Polideportivo and schools)
- 35 follow-up of case studies at the Polideportivo.
- 70 follow-ups of participants in the schools.
- 5 focus groups with mothers.
- 8 focus groups with participants.
- 5 focus groups with teachers and trainees at the Polideportivo.
- 5 focus groups with teachers at the schools.

# Results

# What did they say in the schools?

## Selected comments

- “The situation of the kids is too complex for the changes to be evident in a single activity. However, I have to acknowledge that there is an important change in behavior.”
- “I believe that the kids’ time is better organized, more scheduled and they have more skill. The case of Sergio comes to mind, who was a kid with violent characteristics. He had many problems during the year. Now he has another attitude, more respectful.”
- “The kids come with more enthusiasm to talk and participate, less apathetic. They look forward to the activity that they do at the Polideportivo, especially the pool.”
- “Rocío is one of the girls that is doing much better since she goes to Sedronar. She has serious family problems, a violent father. I believe that with the physical activity she is becoming able to express and channel her energy and anxiety.”



- “The change that I note among my students is that they pay more attention to their assignments, they are more disciplined, they concentrate more.”
- “I feel that Rodrigo is happier, because despite having a generally apathetic attitude, always generating conflict, has a serious family problem. He learned how to swim four stroke that that made him feel better about himself.”
- “The kids that go to the problem have raised their grades in general, but this more evident in reading and writing.”
- “This space is like heaven on earth for the kids.”

# What did the mothers say?

## Selected comments

- “This activity does them good, you can tell, they’re changed, better.”
- “My son now gets up earlier; what’s more, he is now getting me up. The evening before an activity he doesn’t watch the TV or ask to play.”
- “My baby is more active, pays more attention in school. I spoke to the teacher and he told me that she’s more quiet and attentive.”
- “Since they began to come to the program they’re more organized. They’re more independent. They pack their own backpacks.”
- “And they even learned to eat healthier. Mine don’t want soda pop, only drink water.”
- “The integration is also very good. They have other groups of friends, besides school. This place lets them get a whole new group of friends. And that’s real good.”
- “My baby has a problem with bronchitis, but now he’s doing well.”
- “Mine was very frightened and has changed a lot. Now he runs, jumps, plays, changed a lot.”



**Parents of the Participants**

# ¿What did the teachers and assistants say?

## Selected Comments

- “There was an incredible change, in the way of expressing themselves, of getting along, in the warmth towards us.”
- “When we began, the relationship among them was rowdy, pushing each other, now they respect each other.”
- “Before, they didn’t pay any attention to us, now I like the friendship.”
- “Now the biggest ones get to class and take off their caps, they know that they can’t run in the pool, nobody leaves the group, even ask you for permission to go to the bathroom.”
- “The kids could answer back when asked. Now they know what they can and can’t do.”
- “Before, they answered back, they ran off from the group, they skipped to their favorite sport. Now, nothing like that .”
- “The most important change is the respect, towards the classmates, towards us, towards the work in the project.”
- “They also changed their vocabulary, now they correct themselves, they’re careful not to say bad words.”





**First Month of the Program**

- “They were learning a lot, you could tell how they handled the ball, in the coordination, in the handling of the body and space.”
- “The change in the way of working that they acquired, before we had to be on top of each one, now they understand the instructions better.”
- “You noticed the order, but it was all a process.”
- “Some kids did not do the activity, now they enjoy it.”
- “The other thing you notice is the social change in kids 14 y 15 years old.”
- “It was good to put limits from the beginning.”
- “They got new habits; for example, the kids in personal hygiene.”
- “Now, whenever they go to the bathroom, they wash their hands; before that did not happen.”
- “They kids are more together in a group, they’re more bonded.”
- “Now they are more educated, that is, they say fewer bad words, express themselves better.”
- “Before, everything was , “chabón”, “eh loco”, they shoved, etc., now they call each other by name. There’s more respect towards themselves and towards us.”

# ¿How did the kids change?

## Selected cases

Matías – 18 years old

At the start of the program

At the end of the program

Bossy

Learning how to fit in

Disrespectful

Less disrespectful

Didn't accept the rules of the program

Accepts norms and limits. Understands the rules and the reasons for them. Has found a frame of reference in the program

Negative leader

Neutralized his leadership. Now he is one of the group.

Rough relations with teachers

Good relations

Basic sports activity

Improved notably

Didn't want to get in the pool because he said he did not know how to swim, although he was really afraid.

Overcame his shame, accepting the help of others to get in the pool, recognized his own limitations.

## Lucas O. – 11 years old

### At the start of the program

Isolated, stubborn and hard to get along with her peers

Little contact with classmates

Hard to get through a task, distracted.

Did not want to participate

Angry and spoiled

### At the end of the program

A positive leader

Gets along with everyone

An example for the group, always ready to help. Helps teacher in group organization

Jumps into everything

Important emotional improvements.  
Good relations with all

## Kimberley - 7 años

At the start of the program

Shied away from the group and activity

Almost no contact with playmates

At the end of the program

Adapts much better

Involved with playmates, integrated in the group

## Víctor - 15 años

### At the start of the program

Isolated and lonely

Did not accept or understand instructions from teacher

Did not come prepared, lacked cleanliness. Did not bring necessary cloths (another pair of shorts for the pool)

Had problems with basic motor skills, could not resolve a problem.

### At the end of the program

Reaches out to his group

Carries out all activities in time

Now more prepared, comes better dressed and brings the necessary kit to engage in activities.

Does exercises with confidence and strength

**Note:** Víctor left school while in third grade. He can't read or write. Has health problems due to malnutrition.

# Conclusions and Final Considerations

# What are the conclusions?

The framework and modality of work characterized by:

- personalized care
- teamwork
- promotion of personal development
- defined space and time.
- rules of sports.
- the specific norms of the program organization,

produced modifications in behavior and the internal organization of the participants.

- This way of working, in which everyone takes care of each other, generates an environment that has a “contagious effect”, that is replicated in all the other members of the system
- A learning process with the methodological characteristics mentioned, that gave identify to the program, guarantee the development of new skills and the positive modification of attitudes.
- The decision of offering opportunities of change to children and young people that live in adverse conditions, ensures the development of latent personal potential and resources.





- Work with the body and recognition of the importance of health produced the incorporation of habits of healthy hygiene and life.
- Participating children and young people obtained systematic and concrete learning of different sports: football, handball, volleyball, basketball, track and field and swimming.
- These new skills linked to sports place them in a valued position for the participants themselves and for the community. This was witnessed during the Buenos Aires Youth Tournaments.



The activities of primary prevention, like the sports school carried out following the guidelines of this program, seem to be adequate and relevant for addiction prevention, since they reinforce positive aspects of the participants, such as self-confidence, self-esteem and body control.

This careful attention of the body and health is a basic antidote against consuming toxic substances.

# Final Considerations

According to the evaluation, several questions arise:

Is it convenient to plan state policies that consider integral strategies, as those developed in the evaluated program, to favor equal opportunities to marginal populations and at greater social and health risk.?

Will it increase the effectiveness of prevention actions if they are carried out by intersectorial work units with the participation of Education, Health, Sports, Culture and Social Development?

¿Could a coordinating and promoting unit be created for strong ties between sectors developing innovative programs in addiction prevention?