



Values in Youth Sport and Physical Education

From Jean Whitehead

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As sport has become more intense, professional and commercialized so have the debates grown about what constitutes acceptable behaviour and fair play, and how to encourage and develop 'good' sporting behaviour, particularly in children and young people. This book explores the nature and function of *values* in youth sport and establishes a framework through which coaches, teachers and researchers can develop an understanding of the decision-making processes of young athletes and how they choose between playing fairly or cheating to win.

The traditional view of sport participation is that it has a beneficial effect on the social and moral development of children and young people and that it intrinsically promotes cultural values. This book argues that the research evidence is more subtle and nuanced. It examines the concept of values as central organizing constructs of human behaviour that determine our priorities, guide our choices, and transfer across situations, and considers the value priorities and conflicts that are so useful in helping us to understand behaviour in sport. The book argues that teachers and professionals working with children in sport are centrally important agents for value transmission and change and therefore need to develop a deeper understanding of how sport can be used to encourage pro-social values, and offers suggestions for developing a curriculum for teaching values through sport in differing social contexts.

Spanning some of the fundamental areas of sport practice and research, including sport psychology, sport pedagogy, practice ethics, and positive youth development through sport, and including useful values and attitudes questionnaires and guidance on their use and interpretation, this book is important reading for any student, researcher, coach or teacher with an interest in youth sport or physical education.

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Editorial Review

Review

"It is rare to find a body of work that presents a definitive consistent and comprehensive framework over time. One of the real insights and benefits of the book ... is how it might ... develop and evolve a research agenda ... The work developed here on a values framework for sport is extremely helpful, particularly for youth and children. Where it perhaps has its greatest value, however, is not in the research findings provided, but in terms of the implications such findings have on coaching practice. Of particular interest remain the questions as to why it is that despite all the best evidence about the need for an approach to coaching that places the needs and interests of the child first, for the most part, the sports coaching environment seems relatively powerless to challenge the ideology of performance." – Alun Hardman, *Sports Coaching Review*

About the Author

Jean Whitehead was an international long jumper and physical education teacher before coordinating the disciplines in human movement studies at Bedford College of Higher Education, UK, where she taught sport psychology. In research at the University of Brighton, UK, she focused on achievement goal perspectives, and measuring values.

Hamish Telfer was course leader at the University of Cumbria, UK, for the postgraduate degree in Sports Coaching. Now retired, he is still actively involved in research and publication in sports coaching, particularly practice ethics and reflective practice. He has been a Great Britain Team Coach for Cross Country.

John Lambert is a Senior Lecturer in Sport Coaching and Physical Education at the University of Brighton, UK. He works in talent ID for a Premier League football club. His main research interest is teaching values through sport having worked on a major international sport for development project for over ten years.

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