

worldcoaches

Beyond football

Basic Manual

Life Skills | English version



For KNVB developed by:



Universiteit Utrecht



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Dear WorldCoach,

As a coach, you play an important role on the football pitch. It is your job to teach kids how to play football. But you can have an even greater impact on their lives by keeping an eye on what happens beyond the sport, both on and off the pitch.

As a WorldCoach, you work with young people and teach them football skills. Football is about technique, tactics and rules. But it is also about respect, cooperation and decision-making. These skills are of great importance off the football pitch as well. They are called life skills.

This manual is meant to show WorldCoaches like yourself how to use football training to teach life skills as well. This manual is a tool that can help you find out what problems your footballers face, decide what your role might be, and actually make a difference in dealing with those problems. This way, you can help kids who are confronted with issues such as HIV/AIDS, inequality between the sexes, environmental pollution, crime and addiction.

A WorldCoach creates better footballers and a better society. I wish you the best of luck!

Kind regards,

Aron Winter

WorldCoaches Ambassador



WorldCoach's Note
A footballer with sufficient life skills leads a healthier, safer and more respectful life. Life skills benefit both the player and society as a whole.

Why Life Skills?

Everyone needs life skills. Not only your footballers, but you too. You need life skills to deal with the issues and challenges you face every day. Life skills are especially helpful when things get tough.

Life skills help you in many ways:

- They build self-confidence and help you decide what you want. This can help you say “no” to the temptations of alcohol, drugs and unprotected sex, for instance.
- They teach you to communicate with others and strengthen your commitment to those around you. You may learn to talk to young people who are heading for a life of crime, or perhaps you can organize activities to clean up your neighbourhood.
- They enable you to logically think situations through and make well-founded decisions. You may realize, for example, that disrespectful behaviour towards women is not cool, but rather leads to inequalities in society.

WorldCoach's Note
Keep an eye out for what your footballers are doing off the pitch.

Why should a WorldCoach care about Life Skills?

As a football coach

A football coach mainly wants to deal with teaching the sport, of course. Football is, and should remain, your top concern. But as a coach, you are in a special position. You know the community and the kids on the teams. You have a bond of trust with them. You have authority. You hear about the kids' problems at home or in the neighbourhood. You see how they treat each other.

As a life skills trainer

Because of this special position, you can be more than just a football coach. You are the one who can make a difference in these youngsters' lives. You can help them deal with the challenges they face, their problems. These may include violence, drug use, crime, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, and much more. It is important to keep an eye out for what happens both on and off the football pitch and to use your football training sessions to teach life skills as well. After all, kids who have life skills are more sure of their ground. They are better able to make responsible choices for their own future and the future of their community.



How can a WorldCoach contribute to Life Skills?

A WorldCoach who is also a life skills trainer, sticks to the following rules:

Rule no.1 Combine football and life skills training

Football and life skills are closely linked. The strength of WorldCoaches lies in the fact that they are able to integrate football training with life skills development. These are not separate things.

Kids enjoy the sport. That is your basis. At the same time, you can use your football training sessions to show how important life skills are. This is easy, because some of the basic principles that are vital to a good football training session are also necessary for successfully developing life skills.

For example:

Principles in football training	Principles in teaching life skills
Cheating and violence have no place in football, so as a WorldCoach you cannot tolerate either of these.	→ You are equally clear about the fact that these norms and values apply off the pitch too.
In order to play football well, you need to form a team, help each other and communicate with others. You cannot (always) score on your own.	→ In daily life, you can only successfully function in your community if you help others and communicate clearly with those around you. You cannot (always) solve your problems alone.
You must learn to apply football skills in different situations. No situation is exactly the same, but you call upon the same skills every time.	→ In daily life you also need skills to help you deal with the ever-changing problems you face.

Rule 2: Be a Role Model

As a WorldCoach, you are in a position of authority. Therefore, your behaviour serves as an example to the kids. A good life skills coach is aware of this fact and acts accordingly.

Your credibility depends on practicing what you preach. For example:

- If you warn your footballers about HIV/AIDS, do not have unprotected sex;
- If you teach your team about the dangers of alcoholism, do not drink beer in their presence;
- If you want to build a sense of responsibility for a clean environment, do not litter.

At the same time, it is not always easy to do the right thing. It is important to show your footballers that you understand that. WorldCoaches dare to show their footballers how they deal with, and sometimes struggle with, the temptations in life.

Rule 3: The Child is the Main Focus

Show empathy with the youngsters on your team. They are the people you are trying to reach. You must understand them well if you are to successfully convey life skills. What motivates them to come and play sports? And how can you make that as enjoyable as possible? How can you make them happy and teach them something at the same time? In order to empathize, you need to:

- stay in regular contact with the kids, also off the pitch.
- contact the kids' parents. Because you are dealing with youngsters, their parents are very important. Involve parents whenever possible.

WorldCoach's Note

- *Life skills are an integral part of your training sessions.*
- *Practice what you preach.*
- *Focus on the child.*





What role can a WorldCoach play in Life Skills training?

There are different ways to teach life skills. You can give young people information so they can make more well-founded decisions. One example of this would be to tell them how to avoid getting infected with HIV. Another way to teach life skills is to refer kids to professional institutions that can help them deal with a particular problem (if they are addicted to alcohol or other drugs, for instance). No two situations are exactly the same and each requires a different approach.

As a coach, there are five roles you can play:

Educator

If your footballers know too little about an important social issue such as HIV/AIDS, you can educate them. As an educator you pass on (basic) knowledge to your players. This may be in one-to-one talks or in group presentations. You can also invite an appropriate organization to do this for you. Simply doing this once is not enough. You should bring up the topic regularly. There are special manuals about HIV/AIDS, girls' empowerment, crime prevention and addiction to help you prepare.



Trainer

If your players need specific skills, such as dealing with conflicts at home, you can bring up and practice these skills as part of a game. The special manuals on HIV/AIDS, girls' empowerment, environmental pollution, crime prevention and addiction provide various examples.



Mentor

If your footballers need guidance with a problem, you can help them by being their mentor. In that role, you look out for signs that point to particular social issues and talk to players when you are worried about them. You could also start a group discussion if you notice that the whole team shows signs of needing to talk about a particular issue. You encourage your players to make the right choices.



Confidential counsellor

Are players looking for someone they trust, with whom they can discuss their problems in private? If so, you can be their confidential counsellor. You can set aside time – before, during or after practice – when you are available to talk. You ensure privacy and guarantee that the information you receive remains confidential.



Referrer

If your players need professional help, but do not know where to turn, you can refer them to the most suitable institutions.



In other words, depending on your youngsters' needs, there are various roles you can play to help them develop life skills.

WorldCoach's Note

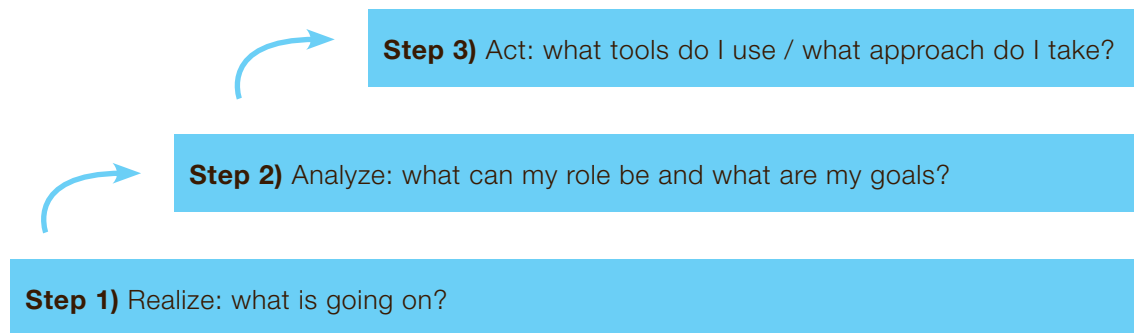
You can help develop life skills in various roles:

- Educator
- Trainer
- Mentor
- Confidential Counsellor
- Referrer

Roadmap

Every community is different and it is important that you, the WorldCoach, think of the best solution to fit the specific circumstances in which you coach football. It helps to use the following 3-step plan.

WorldCoaches use this 3-step plan:



Below we will discuss this 3-step plan in more detail, so you can start using it right away with your team!

Step 1) Realize

Goal In this first stage, you try to collect as much information as possible about the issues affecting your footballers' community and surroundings. You also take stock of what you and your players know already, which information is missing, and which parties can supply you with this information.

Action Answer the questions below. Find out what the players on your team and members of organizations in your community think.

1A) Find out what the main social issues are

What do you see as the main (social) issues that the players face?

What do the players see as the main (social) issues they face?

What do the social organizations in your community think are the main social issues?
What issues do these organizations deal with? What does that tell you about the community you and your team are part of?

Based on the answers to the previous questions, What are the two most important issues your community faces?

Now you know the two most important issues that you as a WorldCoach need to address.

1B) Find out how much is known about these social issues

What do you as a WorldCoach know about these two main issues?

What do your players know about those two issues?

What information can local social organizations provide about these issues?

Where else could you possibly get more information?

Now you know how much knowledge your players have about these issues and you have increased your own awareness on the subject.

1C) Find out which organizations deal with related to these social issues

Which social organizations address these issues?

Exactly which services do these social organizations provide?

Now you know more about the network dealing with these issues in your community.

WorldCoach's Note

Before teaching life skills, first make sure you know what you're dealing with.

Step 1 helps you discover which social issues need to be addressed in your training sessions.

Step 2) Analyze

Goal In Step 2 of the 3-step plan, you start using the knowledge you gained in Step 1. You find out what your role as a WorldCoach could be, but also where your limits are. You are not a social worker or a psychologist. You are, and will remain, a football coach first and foremost.

Action Answer the following questions and decide what role (see page 9) you can play.

2A) Determine what role you can play as a WorldCoach

If your players lack knowledge about this social issue and need to know more, then they need an **educator**.



If your players know quite a bit about this social issue, but they need extra skills in this area, then they need a **trainer**.



If your players know what to do in theory, but they need coaching, then they need a **mentor**.



If your players mainly need to talk about this social issue with others, then they need a **confidential counsellor**.



If they need professional help, but do not know where to turn, then they need a **referrer**.



Now you know which role or roles to play as a WorldCoach.

It is time to set your goals. What do you want to achieve in this role? Below you will find a few examples of such goals. Write down your own goals and give yourself a deadline for achieving them.

WorldCoach's Note

Step 2: analyze which role will allow you to best help your players. Set yourself tangible goals for your life skills training sessions.

2 B) Set goals

Are you playing the role of **educator**? Then you might want to set yourself goals like these:

- After 6 meetings, the players will know just as much about this issue as you do.
- After 10 exercises, your players will have become better at critical thinking; they will question each other's choices and be less prone to say 'yes' without thinking.



Are you playing the role of **trainer**? Then you might want to set yourself goals like these:

- After 5 exercises, the issue will be easier to discuss: people will no longer start sniggering
- After 10 exercises, your players will have become better at critical thinking; they will question each other's choices and be less prone to say 'yes' without thinking.



Are you playing the role of **mentor**? Then you might want to set yourself goals like these:

- After 5 talks, your players will be more self-confident in making decisions, and will give more thought to those decisions.



Are you playing the role of **confidential counsellor**? Then you might want to set yourself goals like these:

- After 4 talks, the player in question will be able to think about his/her problems more clearly and about possible solutions in the form of actual steps.
- After 2 group discussions, the players will be able to bring up and discuss the issue amongst themselves, without your intervention.



Are you playing the role of **referrer**? Then you might want to set yourself a goal like this:

- See to it that the player actually seeks professional help.



Step 3) Act

Goal Step 3 of the 3-step plan is when you really start to teach life skills. You know which issues need to be addressed. You know which role you can play and have set yourself and your team tangible goals. Based on these, you now take action.

Action Come up with concrete steps to achieve your goals, by finding appropriate activities (tools). Start by taking the following steps:

3A) Find tools/activities you can use

Make use of the available tools for each role (Step 2) in the special WorldCoach Manuals.

Sound out the network of social organizations for supplementary or more appropriate tools. Talk to fellow coaches, school teachers, social workers and others about ways to achieve your goals.

You have now come up with a number of tools you can use. Your next step is to determine how and when to use these.

3B) Plan your activities

Come up with a schedule, detailing for each football training session (1) specifically what you want to do and (2) when you want to see results. For example, schedule an informative presentation on an issue during the season's first football training session and specify that you want to see visible results by the second session.

Compare notes about your experiences with fellow coaches.

Adjust your plans and goals if the situation calls for it or the players on the team request this. Be prepared to take immediate action if something happens, for example if a player asks you for advice in your role as confidential counsellor. Be flexible in this kind of situation.

WorldCoach's Note

Step 3: Schedule your life skills training sessions, using tools that fit your chosen role and your goals. Use the available manuals on HIV/AIDS, girls' empowerment, environmental pollution, crime prevention and addiction.

www.worldcoaches.nl