



## REPORT

### Activity 2. How to approach the aspect of Safety in Youth Climbing

**Hosted by:** Magyar Hegy – és Sportmászó Szövetség

**Date and location:** 13. - 15.8.2021, Nagymaros, Hungary

**Aim:** To identify age-appropriate approaches to training courses regarding safety measures, technical knowledge, skills, and different types of climbing. The aims and objectives of the meeting are tied directly to the main objective of the project – safe climbing. Assessment will be done through sharing experiences, knowledge, and good practices in youth climbing courses. The result of the above work will be presented in the form of guidelines for working with youth in climbing.

#### **Participants:**

Planinsko društvo Domžale  
Sportsko penjački klub Fothia  
Horolezecký klub Atlas Opava, z.s.  
Horolezecký klub Horec Liptovský Mikuláš  
Magyar Hegy – és Sportmászó Szövetség

#### **Agenda:**

Climbing can be a safe sport for children, but being adequately prepared and guided is paramount. That is why climbing courses for children have to have a special emphasis on the necessary knowledge for safe participation in this sport. The learning methods need to be different from those for adult climbers. It is very important for climbing instructors to have good guidelines while preparing technical lectures and training programs for youth, regardless of the type of climbing.

The main format of the meeting was discussions and workshops, where we had the opportunity to discuss and share our methods and experiences. To identify age-appropriate approaches to training courses regarding safety measures, technical knowledge, skills and different types of climbing, we discussed specific topics throughout the meeting:

#### **1. Recognizing key factors influencing the development of young climbers**

We discussed and worked out different factors:

- Excellence in sports takes time
- Physical Literacy
- Specialization stages in climbing
- Developmental Age
- Sensitive Periods and Window Time of Trainability - the 5 S's: The five S's are stamina (endurance), strength, speed, skill, and suppleness (flexibility).
- Mental, Cognitive, and Emotional Development of young climbers
- Periodization in training
- System Alignment and Integration
- Competition
- Continuous Improvement

## **2. Age specificity of climbing development**

We discussed different age groups and logical divisions. We decided to follow the same age groups that were already used in Activity 1 (Preparation, analysis, and initial assessment):

- Stage 1: Active Start: Birth to age 7
- Stage 2: FUNdamentals and Learn to Train: Age 7-11
- Stage 3: Train to Train: Age 12-15
- Stage 4: Learn to Compete and Train to Win: Age 16-19

Stages 1 and 2 from birth to the onset of the growth spurt in puberty, emphasize the development of physical literacy. Children have the basic movement skills and sports skills to be successful in sports and stay active for life. Physical literacy also provides the foundation for those who choose to pursue elite training in one sport or activity after puberty. Stages 3 and 4 provide training and competition for athletes who want to specialize in climbing, optimize physical, mental, and emotional development, and work toward the highest levels of competition.

## **3. Specific issues and considerations in youth climbing**

We shared our experiences and discussed issues we face while working with youth climbers. We also talked about the solutions and adjustments that make working with youth climbers easier:

- Different needs, motivation
- Gamification strategies; to involve them in warming up, stretching, and achieving climbing goals
- Climbing games
- Walls specific for kids, more colors, more holds, bigger holds, exciting structures, volumes, fewer crimps,
- Different levels to try and excel
- Environmentally controlled area, safe
- The climbing wall should be suitable for the different age groups of children
- Proper ergonomic design to avoid injuries
- Surfaces are visible
- Focusing should be easier in kids' indoor climbing, and distractions should be low

## **4. Age-appropriate guidelines for training**

We planned a structure of guidelines. As a result of discussions from points 1. - 3., it was decided that guidelines will have 4 age groups, focusing on 3 subjects: safety (technical knowledge), physical aspect (motor abilities), and psychological (development).

We prepared the first draft to be used at Activity 5 (2. Transnational Meeting, Youth Climbing Camp), mainly the parts about safety (technical knowledge) and physical aspect (motor abilities).

## **5. Presentation of results of Activity 1 (Preparation, analysis, and initial assessment)**

We presented the national results and the final analysis (summary report). We had a final discussion, where we compared partners' countries, identified the areas where improvements would be necessary, the biggest issues and how to overcome them.

## **6. Planning of Activity 5 (2. Transnational meeting – Youth Climbing camp)**

We went through plans for Activity 5 and resolved any remaining questions and problems. We talked about:



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- Participants and age groups
- Location and local characteristics
- Safety measures
- Camp logistics
- Camp activities
- Feedback questionnaire

### **Annexes**

1) photos



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