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GUIDE TO RUNNING **IN-SCHOOL EVENTS**

For Sports Clubs



This guide is prepared under *Erasmus+ Sport* project number 101134197 - **Kayak Crews 4 Youth**

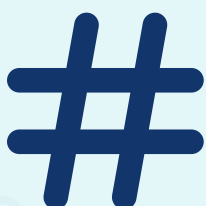
December 2024



Official Project Name
Kayak Crews 4 Youth



Project Acronym
Kc4u



Project Number
101134197

The publication constitutes one of the deliverables of the *Kayak Crews 4 Youth* project.



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Introduction

Welcome to the In-School Event Guide for Sports Clubs! This guide was created as part of the *Erasmus+ Sport* project - *Kayak Crews 4 Youth* (Kc4u).

In 2024 Kc4u successfully hosted in-school sprint kayaking events for over 600 children in Italy and Slovenia. Through the design and execution of these events, we crafted a model that can be easily tailored to other sports.

This guide draws on our first-hand experiences and offers a comprehensive approach to planning, preparing, and implementing fun and interactive in-school events.

Organising in-school events is an excellent way to raise awareness of your sport, and actively engage kids in physical activity. It also provides a fantastic opportunity to promote your club.

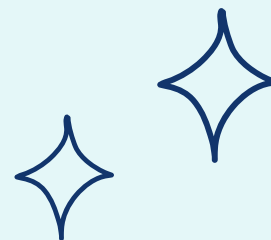
We hope this guide proves useful in creating unforgettable sporting experiences for students in your local community. If you're curious about the other Kc4u activities and free resources, be sure to explore our website kayakcrews.eu

Let's begin...



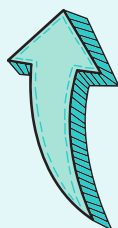
IN-SCHOOL

An exciting, large scale event run by your club at local schools during school hours



INTERACTIVE

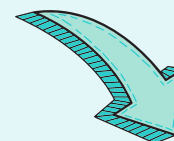
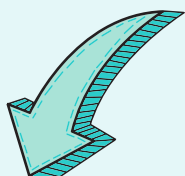
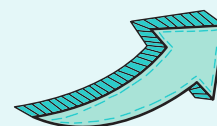
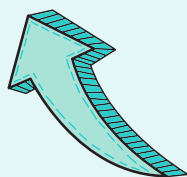
Multiple activity stations running simultaneously ensure participants are constantly engaged



ATHLETE COACHES

Your club athletes coach their age-peers

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF IN-SCHOOL EVENTS



DIVERSE SKILLS

Unique challenges test diverse sport specific physical and teamwork skills



PROMOTION

In-School events are a fantastic way to promote your club and sport



UNIQUE

Participants complete fun & unique challenges they haven't encountered before during school sports



TOP 5 REASONS TO RUN

IN-SCHOOL EVENTS

1

REMOVE BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Taking events directly into schools removes all barriers to participation, and connects your club with large numbers of children in a short timeframe.

2

PROMOTE YOUR SPORT

Regardless of whether your club's sport is instantly recognisable and widely played, or not included in the school curriculum, visiting schools is an excellent opportunity to connect with children who may have previously believed that your sport wasn't meant for them.

RECRUIT NEW CLUB MEMBERS

Dynamic and interactive in-school sessions can spark children's interest in joining your club. By involving your club athletes, these events transform a boring lesson into fun-filled sessions. It's the perfect chance for students to meet their future teammates and soak up the one-of-a-kind atmosphere your club offers.

3

4

EMPOWER YOUR ATHLETES

Peer coaching serves as a powerful learning and development tool to empower your club athletes. By having them coach activity stations, you can enhance their skills, nurture leadership qualities, and boost their confidence, all while fostering new friendships.

5

TALENT IDENTIFICATION

Are you on the hunt for the next sporting superstar? In-school events allow you to assess general physical literacy and fitness, movement quality & control, and many of the essential underlying physical skills required in your sport.

"Tell me and I forget,
teach me and I may
remember, involve
me and I learn."

Benjamin Franklin

HOW TO DESIGN IN-SCHOOL EVENTS

In-School sporting events present valuable opportunities for your sports club to forge connections with a significant number of children in your target age range. However, they come with several challenges in terms of maximizing engagement among children who may have:

- short attention spans
- a broad spectrum of skill levels
- a lack of interest in sports

Through intentional session design, and the contagious enthusiasm of your team, every child can feel included, ensuring exciting and successful events.

EVENT INTRODUCTION



1. Introduce your team and your sport

Each person from your club should introduce themselves by name, and share one thing they love about their sport, or a humorous anecdote about themselves. Public speaking is an excellent way to enhance your athletes' confidence, and positions them as key ambassadors for attracting new members to your club.



2. Ask Questions

Ask the participants questions to gauge their knowledge and experience with your sport.



3. Keep it Short and Interesting

As time for in-school sessions is usually limited, focus on hands-on activities for the majority of your event. Minimise talking and incorporate a brief, impressive sporting demonstration by your club athletes to captivate the participants.

ACTIVITY STATIONS

Activity stations form the heart of interactive school events. Each station should be fun and present challenges which are unfamiliar to most participants. The activities should be difficult, but not unachievable.

Maximising Fun & Engagement

Multiple Activity Stations

- Operate multiple activity stations simultaneously. Between **6-10 is ideal**

Small Teams

- Have small teams at each of the stations, this ensures everyone is actively participating at all times, and also helps build teamwork skills. We recommend teams of 4-8 participants.

Rotate Frequently

- The number of stations and time at each will be influenced by the total time you have for each event, and the complexity of the activities at each station. To keep interest high, we recommend 10 stations with 3-4 minutes spent at each.

Variations

- Provide **variations** at each station. By incorporating different variations at each activity station, you can tailor the challenges to accommodate the abilities of each individual group. Be sure to keep instructions and demonstrations clear and concise.

Station Layout

- Lay out the stations in a way that makes it easy to find the next station
- Mark each station with a large number
- Allow enough space around any activity stations involving balls (which will inevitably escape)



ACTIVITY & SKILLS CHOICE



The activities and skills for each station should be related to your sport, but don't need to be overtly sport-specific. The key consideration when selecting activities is that most should be unfamiliar to the participants.

If your club offers a sport that is commonly taught in schools or widely played within the community, you'll need to get creative in designing engaging station activities that capture the interest of participants.

Stations should test a wide variety of skills, such as:

- **General physical literacy**
- **Fitness**
- **Teamwork** (communication among athletes is crucial, even in individual sports)
- **Underlying fundamentals** of your sport; eg. dynamic and static balance, rotational power, acceleration, upper or lower body strength, core control, specific coordination patterns, etc.

EVENT STRUCTURE

Session Size

- We recommend **30-60 participants** per session
- minimum 20, maximum 80

Number of sessions

- Always aim to reach as many children as possible at a given school
- **4-5 sessions** per school, per day works well (younger club athletes may struggle to maintain their enthusiasm and energy for coaching with any more than this)

Session Length

- **35-50 mins** (ideal length is 45 mins)

Session timetable

Event Welcome

TIME:

2-5 mins

- Introduce your team
- Introduce the sport and ask questions
- Sport demonstration

Group Division

TIME:

3-5 mins

- Have the PE or classroom teacher present assist you
- Divide participants into small teams
- Have club members fill up incomplete teams if they need to be a fixed number

Activity Stations

TIME:

25-40 mins

- Have each team spend 2.5-5 mins at each of the activity stations
- Have someone (preferably someone from the school) keep time and blow a whistle when it's time to change stations

Debrief

TIME:

3-5 mins

- Distribute giveaways - stickers, flyers. etc.
- Have participants fill out a short survey - or take it back to class to fill out



10

"The best team is not the team with the best players, but the team that plays best together."

Jamie Dimon

PLANNING & PREPARATION



SCHOOLS

- Contact your local schools and set a date for your event/s.
- Most schools prefer to have events during their regular PE session times.
- Liaise with a school representative to coordinate the groups/classes and teachers. It's great if they are from the PE department so they can help out on the event day.
- Be sure to check you have full use of the school gym, or a large outdoor space.



LOGISTICS

- **Transport** - plan how and when you're getting all your equipment and team to the school.
- **Equipment** - aside from checking all your equipment is in safe working order, it's a good idea to make a checklist of all the equipment you'll need on the day. You may be able to borrow some equipment from the school, but be sure to check this in advance.

COMMUNICATION

In-School events provide a variety of opportunities to promote your club and sport directly to children in your desired demographic. By utilising flyers, posters, social media, and engaging local media, such as newspapers and radio stations, you can further amplify your message to reach parents and the wider community.

To continue the momentum built by school events, we highly recommend coordinating them with an **Open Day** (or week) at your club where children can try your sport for free.

EVENT SPACE

To highlight your club & the sport during the events, be sure to decorate the event space with:

- **Roll banner**
- Club (or other) **flags**
- **Photos**/posters from competitions
- **Posters** promoting your Open Day/Week

Don't forget your team should all be dressed in **club clothing**

FLYERS

Distribute visually appealing flyers to participants at the end of every session. These will inform parents of your Open Day, and on the back you can print your regular club training timetable.

PRESS

Be sure to send press invites for your events to local press at least one week before your event/s.

Send press releases to national press and other relevant sporting organisations afterwards.

Remember you need permission from parents to use any images or videos of children online or in your press kit.

GIVEAWAYS

A free gift at the end of a session is a great way to get kids to remember you. A club sticker or other small club-branded item is enough, but if you've got the resources, you may want to give everyone a club t-shirt or participation medal.

PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Participant surveys serve as a valuable tool for collecting data for current and potential funding partners, along with other relevant stakeholders. It's also a great way to evaluate your sessions. Keep the survey short (you don't want to ruin a fun event by asking 100's of questions afterwards).

YOUR TEAM

SIZE

We recommend running school events with at least **10 people from your club**; 2 coaches, and 8 athletes - preferably in the same age range as the participants. This setup allows 10 activity stations to operate simultaneously, maintaining high engagement levels for all participants.

If you're running events with fewer people from your club, it's a good idea to keep the participant group size for each session under 40, and form larger participant teams. In this scenario, start the teams on alternating stations and have coaches stay with a team for two consecutive stations.

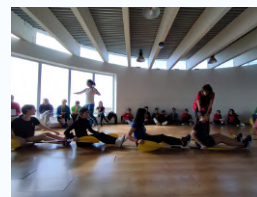
PREPARATION

It's beneficial to run a training workshop with your athletes before the school event/s to familiarise them with demonstrating and coaching all of the activity stations.

To ensure things run smoothly on the event days, decide who will coach at each station in advance. Some activity stations may require demonstrations from your team, so it's wise to choose the most skilled and confident candidates for each station.

When running multiple sessions on one day, consider having your station coaches rotate between two or more stations (to help their enthusiasm high). If your team comprises less than 10 people, it's important all team members can demonstrate and coach all stations.

Finally, if your club athletes need to miss school or class to attend the events, be sure they get permission from their school in advance.



"Good communication is the
bridge between confusion
and clarity"

Walt Turner

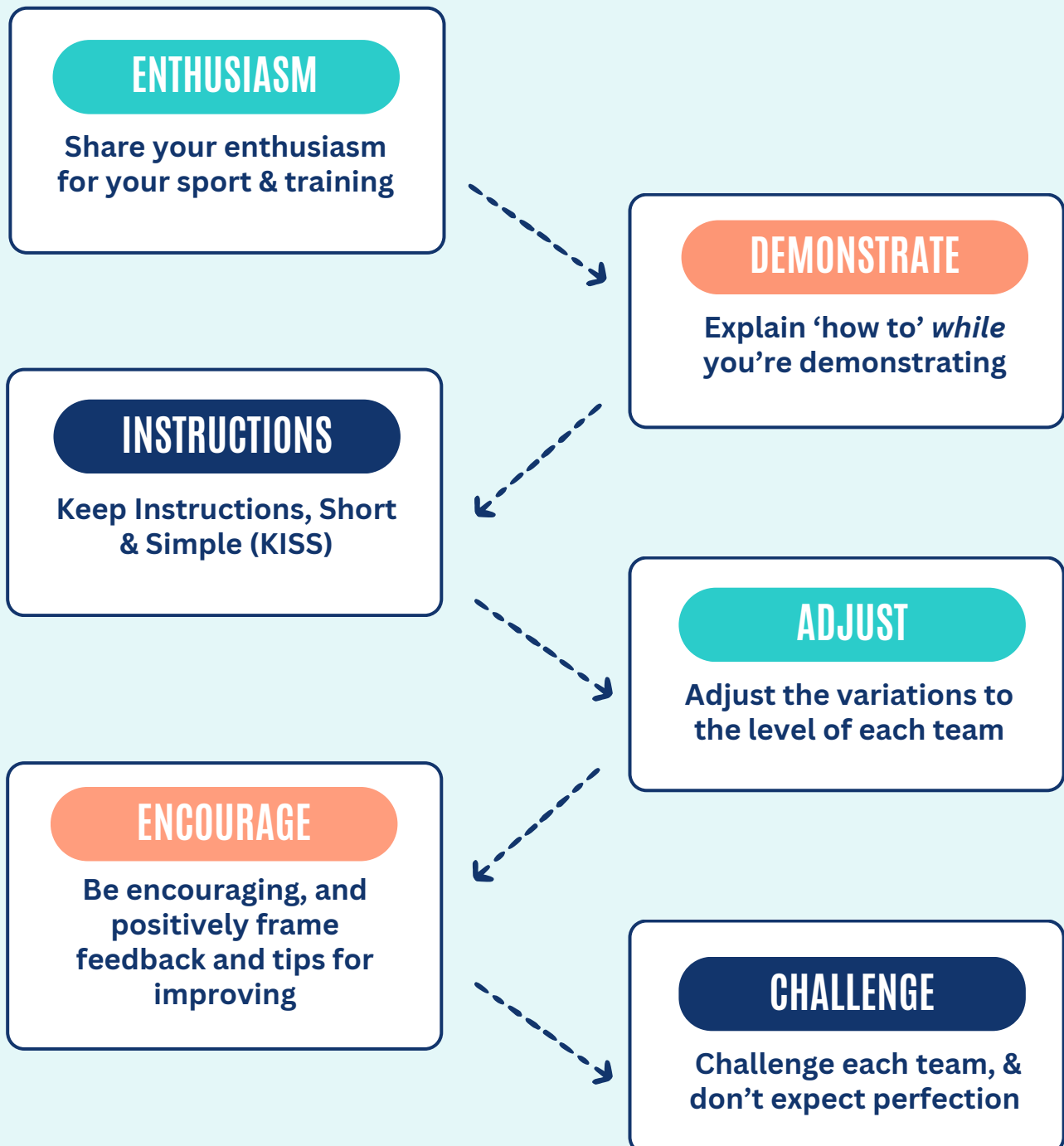
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TOP TIPS

FOR PEER-TO-PEER COACHING

Depending on how your club operates, these events may be your athletes' first coaching experience. To help them prepare, our top tips for peer-to-peer coaching within the framework of in-school events are:



TEAM ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Activity Station	Session Nr.	Coach Name/s
1	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
	_____	_____
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5	_____	_____
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6	_____	_____
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7	_____	_____
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8	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
9	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
10	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

Items	
Club Flag (or other local or national flags)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roll Banner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flyers (promoting an Open Day/Week + general club info)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giveaways	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images from competitions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medals (club member medals can be used to decorate the space)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participant Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Press invited	<input type="checkbox"/>
Press release	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Release Consent	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Kc4u School Experience

In 2024 Kc4u introduced Crew Kayaking Events to four schools in Sardinia and Slovenia, engaging over 600 school children and club athletes.

- Istituto Comprensivo, Cabras (IT)
- Istituto Istruzione Superiore 'Mariano IV d'Arborea', Oristano (IT)
- Istituto Comprensivo n2, Oristano (IT)
- Osnova šola Simona Gregorčiča, Kobarid (SI)

We sincerely thank all the students and staff for their participation and contributions to enhancing the model presented in this guide.



PHOTO: © DANIELA CADDEO

Our Key Statistics

581

Total School Participants 10-18 yrs

39

Total Club Athlete-Coaches <18yrs

48%

% Who didn't know sprint kayaking is a competitive sport

64%

of participants had never previously been kayaking

61%


of participants wanted to try sprint kayaking on the water

83%

of participants rated their enjoyment of the events 4, or 5 out of 5

THE KC4U TEAM

Kayak Crews 4 Youth is an international collaborative project developed and managed by the coaches and athletes of Kajak Klub Zlatorog and Circolo Nautico Oristano. Our dedicated crew has a wealth of experience in nurturing talent and crafting programs for everyone from beginners taking their first strokes, to seasoned Olympians.

 [@kayakcrews.eu](https://www.instagram.com/kayakcrews.eu)



Kajak Klub Zlatorog – SLO

Nestled in the small town of Most na Soči - Slovenia, KKZ is home to National Team athletes and coaches, as well as kayakers at various stages of their paddling journey. Alongside challenging the status quo through innovative programs, KKZ is dedicated to empowering more girls through sport. Their *Paddle PWR-Girl PWR* initiative was honoured with the EU's 2022 #BeEqual Award for gender equality in sport.



Circolo Nautico Oristano – ITA

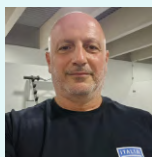
Established in 1970, CNO has a long tradition of coaching kayak, canoe and other watersport athletes of all levels. Located in Cabras on the island of Sardinia, CNO is an integral part of the local community, and home to three Italian National Team coaches along with many exceptional athletes.



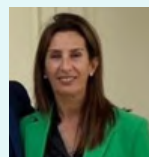
Melanie Schembri Waite
Project Leader, Coach, & Education
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Stefano Loddo
Coach



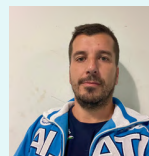
Gianmarco Patta
Italian Coordinator & Coach



Cecilia Tola
Coach



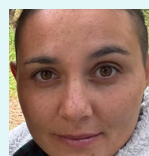
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