ITF Tennis Play and Stay Campaign

Promoting tennis as an easy, fun and healthy sport for all

Created to increase tennis participation worldwide, the Tennis Play and Stay Campaign aims at giving starter players a positive first experience where they are able to play the game from the beginning.

Location: Worldwide
Organisation: International Tennis Federation (ITF)
Start-end date: 2007 – ongoing
Target group: All ages
Reach: Tens of thousands of children and adults in over 160 countries
Partners: The ITF’s member National Associations
Key facts: The campaign has proven very successful, with 160+ nations introducing programmes using slower balls and smaller courts or adopting Tennis Play and Stay as their national participation programme.

For inspiration: www.tennisplayandstay.com
Summary

In 2007 the ITF officially launched a global campaign aimed at increasing tennis participation worldwide. The Tennis Play and Stay campaign aims to promote tennis as easy, fun and healthy, and to ensure all starter players are able to serve, rally and score from their first lesson. Fundamental to the campaign is the use of slower balls by coaches working with starter players, ensuring that their first experience of tennis is a positive one, where players are able play the game. The programme consists of a series of supporting programmes, which introduce tennis to the starter player, and club-based programmes to retain and encourage increased activity. These programmes include Tennis10s for children aged 10 and under, 11-17 tennis programme for young people and Tennis Xpress for adults, and are all characterised by the use of slower balls.

Keys to success

Making tennis more accessible

At the 2010 ITF Annual General Meeting, a new rule was introduced for 10-and-under competition impacting coaches and junior players worldwide. This was only the fifth occasion that the ITF Rules of Tennis have been changed in the history of the sport. The new rule came into effect in 2012 and states that 10-and-under competitions can no longer be played using a regular yellow tennis ball, with the mandatory use of slower red, orange or green balls. This rule change is a key part in the development of the ITF’s efforts to make tennis easier to take up. Through the various supporting programmes, the coaches are now using the slower balls for all starter players.

A focused event

In 2013, the ITF and StarGames launched the inaugural World Tennis Day to further support the promotion of tennis and increase participation among players around the globe. In its inaugural year, the ITF encouraged its member National Associations to focus on Tennis10s and staging organised activities for players aged 10 and under. In 2014, the second World Tennis Day was held with already a wider focus encouraging all ages to get involved in the sport. With 90 nations in full support of World Tennis Day in 2014, 79 countries organised specific activities and events to raise the profile and increase participation in tennis.
Sport for All objectives

**Promote sport and physical activity**
One of the main aims of the Tennis Play and Stay campaign is to encourage people of all ages to play tennis as a leisure or sporting activity. This is further facilitated by the ITF’s supporting programmes.

**Improve public health and well-being**
A Health Benefits of Tennis taskforce has been established to help better position tennis as a healthy and model sport for life. The taskforce is made up of 10 leading experts from the medical, tennis research and coaching fields across the world and will be driving a number of research projects and develop a campaign to support the objective.

**Support active societies**
Coaches are at the heart of the Tennis Play and Stay campaign and are being educated and encouraged by the ITF to introduce the use of the slower tennis balls within their day-to-day coaching programmes for starter players. Providing coaches with the tools needed to introduce new starters to the game helps to feed the sustainability of the programme for the future.

How is the programme communicated?

The main channel of communication for the ITF is always through the member National Associations, who then disseminate the information directly to their registered coaches and clubs. In addition, the programme is promoted via a dedicated website and various social media outlets.

How is the programme evaluated?

Beginning in 2014, 24 member National Associations will be taking part in a global participation survey funded by the ITF and the Tennis Industry Association. The outcomes of this research will focus on general participation and interest in tennis as well as detail the impact of racket and ball sales globally, providing insight in the global picture of tennis.

“There can be little doubt that in the past seven years the campaign has had a big impact and has proven extremely successful with 160+ nations introducing supporting programmes using slower balls and smaller courts or adopting Tennis Play and Stay as their participation programme at the national level.”

Dave Miley – Executive Director Development – International Tennis Federation
Join the sporting society!

Globally, 1 in 4 adults is not active enough and more than 80% of the world’s adolescent population is insufficiently physically active (World Health Organization). Let’s reverse the trend and get moving.

Promote sport and physical activity
Recent changes in leisure and work practices, diet and a host of other trends has led to an increasingly sedentary lifestyle amongst the world’s population. Sport for all programmes aim to promote sport and physical activity to mitigate the negative effects associated with these developments.

Improve public health and well-being
Sport and physical activity plays an important role in making societies healthier, happier and safer into the future. Successful sport for all projects help to stimulate these common benefits across entire communities.

Support active societies
Active societies involve many stakeholders such as parents, coaches, schools, local clubs, sports organisations, event organisers and grassroots activities, to name but a few. They can all be hugely influential in promoting healthier lifestyles within a community. Programmes that support and reinforce their efforts are vital for the encouragement and promotion of active societies around the world.

Provide equal access to sport
Every member within a community should have equal opportunity to live an active and healthy lifestyle. Effective grassroots programmes place a heavy emphasis on ensuring that all of their participants can enjoy this opportunity regardless of physical condition, race, gender, social conditions, geographical location or otherwise.

Foster Olympic legacy
The Olympic Games provide a source of inspiration and a vibrant expression of the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. This unique power can energise communities to develop projects enabling and inspiring people to become and stay physically active into the future.

Become a key player in your community

A useful platform has been designed for organisations across the Olympic Movement that are managing Sport for All programmes, providing them with the knowledge, understanding and tools needed to improve existing programmes worldwide, as well as to create new ones.

Get inspired by more than 45 projects around the world
Learn more about best practices with our toolkit
Create your project based on proven academic research and experience of organisations
Share your experience and lead the way to inspire more projects
Connect with a vast network fueled by inspired partners

Find more information
- Sports and Active Society Programmes
- A Guide to Implementation
- www.olympic.org
- activesociety@olympic.org