**Football Training with a Focus on Kinesiology**

**The participating children of the SMS initiative completed a training session with the football trainer and former professional player Efthimios Kompodietas.**

The primary school pupils of GGS Die Brücke in Neuss will long remember this sports lesson — after all, the leader of the training session was Efthimios "Effi" Kompodietas, the former Bundesliga player of Arminia Bielefeld and football coach. In addition to his work as a trainer and owner of the company "Brain Activity", Kompodietas has in recent years worked as a kinesiologist with many top athletes and even with the German national football team. Kinesiology, the study of the mechanics of body movements, includes a special training to promote brain performance. The goal of kinesiology is to increase concentration, improve motor processes, stabilize muscles and posture, and prevent injuries.

During the training units with the participating pupils of the initiative "SMS. Be smart. Join in. Be fit" on Tuesday, May 7, 2019, the emphasis was on having fun. Under the guidance of Efthimios Kompodietas, the children performed special exercises from the field of kinesiology. For example, the primary school pupils trained their coordination and reaction ability when jumping rope. Groups of three children tried to jump together in a large rope and then after three jumps leave the rope again without touching it. In various throwing games with tennis balls and soccer balls, they also learned to promote their concentration by means of predetermined movement sequences. In addition to coordination and concentration, the children's endurance and physical activity were also increased through playful, holistic training. These components play an important role in the SMS initiative, which promotes healthy growth and development and long-term prevention of obesity and lifestyle-related illnesses already in childhood. The aim of the SMS initiative is to inspire children to keep fit with a balanced diet and regular exercise.

“If children are made aware of the importance of a balanced diet and regular exercise at an early age, this awareness will last a lifetime. That's why I like to support the SMS initiative in its goal of inspiring children to enjoy sports," said Efthimios Kompodietas, a successful kinesiologist and football coach. SMS project manager Professor Karsten Müssig added: "We are delighted about the support of our numerous sponsors, as they are the best way to convey the importance of regular exercise to the children. Seeing how much fun and energy the students have in the training sessions encourages us in our early prevention approach."

The initiative “SMS. Be smart. Join in. Be fit." led by Professor Karsten Müssig at Düsseldorf and Neuß primary schools seeks to counteract overweight/obesity and other lifestyle-related diseases in childhood and adolescence. The SMS initiative is supported by the association Düsseldorfer Kids mit PFIFF e.V. and scientifically accompanied by the German Diabetes Center (DDZ). The participating children earn their nutrition pilot license in cooperation with the Educational Center for Dietary Assistants of the Kaiserswerther Diakonie and take part in the exercise program for primary schools “Fitness for Kids” developed by sports scientist Professor Kerstin Ketelhut. In addition, the pupils are taught stress mitigation techniques in an advanced training course in motor skills in a sensory classroom of the Präha Weber School and relaxation exercises in cooperation with the initiative ”Physical Activity during School Recess“ of the Dietrich Grönemeyer Foundation and the Deichmann company. Furthermore, in cooperation with the Techniker Krankenkasse, the course "Loosen Up! – Stress Management for Children" is offered in the participating school classes.

The two health insurance companies IKK classic and KKH, the organization diabetesDE –- German Diabetes Aid, the Sports Department of Düsseldorf and other renowned partners and prominent people support the project and provide the participating school children with additional attractive venues for learning outside of school. The patron of the initiative is Thomas Geisel, mayor of the state capital Düsseldorf. The SMS initiative was awarded the support logo of IN FORM, Germany’s initiative for a healthy diet and more exercise, and the GUT DRAUF label of the German Center for Health Education (BZgA).

Caption:

SMS\_EffiKompodietas\_2019.jpg: The children of the GGS Die Brücke had lots of fun in the training session with Efthimios Kompodietas (Photo: Düsseldorfer Kids mit PFIFF e.V./SMS).

For more information on the initiative, see: [www.sms-mach-mit.de](http://www.sms-mach-mit.de)