

WOMEN & ORIENTEERING – CHILD CARE ACTIVITIES



Picture: Juan David Pérez-Caballero Fernández

Certain characteristics of this sport, however, make it the perfect election for women and children. In Spanish Orienteering competitions run people of all the ages, from 2 to 75 years, all at the same time. There is always a safe space for children attended by caretakers during the competitions and a small race adapted for the youngest called “Correlín”. Because of these characteristics, mothers can return to physical activity soon after having a baby. Our goal is to increase the popularity of this sport among women in Spain.

This project started in 2009 inspired by the CSD (Spanish Sport Authorities) Women & Sport Program with the aim of increasing the number of women practicing orienteering. The first step was to meet a group of female orienteers and create the Women & Sport Committee with the aim of determining the current situation (women made up 30% of the national licenses) and how to improve these statistics. Then “**Orienteering Summer training camp for Women**” was born. During four days women live together in a youth hostel, sharing meals, training and doing their favorite activity or having their first experience in orienteering. Due to the support of the Women & Sport Program of the CSD, very attractive prices are offered for families. Daily relationships among participants are very important to ensure that the sporting habits built during these days go on afterwards.



Picture: María Peris Camus



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During this event, children from 1 to 6 years of age are looked after by caregivers and spend the time doing a variety of activities like painting, manual arts, orienteering...The idea is that, if girls experience orienteering from a very young age, having their mothers as models, and seeing other women practicing the sport, they will go on in the future. And at the same time boys share physical activity with girls, as they will do in the future. For children, orienteering is a very fun and social activity, in contact with nature and learning to read a map.



Picture: Estraviz Castro, José Ángel



Control card for the youngest "Correlín" for children from 2 to 6 years

Our experience over the last few years has shown that we are heading in the right direction because women want their children to enjoy the same sport as they do. During the event, they know that their children are having also a good time, so they can focus on reading the map and progression in the sport. And the work is done for the future because the sport becomes a way of life. After these four days, due to the close relationships built, new orienteering clubs have been founded. These achievements have made this experience very satisfactory. Of course, this has all been possible due to the support of the Spanish Sport Authorities (Consejo Superior de Deportes) and their Women & Sport Program.



Picture: María Peris Camus