**Project Sport-Inclusion**

The aim of the project is to provide children with autism with all sports training.

The objectives are to bring cutting-edge technologies into the country to provide training for children with autism on an equal basis with other children.

Sport could be a good example of inclusive development in many social areas in Belarus. Let’s start with swimming.

Relevance. In 2007, WHO presented a statement to the UN on the theme autism as a pandemic of humanity. Year after year, the number of children diagnosed with autism is growing exponentially around the world. Since 2008, the United Nations has announced April 2 as the World [Autism Awareness](https://context.reverso.net/translation/english-russian/Autism+Awareness) Day.

Belarus is no exception. As elsewhere in the world, autism is a latent problem, including its public understanding. Children with autism are not included in life processes on an equal footing with other children, starting with diagnostics, continuing with the timely start of teaching, child’s right to education and participation in all activities. The problem lies primarily on the shoulders of parents.

There is still stigma exists in society – “disabled,” “ill,” etc., which fundamentally differs from the nature and core of the autism problem. As a result, in reality, there is no opportunity to acquire a profession and education; no opportunity to realize one’s potential and become a useful member of society.

The country spends a lot of efforts and resources on organizing the social support system for adults with autism, instead of creating the environment, which provides opportunities for education and inclusion for a child with autism from early childhood.

There are a lot of examples around the world, that people with autism achieve success in science, art, sports, IT, military, medicine ... These are people who successfully receive education, defend scientific theses, set up business.

**Our project provides new opportunities for children with autism, which means new opportunities for the state and society!**

**Immediate objectives:**

1. For 2018 - 2019 academic year: to test and put into practice swimming classes involving children with autism providing inclusive environment and using new methods for the country with the support of foreign experts with long-time practice (Italy, USA).
2. In support of the project of inclusive practice in swimming, develop and implement a PR project with a number of international information and charity events. Thereby call on the world to pay a special attention to children with autism and other health conditions, including in sports. The initiative comes from the Belarusian swimmer, a multiple Olympic champion Alexandra Gerasimenya. Alexandra will seek support of athletes from other countries and carry out a number of joint activities.

\* Preparation of PR project: the end of 2018 - the beginning of 2019.

\* Implementation of the activities as the integration of athletes from other countries

**PR program content:**

* social photo and video projects;
* international conferences in the athlete's country (June 2019, Minsk);
* workshops and training with the participation of the athlete.

International Public Charitable Organization “Children. Autism. Parents.” and International Public Organization “Swimming Club of Alexandra Gerasimenya” are working on open issues and currently on developing the theme “Inclusion and Sport”:

* social access to swimming classes for children with autism in groups with normal children outside the project with the Alexandra Gerasimenya Swimming Club;
* review of international practices, searching for partners;
* searching for financial partners, participation in grants.

In Belarus, the pilot project "Sport-Inclusion in Swimming" was launched in October 2018 on the basis of a Sport and Fitness Complex TRACTOR and includes five groups.