



THE STORY OF THE RED BALL



Right To Play uses the Red Ball as our symbol. The Red Ball is in play in the field; it is our teaching tool and our gift wherever we take our programs -- to every school, every community, and every refugee camp.

Written in different languages on the Red Ball is our philosophy -- LOOK AFTER YOURSELF, LOOK AFTER ONE ANOTHER. This message embodies the best values of sport, such as the importance of teamwork, respect, inclusion, and fair play. Through our games, our resources, and everything our Project Co-ordinators and Local Coaches do, we strive to empower individuals to look after themselves and look after their community.

The Red Ball symbolizes the humanitarian potential of sport to promote health, development and peace.

THE IDEA OF THE RED BALL

Right To Play's Red Ball was the brain child of Toronto-based social marketer **Ric Young**. With 25 years of experience working on a wide range of strategies to promote social change, Ric considers the Red Ball one of his greatest achievements. (And, we agree.)

"From the very first meeting, when Johann Koss came to see me, I was struck by the boldness of the idea of using sport to change the world," remembers Ric. "A global humanitarian initiative harnessing the power of sport to reach kids and communities in the world's most troubled places. I thought it was a breakthrough idea with limitless potential."

SUCH A SIMPLE IDEA WITH SUCH AMAZING IMPACT – THE STORY OF THE RED BALL

That meeting also triggered a memory of a story Ric had heard years earlier from his tailor about growing up in a small village in southern Italy during the war years. The village was extremely poor. There was hardly enough money for food, let alone any extras. But at Christmas the parents of the village did a brilliant thing: they scraped together enough money to buy a single ball. And that was the gift for all the children.

"This story shows the genius of community," says Ric. "Tom (the tailor) says there never was a better gift. The ball was everyone's. And everyone could play. I understood that this simple ball had become a catalyst and a symbol, and a powerful connecting force in the community. Such a simple idea with such amazing impact. I realized that Right To Play could have this same impact in communities around the world. So I said to Johann, 'Can you take a ball with you everywhere you go?' "

"The idea was to make the Red Ball a universal symbol, recognized everywhere," continues Ric, "a symbol of hope, of the power of play and of connection, of people's capacity to overcome hardship, to join together to make life better. Kids rally around the ball locally, in refugee camps and villages and schools. But so do their sports heroes globally. Champions in the world of sport who know what sport can do, the strength and inspiration it can give to kids, and who want to be connected to sport as a force for good."

Right To Play's vision is to create a healthier and safer world through the power of sport and play

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Ric drew on a deceptively simple story and his many years of experience to give birth to the idea of the Red Ball and the words that circle it. "Look after yourself, look after one another," concludes Ric, "is a powerful articulation of what Right To Play exists to do, to use sport and play to provide children with the skill sets and the desire to look after themselves and their communities."

Today, Right To Play's Coaches, Leaders, and many other volunteers use the Red Ball as a teaching tool and program aid around the world.

Our hope is that a global social movement for health will revolve around the Red Ball, and that it will be both a catalyst for change and a connecting symbol of health and community.

Ric Young continues to be a trusted friend, partner and advisor to Right To Play. Ric is President of the leading social marketing firm E.Y.E. and a member of Right To Play's Canadian Advisory Board.