

ADL[®]

Playbook for Addressing Antisemitism in Sports



Introduction

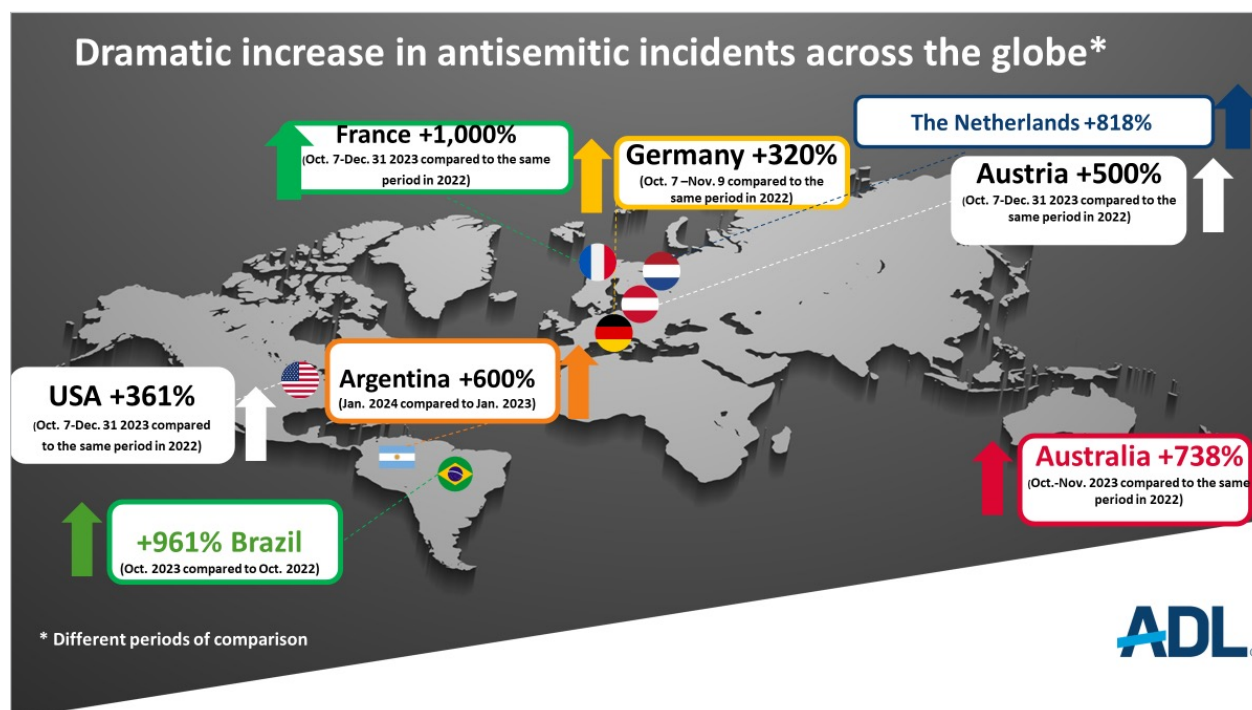
The ADL Playbook for Addressing Antisemitism in Sports is designed to equip athletes, coaches, and their entire organization with the tools and knowledge necessary to recognize, respond to and combat antisemitism in sports. As global events unfold, the rise of antisemitism has become increasingly apparent, making it crucial for all stakeholders in the sports community to understand and address this issue effectively.

Background: Rise of Antisemitism Post October 7 Attack

The world has witnessed a significant surge in antisemitic incidents following the tragic events of October 7, 2023. This increase is part of a broader trend that has been escalating over the past few years. According to the ADL's 2023 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, the number of reported antisemitic incidents in the United States reached an all-time high, reflecting a 140% increase from the previous year. This trend is not confined to the U.S. alone; similar spikes have been observed globally.

Importance of Combating Antisemitism in Sports

Sports play a pivotal role in bringing people together and promoting unity. However, when antisemitism infiltrates this arena, it undermines these values and creates a hostile environment for Jewish and Israeli athletes and their allies. Combating antisemitism and anti-Zionism in sports is essential to maintaining the integrity of the sporting community and ensuring that all individuals can participate in a safe and respectful environment.



How to Talk About Antisemitism or Anti-Zionism

What is Antisemitism?

- Antisemitism is a form of prejudice or discrimination directed toward Jews as individuals or as a group. Manifestations of antisemitism can be explicit (aware, voluntary, intentional) or implicit (unaware, involuntary, unintentional).
- It's based on age-old stereotypes and myths targeting Jews, their religious practices and beliefs, or the Jewish State of Israel.

What is Zionism and Anti-Zionism?

- Zionism is the movement for Jewish self-determination and statehood, reflecting a nearly 4,000-year-old Jewish connection and desire to return to their ancestral homeland, Israel.
- Anti-Zionism downplays the history of Jewish nationhood, its connection to Israel and Israel's importance to Jews. Rejecting Israel's existence as a Jewish state is at the core of anti-Zionism.
- There is significant overlap between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.
- Criticizing Israeli government policies is not antisemitic. Many Israelis and other Jews criticize Israeli policies and are committed Zionists and Israel supporters.

How to Talk About Israel/Zionism?

- When talking about Zionism, it's fair to assume that many people don't understand the term, and some mistakenly associate it with a form of racism and/or colonialism. They don't understand that Zionism is the modern-day term used to describe the nearly 4,000-year Jewish connection to the land of Israel, and that Israel has always been an integral part of Jewish identity.
- Try and make Zionism personal. Explain that as a Jewish person, Israel is part of your identity – reflected in Jewish prayer, text, rituals and traditions. When Zionism is misrepresented or demeaned, it impacts you personally as a Jew.
- Finally, you can explain that it's ok to criticize the policies of the Israeli government – just like you can criticize European, the US or other governments. That is not anti-Zionism or antisemitism.

Examples

Tottenham Hotspur Incident

- [In April 2021](#), Tottenham Hotspur chairman Daniel Levy was targeted with antisemitic abuse on Twitter. The messages included derogatory stereotypes and offensive language against Levy's Jewish heritage.
- Tottenham Hotspur, along with other Premier League clubs, condemned the antisemitic abuse. The club called on social media platforms to take stronger actions against such hate speech. The matter was reported to the police for further investigation.

Nazi Salute in Germany

- During a friendly soccer match between [Israel and Germany in June 2022](#), a German fan performed a Nazi salute, an act of explicit antisemitism that is illegal in Germany.
- German police immediately launched an investigation into the incident. The individual involved was identified and is expected to face legal consequences for violating Germany's strict laws against displaying Nazi symbols and gestures. The German Football Association (DFB) said it "strongly condemned the right-wing extremist incident."

Algerian Judo Incident

- **Tokyo Olympics:** An [Algerian judoka Fethi Nourine](#) and his coach were sent home for refusing to compete against an Israeli athlete, highlighting a pattern of some athletes' ongoing refusal to engage with Israeli competitors.
- The International Judo Federation banned Nourine from competition for [10 years](#).

Steven Berghuis Mural (Dutch Soccer, 2021)

- In the [summer of 2021](#), Steven Berghuis, a player for the Dutch team Feyenoord, was transferred to rival Ajax and supporters responded by creating a mural which depicted Berghuis, who is not Jewish, as a victim of the Holocaust. The mural went further by enlarging Berghuis' nose, a Jewish physical stereotype, and giving him a yarmulke. The mural also included the words "Jews always run away" in Dutch.
- The banner was condemned by both Ajax and Feyenoord. The perpetrators were caught on camera and were found guilty. They were sentenced to community service and were also required to visit Amsterdam's Holocaust memorial.

Response + Best Practices

Immediate Response

- **Safety:** If you fear for your safety or the safety of others, call 9-1-1 or a local emergency number.
- **Stay calm and document:** Remain calm and immediately document the incident, noting time, place, people involved, and details. This is crucial for reporting and investigation. If it is safe to do so, take pictures or a video of the incident. If the incident involves vandalism, do not clean up or remove until law enforcement has completed its investigation.
- **Report the incident:** Use established channels within your association or league, such as reporting to a coach, team manager, or security officer. Ensure prompt reporting for timely response.

Support

- **Offer support and solidarity:** If a teammate is the target, offer them support and solidarity. Let them know they are not alone and the team stands with them.
- **Encourage professional support:** Encourage the victim to seek professional support, such as counseling services provided by the team or external organizations.

Responding Publicly

- **Official statements:** If the incident becomes public, the organization should issue a clear, strong statement condemning antisemitism and supporting the affected individual, demonstrating the team's commitment to combating hate.
- **Encourage other teams/national associations to respond publicly:** Coalitions are important in demonstrating mass rejection of any form of hate.
- **Use of social media:** Before posting, ensure information is verified. Use social media to spread messages of support and solidarity, while being mindful of potential backlash from potential hateful endorsers.

Education

- **Hold team meetings:** Organize team meetings to discuss the incident, the nature of antisemitism, and why it is harmful. Educate team members on recognizing and addressing antisemitism and other forms of discrimination.
- **Engage with experts:** Invite experts from organizations like ADL to conduct workshops or seminars for deeper insights and effective strategies.

Best Practices

Awareness and Education

- **Continuous learning:** Regularly educate yourself and the team about antisemitism and discrimination, understanding both historical and contemporary contexts. Acknowledge that people of all identities can better recognize and challenge antisemitism by learning about its many manifestations.
- **Recognize systemic issues:** Recognize that antisemitism is often systemic, embedded in societal and organizational structures. Efforts to combat it must address these broader systems and not just individual incidents.
- **Training programs:** Participate in mandatory training programs on diversity, equity, and inclusion for all team members. These programs help ensure team are informed and prepared to act against discrimination.

Proactive Measures

- **Preventive policies:** Establish and enforce preventive policies within the team. This includes clear guidelines on acceptable behavior, reporting mechanisms, and consequences for discriminatory actions.
- **Clear policies and enforcement:** Sports organizations need clear policies against antisemitism, with strict enforcement mechanisms. This includes consequences for non-compliance and measures to ensure accountability.

Support Network

- **Internal support:** Create a robust internal support network where team members feel safe to speak up about any issues.
- **External partnerships:** Partner with organizations specializing in combating discrimination, like ADL, to access additional resources and expertise.




605 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10158-3650
(212) 885.7700
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Contact:


Sivan Sinnreich
Israel Education Director, ADL
ssinnreich@adl.org

Alex Freeman
Director of Sports Engagement, ADL
afreeman@adl.org

 @ADL

 Anti-Defamation League

 @ADL_National

 @ADL