

independent defining of the criteria of desirable behavior, young athletes will form positive beliefs about their own competence, have the feeling of independence and a high level of moral reasoning (Rutten et al., 2007; Theokas, 2009).

From the perspective of social pedagogy, the significance of the findings branches in two directions. The first one is related to the confirmation of the assumption that sport *could* represent a social environment which promotes the development of youth's pro-social behavior. Also, sport can be uniquely positioned as social-pedagogical intervention that provides many opportunities for preventing youth problem behavior. Furthermore, the results of the research are important because they support relinquishing of the traditional approach to organizing sports activities for the young and emphasize the need for more intensive pedagogical guidance (mentorship) of children and adolescents in the process of social learning in sports activities. We believe that the values and the system of beliefs of parents and coaches and behavior towards the young represent significant determinants of the value system, behavior and achievement of the young in sport. In other words, on the basis of the findings of this research it is obvious that achieving a desired role of sport requires all the participants to adopt a new way of thinking about sport and its developmental functions. More specifically, it is about conceptualizing sport as comprehensive social-pedagogical intervention, based on contemporary theoretical and empirical findings of social pedagogy. There is a doubtless potential for this direction of the development of youth sports, which has been proved by the findings of this research.

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