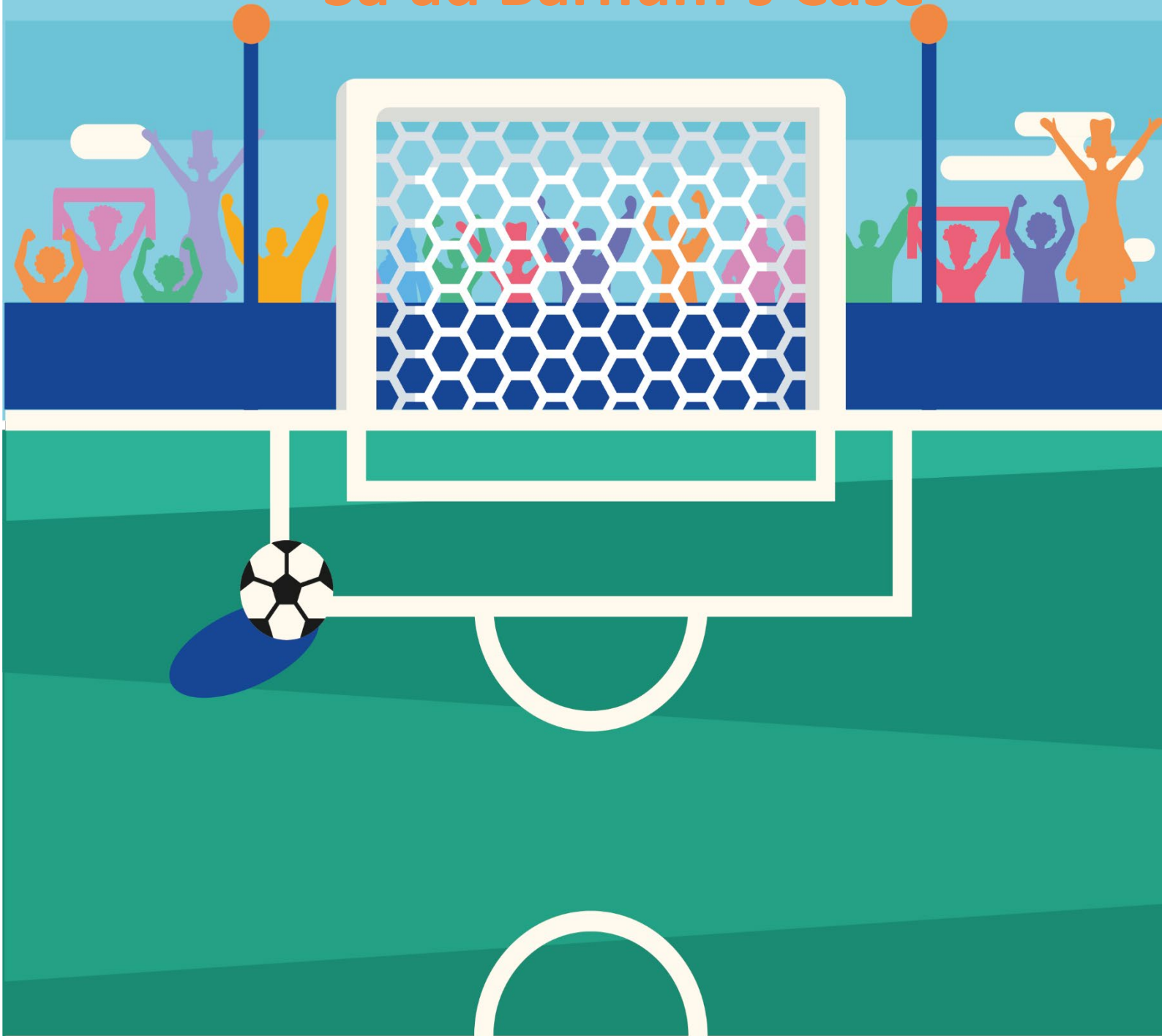


Football against Racism

Sa'ad Barhum's Case





Twinned Peace Sport Schools

Sa'ad Barju

Sa'ad is an Arab-Israeli who grew up in the village of Ein Rafa, a small town located ten kilometers west of Jerusalem. For as long as Sa'ad can remember, he has been in love with the game of football and trained with community and school football teams as a child.

Like most children in Israel, Sa'ad had few meaningful and personal interaction with his Jewish peers growing up. That is until his school in Ein Rafa was selected to participate in the Peres Center's "Twinned Peace Sport Schools" program where Sa'ad, then 12-years-old, learned about the values of diversity, inclusivity, and peace and played football in mixed teams with Jewish students from the nearby community of Bet Shemesh.

Sa'ad participated in the TPSS program for two years, and says that the program had a profound impact on his life. "There have always been projects that bring Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis together. But until participating in the TPSS program I had not been aware of any projects who do this through football. The program framework changed and influenced my personality over the years, using football as a tool to shape my thoughts and ambitions into how I can do something to contribute to society and to humanity, how I can help Jewish and Arab children look one another in the eye and see only the human being in front of them, how I can help them see eye to eye and to not underestimate their feelings," Sa'ad says of the program.

Sa'ad remained involved in the program following his participation, volunteering as an older student to help the program coaches and later joining the coaching staff formally. Today Sa'ad, now 29, works for the Peres Center's Sport in the Service of Peace programming as a field coordinator ensuring the success of the TPSS program in communities and schools across Israel.

"This is a project that has made me who I am today. I will strive to continue to work in this field all my life whether with the Peres Center or in other future positions," Sa'ad says.

The Peres Center is incredibly proud of Sa'ad, whose journey from TPSS participant to beloved and valued member of our program team embodies the life-changing impact of our work on hundreds of Jewish and Arab children who participate in our Sport in the Service of Peace programming each year.

Source: <https://www.peres-center.org/en/the-organization/projects/sports/tpss/>



