

# Smile Project

## Paralympic Games

### Supporting School

#### Sitting Volleyball



Toshima City Ikebukuro  
Dai-san Elementary School



Japan Para-Volleyball  
Association

### Toshima City Ikebukuro Dai-san Elementary School < Comments from the School >

- Through the whole project, students greatly developed their interest in Paralympic games and sitting volleyball. More importantly, their perspective on disability changed from "pity" and "it's difficult" to "admiration." Furthermore, the older students learned the importance of making efforts and doing what they can do.
- The sitting volleyball session made students realize the greatness of Paralympic sports that can be enjoyed by everyone. They became more familiar with the Paralympic sports. Students enjoyed sitting volleyball even during the break.
- We conducted the lecture and session by the Japan Para-Volleyball Association on the Saturday School Open Day so that we could share the learning with parents.

## Program Overview

### 【Book Talk】

During the national reading month in November, we organized "Book Talk" for all the classes with the theme of "Paralympics and consideration towards people with impairments." The school librarian introduced books within the theme and by reading a variety of books, students learned to be considerate of others. One of our favorite books was "Korondemo Daijobu Bokuga Gisoku wo Tsukuru Riyu (It's okay to fall. The reasons I make prosthetic legs)" by Fumio Usui. **His story from a prosthetic legs maker's viewpoint allowed us to see persons with impairments from a different perspective.**

### 【Sitting Volleyball Lecture and Session】

On December 2, 2017, we invited the staff and athletes of the Japan Para-Volleyball Association and conducted a lecture and tried out sitting volleyball. In the lecture, after they taught us about sitting volleyball, they had a demonstration. Our students were very impressed by the athletes' physical abilities, and they sensed how hard the athletes have physically trained and practiced. **Students also learned that everyone can enjoy sitting volleyball regardless of whether they have a disability or not.** An athlete shared a story which made students feel the strength that all the athletes have to overcome their impairments and work hard with positive mindsets. The coach previously shared the words of Ludwig Guttman, the founder of the Paralympics, **"Don't count what is lost, Rather make the best of what is left."** Seeing the athletes embody these words left a deep impression on the students. In the session, students enjoyed playing sitting volleyball with easy rules after practicing passing. Through the session, **students felt how good the athletes are, as well as the importance of cheering for others and the joy of playing together.**

### 【Other Learning Activities】

#### The 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:

Students enjoyed playing sitting volleyball with a special rule which permits them to catch the ball and touch the ball as much as they need. Students experienced how difficult it is to move their body, chase and pass the ball. Most of students knew nothing of sitting volleyball but everyone became obsessed with the sport by the end. **The most wonderful aspect of Paralympic sports is that they can be enjoyed both by people with/without a disability. Students told us that they want to watch a sitting volleyball game live.**

## The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:

Students incorporated the theme “Cheer on the Paralympics and Sitting Volleyball” in their integrated studies class. Students researched the meaning of the Paralympics and about sitting volleyball beforehand and they utilized their knowledge to deepen their understanding of the lecture and session by the Japan Para-Volleyball Association. **After the lecture and session, students considered what they can do to cheer for sitting volleyball.** Furthermore, students came up with the idea to play sitting volleyball using a normal volleyball net.

### **【Student Assembly】**

On March 16, 2018, each grade presented what they learned through this Smile Project at the student assembly. By listening to others’ presentations, students learned new perspectives and reflected on their own experiences. It was a great opportunity to share and summarize what we have learned. **Moreover, this assembly fostered their interest in the Paralympic Games and the realization of inclusive society.**

