

Finnish Fair Play Ritual Reaches Football Fields in Mexico

A youth-led action combining sport, peace, and environmental responsibility is now being practiced on football fields across continents.

LIPERI, NORTH KARELIA, FINLAND, April 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A simple action that began on a football field in Joensuu, Finland, is now being repeated by young people across continents, including in Mexico.

The [Fair Play Peace Circle® ritual](#) combines a shared movement — hands to heart, to head, and forward — with a concrete act: planting and caring for a tree as a symbol of responsibility for people and the planet.



Young people carry a tree to the center of the football field in Mexico as part of a Fair Play Peace Circle® ritual before a match.

What started as a local initiative has quickly taken root internationally.

“

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Mika Vanhanen

On Earth Day 22 April, the ritual was carried out by students on football fields in Mexico, where young players gathered before matches to perform the shared gesture and commit to a collective action. Similar actions are now beginning to appear in other countries.

“When the community does this together, peace is no longer an idea — it becomes action,” says a teacher involved in the initiative in Mexico.

“This is not a campaign. It is something people can do anywhere,” says Mika Vanhanen, founder of the Peace Circle® initiative.

The ritual is part of the broader [Peace Circle® model](#), a Finnish social innovation that connects

values, learning, and action. At its core is a simple idea: peace becomes real when it is visible in everyday actions.

By linking sport with environmental responsibility, the initiative invites schools, teams, and communities to turn fair play into something tangible — not only during the game, but also in how we care for each other and the environment.

Beyond football fields, Peace Circle® is also implemented in schools and as physical park spaces, where trees are planted and cared for as part of long-term community engagement.

As more communities adopt the practice, the focus remains on keeping it simple, local, and shared — a small act that can be repeated anywhere and grows through participation.

Football acts as a bridge — the same simple ritual can connect young people across cultures before the game, regardless of language or background.

More information and video: <https://www.peacecircle.world/post/fair-play-peace-circle-launch-2025>

About Peace Circle®

Peace Circle® is a Finnish pedagogical and community-based innovation that transforms values into visible, shared action. It connects schools, communities, and cities in a global movement for peace, sustainability, and collective responsibility.

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Players place their hands on their hearts on the field in Mexico as part of a Fair Play ritual.



Players form a peace symbol on the football field in Mexico — a shared moment that brings the Fair Play Peace Circle® ritual to its conclusion.

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