

Tips for Coaching Youth with Disabilities

Youth with disabilities want to be involved in activities for the same reasons as youth without disabilities. While most coaches and programs are open to including youth with disabilities in programs, they often lack the knowledge about how to best include individuals with disabilities. Listed are some basic tips to get you started. In addition, several resources are provided that have more detailed information about coaching individuals with a particular disability.



- Create a positive experience from the first point of contact. The team takes direction from the coach.
- Find out more information about the person's disability which might include specific support services, modifications (e.g., access to bathroom facilities, ramps, interpreters, large print instruction, etc.) medications or secondary conditions.
- Find out and allow the person to demonstrate their skills and abilities. Don't assume that they can't do something because of their disability. Focus on identifying abilities not disabilities.
- Bring the individual on a tour of the surroundings where practice and competitions will take place and explain the functions of the equipment that may be used.
- If there is another practice going on, let the individual eavesdrop into that session so that she or he gets a sensory, auditory, or visual feeling.

Modify only those aspects of the activities that need to be modified for a given individual, while still maintaining the integrity of the game.

Examples of different types of accommodations:

Rule modification: in tennis, an individuals' participation might be facilitated by allowing them to return the ball after two bounces, while other players in the same game must play the ball after only one bounce.

Instructional: persons with visual or with cognitive impairments may require a more tactile teaching methods, and will learn primarily through repetition of the exercises. Persons with hearing impairments might like to have drills and instruction written on a board.



Equipment: In baseball a tee might be used to assist in contacting the ball. A ramp for bowling, a bow holding stand for archery.

Source:

Coaching Athletes with Disabilities. (2005) Retrieved June 5,2009 from, Coaching Association of Canada and National Coaching Certification Program. Ottawa, Ontario. http://www.coach.ca/eng/products/documents/Coaching_Athletes_Disability.pdf

Feigley,D., Sharkley, L. & Hunt, J. (n.d.) *Including and Coaching Individuals with Disabilities in Recreational youth Sport Programs.* Retrieved June 5,2009 from Rutgers Youth Sports Research Council. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. New Brunswick. <http://youthsports.rutgers.edu/documents/disabilities>

Additional Resources

National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (www.ncpad.org)

National Center on Accessibility (<http://www.ncaonline.org>)

Coaching Athletes with Disabilities. (http://www.coach.ca/eng/products/documents/Coaching_Athletes_Disability.pdf)

The ND Disability Health Project can provide technical assistance to assist with health promotion, staff training and education, and disability awareness. Contact us at 800.233.1737 or visit our website at www.ndcpd.org/health .



North Dakota Center for
Persons with Disabilities
Minot State University
500 University Ave. W.
Minot, ND 58707
1.800.233.1737
701.858.3580
www.ndcpd.org/health

Project staff :

Brent Askvig
Principal Investigator
701-858-3052

brent.askvig@minotstateu.edu

Kari Arrayan
Program Director
701-858-3048

kari.arrayan@minotstateu.edu

Kylene Kraft
Project Assistant
701-858-4365

kylene.kraft@minotstateu.edu

Korie Huettl
Administrative Assistant
701-858-4154

korie.huettl@minotstateu.edu

Vision:

All people in ND have access to information and services they need to maintain good health and wellness. There are no health disparities between people with and without disabilities that are based solely on the presence of a disability.

Pay It Forward.....

Pass it on to others who may find this information helpful.