

Including Children With Disabilities

Printed with permission from Cira Ontario (www.ciraontario.com).

A quick, easy reference for adapting playground, low-organizational and sports activities for children with physical and mental disabilities.

Some General Guidelines

1. Consult directly with person/participant with the disability. They know best about their disability and what strategies can be developed to make them feel comfortable. Ask lots of questions and make sure the participant is involved in every step of the inclusion process.
2. Make adjustments to the activity only when necessary. Many people with disabilities require few or only minor adjustments to participate fully in activities. Adaptations should aim to increase the person's participation, success and enjoyment. Allow the participant to inform you of what he/she needs.
3. Approach inclusion on an individual basis. People with specific disabilities require specific adaptations to be made. Do not approach adaptations using general strategies—this can lead to making unsuitable or redundant adjustments.
4. Reduce new skills down to their smallest components. This allows the participant to master each new skill component individually and build their skill set in a progressive fashion.
5. Approach adaptations as temporary. Consider adjustments made to the activity as a springboard

Continued...

...Continued

for developing new skills that allow the person to participate more fully and without relying on the adaptation in the future. This prevents the participant from becoming reliant on adaptations when they are actually able to participate without them.

6. Be Fair. Any modifications to the activity should be fair to all participants involved, regardless of ability. Modifications which single out those with disabilities only contribute to isolation and enforce stereotypes.
7. Make sure equipment is available. If adaptations are based on specific equipment, and that equipment is not available, this may limit the participant's opportunities to get involved.

Legend

Common Adaptations



balls of various size, weight, colour and texture



allow a partner to assist



lower and/or increase size of target



extend # of tries/attempts



lengthen or shorten the playing time



vary the tempo



adjust size of playing area



give verbal clues and oral prompts



mark positions on playing field

Organized Sports

Archery



- use lightweight bows
- place wheelchair users on an angle for greater space with the bow
- use smaller bows and arrows with suction cups indoors

www.activeamp.org/sports/archery.htm

Basketball



- allow travelling
- allow two hand/double dribble
- disregard 3 sec. lane violation
- frequent substitutions
- increase # of players
- use a beeper ball
- wheelchair users may hold ball in their lap while moving

www.nepad.org/factshtml/basketball.htm

Bowling



- simplify/reduce # of steps
- use two hands instead of one
- remain in stationary position
- use a ramp; bumpers in gutter

www.awba.org

Croquet



- use plastic equipment
- crutches can be modified to be used as mallets
- allow more space between wickets

Golf



- use clubs with larger heads
- use shorter/lighter clubs
- use a tee for all shots
- shorten distance to the hole

www.usga.org/rules/golfers_with_disabilities.html

Hockey



- use plastic sticks
- use sleds for all players (sledge hockey)

www.shoc.ca

Soccer



- play six-a-side
- use a deflated ball
- use a target that emits a noise when hit
- reduce size of goal in proportion to participant's mobility (if goal keeper)

www.ampsoccer.org

Softball



- use a batting tee
- use a lightweight bat
- shorten pitching distance
- allow wheelchair users to push ball off a ramp, their lap or from a tee

Table Tennis



- use larger paddles
- use an underhand shot to start volley
- shield edges of table to prevent balls bouncing off
- have a peer assistant retrieve balls

Tennis



- use shorter, lighter rackets
- use larger-head rackets
- allow a drop serve
- stand closer to the net on serve

www.tenniscanada.com

Volleyball



- allow players to catch the ball
- allow players to self-toss and set ball
- let assistant hold ball while being hit
- play the entire game sitting down
- allow more hits in a row per side

www.volleyball.ca/nats/disabled/history.html

Playground Activities

Four Square



- allow double bounces
- draw larger squares for better mobility and easier shots
- fix player positions in one spot
- use an over-inflated or mishaped ball

Hop Scotch



- use a large, easily handled marker
- allow stepping on lines
- allow players to hop on two feet
- allow two hops in one square
- use brightly coloured chalk for lines

Schlockey



- variation of hockey played in a 4' x 8' arena with side and end boards. an excellent playground game for those with limited mobility

www.mohawkc.on.ca/external/cira/resource.html

Tetherball



- allow participants to catch ball
- set a time limit instead of playing until completion

Low Organizational Activities

Catching Games



- use Velcro mits with a tennis ball
- throw using underhand toss
- stand close together and move progressively further apart
- stand in front of wall or netting to stop missed balls
- use a beeper ball

King's Court



- use large, slow moving balls such as beach balls
- have participants count to five before throwing
- have all players throw with their weakest arm (i.e. 'righties' throw with their left)

Follow the Leader



- perform activity in partners
- on whistle blow, switch leaders
- use different movements (example: animal movements)

Tag



- use pool noodles to tag
- use beanbags/gator balls to tag
- use 'freezing' and 'unfreezing' to allow more chances to play continuously
- provided 'safe areas' where players can go without being tagged
- blindfold half the players, with the other half as 'buddies' or guides

Frisbee Games



- use games that require players to hit target with frisbee, but not to catch it (ex. modified 'Frisbee Golf')
- substitute frisbee for a ball in other games: (ex. 'Frisbee Baseball')

www.discontinuum.org/What_Is_DG.html

Relay Races



- use scooter boards; add inertubes for extra protection against bumps
- use mats pulled along the ground
- have participants knock objects off cones instead of maneuvering around them
- use large, padded obstacles