

# CHALLENGER BASEBALL SCHOOL PROGRAM EVALUATION

## DID YOU KNOW?



**MORE THAN  
1 IN 10  
YOUTH IN CANADA HAVE  
ONE OR MORE DISABILITIES.**

Strong evidence indicates that children and youth with developmental disabilities gain numerous benefits from participating in group exercise, including, improved gross motor function, communication skills, increased socialization, and increased self-control.

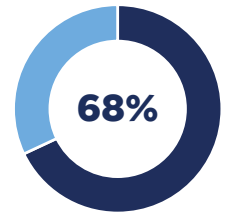
**AND YET,** across Canada, families of children and youth with disabilities report **HIGHER DISTRESS** and **FEWER OPPORTUNITIES** to engage in social and physical activities compared to same-age peers without disabilities.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND DISABILITY

A common challenge for physical education teachers in schools is feeling **INADEQUATELY PREPARED** to teach or adapt activities for students with disabilities.

**68%** of our surveyed educators with prior experience teaching students with physical disabilities have **NEVER** received previous training in **ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.**



This was true even for **70%** of those who had previously taken special education courses or certifications.

The key to better integrating students with developmental disabilities into physical education, after-school sports and the overall classroom curriculum is:



### Teacher Training

Lack of competent, knowledgeable staff is one of the most commonly cited barriers preventing children and youth with disabilities from participating in sport and recreation programming.



### Modified Equipment

Inadequate or lack of adaptive equipment has been highlighted as one of the major barriers experienced by Canadian teachers looking to implement adaptive physical activities.



### Strength Based Approach

The 2018 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth calls on educators to personalize physical activity programs for children and youth with disabilities using a strength-based approach.

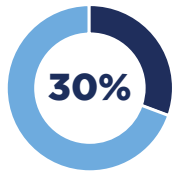
# WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The Challenger Baseball (CB) school program provides teachers with training that introduces practical, versatile techniques to adapt physical education curriculum to suit the needs of all children.

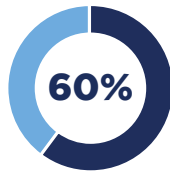
## DOES IT WORK

### We Found Challenger Baseball Meets Teachers Professional Development Needs

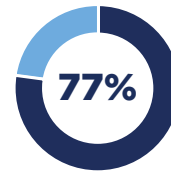
Educators who have received Challenger Baseball training reported significant improvements in knowledge of best practices, and confidence in making adaptations, ability to support positive behaviours, and understanding of how to create inclusive classrooms for students with disabilities. Including:



Increase in knowledge of how to support positive behaviours



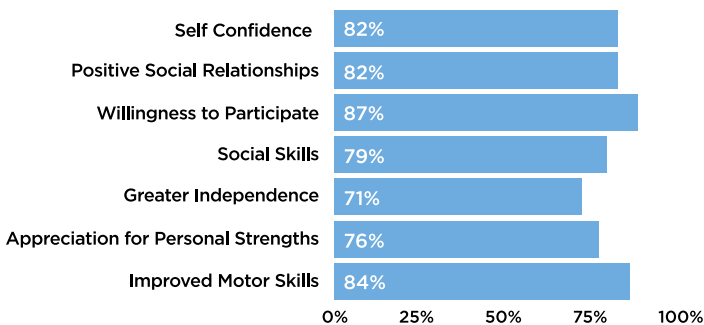
Increase in confidence to adapt activities



Increase in knowledge of best-practices for adaptation

**100%** of educators said that adaptive physical training should be a required part of professional development in schools and that **they would recommend Challenger Baseball training** to other educators.

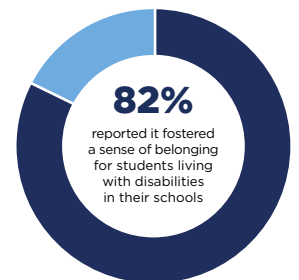
### % of Educators Who Reported Positive Gains



Educators reported that Challenger Baseball training had produced positive gains for many or most participating student athletes in the following areas: self confidence, positive social relationships, willingness to participate in activities, social skills, greater independence, enhanced appreciation for personal strengths, and improved motor skills.

### We Found Challenger Baseball Benefits Extend Beyond Physical Education

Educators reported that Challenger Baseball benefits reached beyond the student athletes directly participating in the program and significantly enhanced their abilities in the classroom.



- **55%** reported it enhanced their adaptability in the classroom
- **63%** reported it provided access to tools and strategies that enhance classroom teaching
- **79%** reported it fostered a culture of learning among teachers
- **74%** reported it promoted an inclusive learning environment

## HOW DO WE KNOW?

In September 2019, Jays Care's Program Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Maria Mardirosian, partnered with Dr. Phillip Groff from Creative Development Unlimited to conduct an external evaluation on the short and long-term benefits of Challenger Baseball in schools.