





NATIONWIDE, YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES ARE **4.5 TIMES LESS** ACTIVE THAN YOUTH WITHOUT DISABILITIES¹

Some of the most reported barriers to participation include:^{2,3,4}

-  Functional limitations
-  Lack of appropriate and inclusive opportunities and facilities to be active
-  Cost and time constraints
-  Fear of being injured and/or stigmatized

In addition:



More than half of K-12 schools allow students to be exempted from required physical education for a cognitive disability⁵

This matters because people with intellectual disabilities are disproportionately affected by chronic conditions

People with intellectual disabilities are:

5X more likely to have diabetes⁸

3X more likely to have arthritis⁸

2X more likely to have cardiovascular disease & asthma⁸



2X more likely to be obese⁸

3X more likely to be admitted to the hospital⁸

EVERY CHILD DESERVES THE OPPORTUNITY TO **MAXIMIZE THEIR HEALTH AND FITNESS**

Participation in regular physical activity can improve overall well-being by fostering:^{9,10}



- ✓ Independence
- ✓ Coping abilities
- ✓ Competitiveness
- ✓ Teamwork



- ✓ Formation of friendships
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Development of self-identify



Sources

¹ The Aspen Institute - Project Play. Physical Literacy in the United States: A Model, Strategic Plan, and Call to Action.

² Shields N, Synnot AJ, and Barr M. Perceived barriers and facilitators to physical activity for children with disability: a systematic review. Br J Sports Med. 2012;46:989-997.

³ King G, Law M, King S, Rosenbaum P, Kertoy MK, Young NL. A conceptual model of the factors affecting the recreation and leisure participation of children with disabilities. Phys Occup Ther Pediatr. 2003;23(1):63-90.

⁴ Rimmer JA and Rowland JL. Physical activity for youth with disabilities: A critical need in an underserved population. Developmental Neurorehabilitation. 2008;11(2): 141-148.

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School Health Policies and Practices Study 2014.

⁶ Active Schools; NCHPAD. Inclusive Physical Education and Physical Activity: Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities - Survey Report. 2016.

⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School Health Policies and Practices Study 2016.

⁸ Special Olympics Health. Inclusive Health - Key Facts.

⁹ Patel DR and Greydanus DE. The pediatric athlete with disabilities. Pediatr Clin North Am. 2002;4(4):803-27.

¹⁰ Dykens EM, et al. Exercise and sports in children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Positive physical and psychosocial effects. Child Adolesc Psychiatr Clin N Am. 1998;7(4):757-71, viii.



Considerations to Promote an Inclusive Physical Education Classroom



Leverage Peer Support

Students learn best from their peers. Create classroom environments that foster peer-to-peer and small group interactions.



Utilize Support Services

Think about other support personnel who can be utilized (e.g., paraprofessionals, occupational and physical therapists, and others).



Apply the Principles of Universal Design

Remember that one size will not fit all. Provide options for activities and instruction that allow each student to practice a task or skill in a way that will work best for them.



The Presidential Youth Fitness Program provides a variety of free resources to promote quality, inclusive fitness education. These include virtual and in-person trainings, teaching aids, sample assignments, and protocols and standards for the FitnessGram® assessment and Brockport Physical Fitness Test. Learn more at pyfp.org.



Special Olympics Inclusive Health Resource page contains inspiring videos, case studies, and fact sheets. Visit specialolympics.org and search Inclusive Health.

Practical Strategies



Utilize instructional strategies that match the learner's strengths and modalities



Arrange the class in a variety of ways to optimize class cohesion and engagement



Plan instructional time to support progressive learning



Utilize cues or supports that will foster independence



Modify activities, environment and equipment



Utilize fitness assessment data to support individual goal setting and plans for improvement



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