


California
After School
Resource Center




Physical Activity: Ability Awareness

California After School Resource Center
(CASRC)

Administered for the California Department of Education
(C.D.E.)

Hello. My name is Doug. Welcome to the Physical Activity: Ability Awareness training. This training will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. So let's get started!



Training Objectives

You will learn:

- How your attitude and actions influence the inclusion of those with a variety of abilities.
- Strategies to create, enhance, and maintain an inclusive environment.
- Strategies to adapt your after school program for those with specific disabilities.

I'd like to start this training by reviewing the training objectives.

As a participant, you will learn:

- 1) How your attitude and actions influence the inclusion of those with a variety of abilities.
- 2) Strategies that create, enhance, and maintain an environment that is sensitive to including those with a variety of abilities.
- 3) Strategies to adapt your after school program for those with specific disabilities.

This training will consist of a series of slides giving you information that is intended to help you gain a better understanding of how all students can be given the opportunity to participate, as fully as they can, in the physical activities offered in your after school program. In addition, you will be asked to complete two interactive activities designed to give you a chance to put what you've learned into action. The first activity helps you assess how inclusive your program currently is. The second gives you an opportunity to be creative in how you would adapt physical activities for students with specific needs.

Objective One

You will learn:

- How your attitude and actions influence the inclusion of those with a variety of abilities.



Let's look at objective one. You will learn how your attitude and actions influence the inclusion of those with a variety of abilities. Let's look at how your example sets the stage for how others, both staff and students, will perform when it comes to being inclusive.



Inclusion is an Attitude

- Staff's attitudes and actions towards inclusion become youths' attitudes and actions.
- True inclusion is accomplished when both staff and youths:
 - Have positive attitudes towards inclusion.
 - Are open to adjusting physical activity to accommodate everyone, regardless of ability.

Inclusion is an attitude. True inclusion is accomplished when both staff and program participants are aware and open to adjusting physical activity in order to accommodate everyone, regardless of their ability.




Laws Regarding Inclusion

- Rehabilitation Act 504
- Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.)
- No Child Left Behind (N.C.L.B.)

It is important to understand that inclusion of all students is not just an option, it is the law. As a member of an after school staff, you need to make every reasonable effort to provide a safe, caring, and productive program that allows for maximum participation, regardless of ability. Let's take a quick look at the four laws that govern inclusion in after school programs.

- The Rehabilitation Act 504 requires equal opportunities for students with disabilities in any program that receives federal funds.
- The A.D.A., or Americans with Disabilities Act, requires after school programs to modify activities based on the needs of the students who participate in them. Plus, doing this can help all students reach their full potential.
- The I.D.E.A., or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, focuses on equal education rights. It guarantees children with disabilities the same access to education as their typically developing peers.
- The last law we need to consider is N.C.L.B., or No Child Left Behind. This law seeks to provide accountability for student outcomes through Learning Standards and Annual Assessments. Regardless of their differing abilities, students need to become "proficient" and schools must make their A.Y.P., or Annual Yearly Progress. These scores are reported to the public.



Objective Two


You will learn:

- Strategies to create, enhance, and maintain an inclusive environment:
 - 1) Promising practices
 - 2) Sensory preferences
 - 3) General adaptations

Now let's move onto objective two. You will learn strategies that create, enhance, and maintain an environment that is sensitive to including those with a variety of abilities. This section explores three basic considerations for achieving this type of environment. They are:

- 1) Promising practices, such as sensitive language
- 2) Sensory preference in learning, and
- 3) General adaptations, such as the use of equipment, changing rules or boundaries, and modifying your instructions.

Creating an inclusive environment allows students to demonstrate empathy, understanding, and respect for the numerous differences exhibited by others in an activity setting. A patient, sensitive leader can establish a supportive environment that meets the individual needs of participants. You play an important role by taking responsibility to learn about the unique needs of these diverse learners and the implications for physical activity. Accommodating for your students can be as easy as changing an activity component and/or providing students with choices among appropriate tasks. Just simplify. You can challenge all students in ways that provide maximum opportunities for learning and development of their personal potential. By working with a student with disabilities, you are helping him or her become fit for life! Helping youths make physical activity an important part of their lifestyle takes time, courage, determination, and imagination.



Promising Practices: Sensitive Language

- Avoid the use of the word “retarded.”
- Avoid the use of the words “short bus.”
- Use “typically developing” versus “normal.”
- Use people-first language:
 - “People with disabilities” versus “the handicapped or disabled”
 - “She has Autism” versus “she’s autistic”
 - “The child with Down’s Syndrome” versus “he’s a Down’s kid”


Let’s talk about disability etiquette when it comes to the language that we use when addressing those with special needs. People with disabilities are quite naturally sensitive to the negative implications of some expressions. Language conveys powerful messages and can lead to inaccurate labeling that dehumanizes or demeans. It is important to encourage all students to be sensitive to their use of language, too. It is not appropriate to use terms like: handicapped people, spastic, or any word ending in “i.c.,” which replaces the identity of an individual. For example, “the epileptic” or “dyslexic.”

Avoid the use of words such as: cripples, wheelchair bound, a victim of, suffering from, deformed, retarded, invalid, dumb, or rides the “short bus” or the special needs child or student.

Instead practice “people-first language” by using terms like:

- “People with disabilities” versus “the handicapped or disabled”
- “She has Autism versus “she’s autistic”
- “The child with Down’s Syndrome” versus “he’s a Down’s kid”

You needn’t be concerned when using common expressions. For example, saying, “Do you see what I mean?” when talking with someone who has a visual impairment. They understand the use of such sayings, and it is not grounds for embarrassment. Remember, it is important to monitor both your own and your students’ language when including those with various abilities.



Promising Practices: Needs Assessment for Inclusiveness


- 1) Strong Leadership
- 2) Collaboration and Communication
- 3) Accommodations/Modifications
- 4) Positive Behavior Supports
- 5) Facilitating Friendships
- 6) Reflection and Relaxation
- 7) Evaluation

Modified from Project Access. (2006). Including Children with Disabilities in After School Programs, Region 10. *WestEd*, 29-30.

A truly inclusive program doesn't come without careful thought and design. Here are seven Promising Practices that need to be considered when assessing the success of your after school program in regards to inclusion.

They are:

- 1) Strong Leadership: Leadership that understands the importance and oversees the implementation of an inclusive program.
- 2) Collaboration and Communication: Hold regular meetings to discuss how best to include students with special needs.
- 3) Accommodations and Modifications: There is a conscientious effort to make sure all participants have equal access based on their abilities.
- 4) Positive Behavior Supports: Students with behavior issues are given support in order to foster more appropriate responses. Also, proper attitudes and actions towards inclusion are valued and held up as the culture of the after school program.
- 5) Facilitating Friendships: Remember, inclusion may begin with the staff, but it is only really effective when it is also modeled by the students.
- 6) Reflection and Relaxation: Take time to see where you have been and where you are going in regards to building and maintaining an inclusive program. Also, celebrate your successes, and create an environment where everyone is welcome and comfortable.
- 7) Evaluation: Keep what is working and fix what is not.



Your Program: Needs Assessment

Area

- 1) Strong Leadership
- 2) Collaboration and Communication
- 3) Accommodations/Modifications
- 4) Positive Behavior Supports
- 5) Facilitating Friendships
- 6) Reflection and Relaxation
- 7) Evaluation

Rating

- Just beginning
- Working on it
- Doing great

Now that you are familiar with the seven Promising Practices, it is time for you to put that knowledge to use. Select the handout. This handout will also be available at the end of the training. Take the Designing an Inclusive Program Needs Assessment, and consider each of these practices as they are currently seen in your program.

You will need to rate the level of implementation for each using the following scale:

- 1) Just beginning
- 2) Working on it, and
- 3) Doing great

Take this assessment to your program and create a plan for improving the inclusiveness of your program with your fellow staff members.

Now that you've assessed where you are, let's review some of the adaptations you may want to make in your program.

Sensory Preference

- Visual learners:
 - 60% of students
- Auditory learners:
 - 20% of students
- Tactile (kinesthetic) learners:
 - 20% of students



Taylor, A., Brewer, E., & Nash, M. (2003). *MindWaves*. AR: The Concerned Group, Inc.

All students are unique in their learning process. However, there are three general ways students gather information. These are known as their Sensory Preference.

They are:


1) Visual learners: Approximately 60 percent of the population learns by what they see.

These students learn best with a sight-word approach, or a "look-say" method, by visualizing, imagining scenes, and attending to pictures and context clues.

2) Auditory learners: Approximately 20 percent of students gain information through what they hear.

These students learn best with a phonics approach, listening and repeating, sub-vocalizing, moving their lips when reading, and engaging in dialogue and discussion.

3) Tactile (or kinesthetic) learners account for approximately 20 percent of students. These students need to touch and do to gain their knowledge. These students learn best with multi-sensory approach, high action stories, acting out stories, role playing, and doing simulations.



General Adaptations

- Equipment
 - Size, quantity, etc.
- Rules
 - Flexibility (number of turns, changing time allotment, etc.)
- Environment
 - Boundaries, facilities, etc.
- Instructions
 - Additional prompts/cues, instructions in multiple formats (written, verbal, pictures)

Now that you have a better understanding of how your students gather information, it is time to consider how you can adapt your physical activities in order to accommodate all of your students and their various needs. You can make simple adaptations to create an inclusive learning environment for everyone by simply modifying the equipment, game rules, environment, and instruction. Remember to work with the student to create adaptations that work for him or her.


These are some examples of the types of adaptations and modifications for physical activity:

Modify the equipment: Examples would be using a different ball size or changing the basket height.

Modify the rules: Examples include allowing bounces in a ball activity or increasing the number of turns a student can take.

Modify the environment or adapt your facilities: To do this, you may change the boundaries or playing area size. Try to reduce unnecessary distractions and noise.

Modify instructional prompts or cues: Examples include providing additional verbal cues, using a buddy system when one student models the activity to the other, or allowing for more time to complete the task.



Objective Three


You will learn:

- Strategies to adapt physical activity for the following disabilities:
 - Behavioral or emotional
 - Learning or processing
 - Physical
 - Health

Now that we've discussed different types of adaptations, let's review how you can use these adaptations for specific disabilities. For objective three, you will learn strategies to adapt physical activity for the following disabilities:

- Behavioral or emotional
- Learning or processing
- Physical, and
- Health

Remember, your role as an after school staff member is to control the learning environment, while helping the child gain control of his or her learning. What works for one child may not work with others.



Behavior/Emotional Disabilities

Attention Deficit Disorder (A.D.D.) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (A.D.H.D.)

- Inclusion strategies:
 - Provide additional reminders about instructions, rules, and activities.
 - Give frequent and specific praise.
 - Offer activities for shorter lengths of time.

The first type of disability we will discuss is behavioral or emotional. Examples of behavioral or emotional disabilities are: Attention Deficit Disorder (A.D.D.) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (A.D.H.D.). Some potential issues for students with these disabilities are: having difficulty paying attention; being fidgety; having a hard time staying on-task; exhibiting a lack of self-control; being aggressive, impulsive, or socially unacceptable. For these students, it is crucial that the after school program activities have a sense of order, structure, and dependability.

Inclusion strategies might include:

- Providing additional reminders about instructions for activities.
- Giving frequent and specific praise for what the student accomplished instead of focusing on what wasn't completed.
- Offering activities for shorter lengths of time and changing activities to match the student's attention span.



Behavior/Emotional Disabilities Continued

Autism

- Inclusion strategies:
 - Give clear directions. Ask the student to do one or two things at a time.
 - Give directions in a format the student can process.
 - Learn about triggers (certain noises, movements, etc.).

A second example of a behavioral or emotional disability is Autism. Some potential issues for students with this disability are: They may have limited communication skills; may react strongly to touch, noise, or lights; and often prefer to play alone and may be isolated.

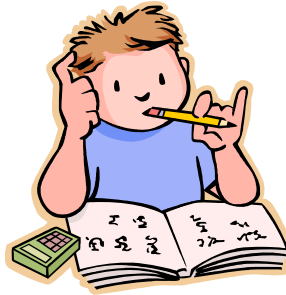
Inclusion strategies would include:

Give clear directions, and ask the student to do one or two things at a time.

- Give directions in a format that the student can process. For example, a student may respond better to picture directions than verbal directions.
- Each student with Autism is different. Learn about triggers (certain noises, movements, etc.) that upset them, and try to avoid them or help the student prepare for them and have a means to deal with them when they occur. Try to get these students involved in group activities using a gradual process. If a student currently won't participate in any group activities, work towards getting the student involved 15 minutes a day, then 20, 25, and so forth.

Learning Disabilities

- Visual and auditory processing disorders
- Cognitive disabilities
- Dyslexia



Now let's discuss Learning Disabilities. Students with Learning Disabilities have an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, write, read, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Students with Learning Disabilities have what would be considered normal intelligence. However, unlike other students, they are unable to perform academically within the normal I.Q. (or intelligence quotient) range. In other words, they have the capacity to learn. They just have difficulty showing it! Some examples of Learning Disabilities are: auditory and visual processing disorders, cognitive disorders, and dyslexia.

Potential issues for these students are: short attention spans, frustration, impulsiveness, poor self-concept, or self-esteem; difficulty processing verbal instructions; difficulty processing where one object is in relation to another; and difficulty interpreting visual cues, such as signs, colors, and boundaries.



Learning Disabilities: Inclusion Strategies

- Provide directions in a format that the student can process.
- Demonstrate how to understand and use visual cues, such as boundaries and hand symbols.
- Be patient and supportive if the student needs extra time to process directions.

Inclusion strategies for students with Learning Disabilities include:

Provide directions in a format that the student can process, such as written directions for a student that has trouble processing auditory directions.

Demonstrate how to understand and use visual cues, such as boundaries and hand symbols for games.

Be patient and supportive if the student needs extra time to process directions. Ask other students to be patient as well.

Physical Disabilities

- Visual impairment
- Auditory impairment
- Gross and fine motor skills issues



All students have different physical and motor capabilities, so learning goals must be designed to meet their specific needs. For students with a physical disability, this need is often more apparent, and with a little creativity, easily overcome. Physical disability examples include: visual impairment, auditory impairment, and gross and fine motor skills issues, such as cerebral palsy.

Potential issues for a student with cerebral palsy include: difficulty walking (they may require a wheelchair or cane), difficulty talking, or they may experience uncontrollable muscle contractions. Potential issues for a student with a visual impairment include: They may also have trouble getting around, trouble understanding the physical environment, and they can't see nonverbal cues, which are often key to knowing how to participate in an activity.



Physical Disabilities: Inclusion Strategies

- Choose environments carefully to reduce the risk of injury.
- Adjust the intensity, distance, and/or duration to the student's tolerance.
- Give the student a pre-orientation to the activity.
- Provide different types of cues (visual, auditory, and tactile).
- Partner students with other students who can serve as guides.

Inclusion strategies for physical disabilities would include the following:

- Choose environments carefully, so that if a student falls, there is the smallest risk of injury. For example, play on the grass instead of concrete.
- Adjust the intensity, distance, and/or duration to the student's tolerance. For example, shorten the throwing distance.
- Give the student a pre-orientation to the activity and the environment. For example, allow the student to walk the distance between the starting and stopping point of an activity prior to playing with the other students.
- Provide tactile cues. For example, add cones to mark boundaries, and allow the student to feel the cones.
- Partner students with other students who can serve as guides.
- For students with low-vision, provide bright cues, such as fluorescent tape.
- For students with hearing impairments, provide additional written cues.




Health Disabilities

- Obesity
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Seizures



A fourth kind of disability is health-related disabilities. Examples of this type of disability would include: obesity, asthma, diabetes, and seizures. It is important to review the health records for students with these unique needs, have a game plan for accommodating activities to ensure their participation, and keep notes of any conditions that require monitoring or adaptations.

Potential issues for students with health disabilities are: trouble breathing during physical activity or due to certain allergens, trouble moving for longer periods of time, or doing certain physical movements, such as hopping or bending. Students may display a listlessness or limited amount of energy, have low-self esteem, or lack of motivation.



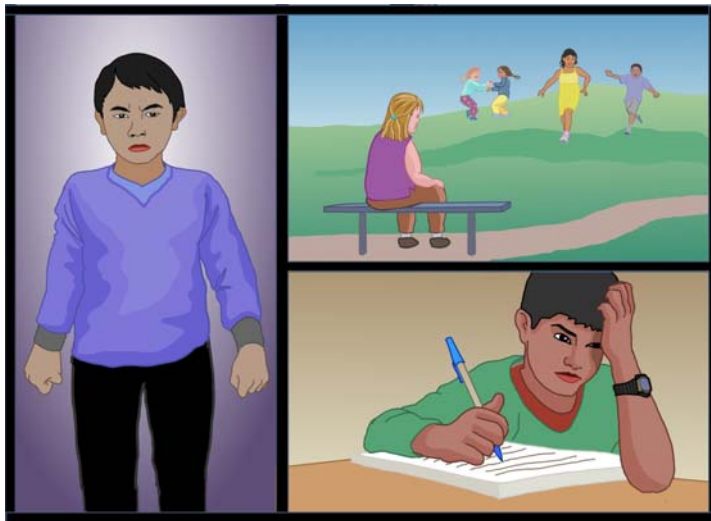
Health Disabilities: Inclusion Strategies

- Have access to inhalers or move activities indoors.
- Offer lower-intensity options.
- Provide a smaller play area.
- Make it okay to take short breaks.
- Consider equipment modifications for the whole group.
 - This minimizes the attention given to a specific student's needs.


Some inclusion strategies to address these issues are:

- If a student uses an inhaler, be sure to have access to it during physical activity or move activities indoors.
- Offer lower-intensity options, such as walking briskly instead of running.
- Provide a smaller play area if a student has trouble covering a large area.
- Make it okay to take short breaks, but still encourage students to rejoin the activity. Limited participation is better than none.
- Consider equipment modifications for the whole group, thus minimizing the attention given to a specific student's needs. For example, in the game circle-to-circle, which typically uses regular-sized hoops, you could tie ropes in a larger circle to use instead of hoops.

Case Studies



Time for your second interactive activity! Please select the handout. Review these two case studies, and write down two to three ways to adapt activities in a way that enables all students to participate in physical activity. When you're ready, continue to the next slide.



How Could You Help These Students?

- John has A.D.H.D.
 - Offer active, constructive breaks from group games.
 - Provide additional cues throughout activity time.
- Mary is overweight and has asthma.
 - Ask Mary what kind of physical activity she likes.
 - Make sure all equipment is accessible.
 - Ask Mary to participate a few minutes at a time.
 - Make sure she can access her inhaler.

Look at the adaptations that you came up with for the case studies. How did you do? The first student, John, has A.D.H.D. You could maximize his ability to participate successfully in physical activity by building in breaks from group play to help him control his temper. For example, you could give him the option to run a lap when he feels frustrated before rejoining the game. You could also provide additional cues about practicing teamwork and positive behavior throughout the game.

Mary has both obesity and asthma. You could increase her interest in and comfort level with physical activity by first asking her what type of physical activity interests her and making sure to offer that option if possible. You could also make sure that the equipment used for physical activity is appropriate for students of varying sizes. You could encourage Mary to participate for 5 minutes at a time, then 10 minutes at a time and so on, and you could partner her with a student who also needs breaks, so she doesn't feel isolated. Finally, always make sure she can access her inhaler.

Do these students remind you of any of your students? Hopefully, you'll now feel ready to adapt physical activity so that all your students can participate fully.



Congratulations!

You have reached the end of the training. You will now have the opportunity to take a quiz to test the knowledge you have acquired in this training. If you receive a passing score a completion certificate, will be e-mailed to you at the e-mail address you provided. If you don't receive a passing score, you will have the opportunity to take the test again at any time. Following the quiz, you will be asked to complete a brief feedback survey. After you complete the survey, you will be able to access sample CASRC library resources and additional information about physical activity. You may take the quiz by selecting the link. Thank you for participating in the training.