



Office for Disability

Coaching participants with a disability

When a sporting organisation is inclusive, it has taken steps to provide many participation choices for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Sometimes this may mean coaches modifying a sport to provide a more appropriate version for a particular group of participants.

Coaching participants with a disability doesn't require specialised knowledge about disability; it requires having a coaching philosophy of inclusion as well as flexibility in catering for individual needs. Coaches also need to understand how a disability and the environment affects a participant's capacity to contribute and how to organise training and activities accordingly.

General tips for coaching participants with a disability

- Don't underestimate a person's capabilities based on their disability.
- Plan for success by setting challenging but achievable individualised goals.
- Have a flexible approach to coaching and communication that recognises individual differences.
- Be willing to try unconventional methods if necessary to assist the participant in achieving a desired result.

Other information for inclusive coaching practices have been provided by the Australian Sports Commission – Inclusive Coaching:

http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches/tools/coaching_specific_groups/Inclusive

Some organisations have compiled specific sports related resources to foster coaching for inclusion. Three examples are below:

- Basketball Victoria - Adaptive Coaching
<http://www.basketballvictoria.com.au/index.php?id=156>
- Deaf Sports Australia – Fact sheet, coaching
<http://www.deafsports.org.au/sports/factsheets.htm>

Note This document is available only in .pdf, which screen readers used by vision-impaired people may not be able to read. See fact sheet 'Access to the Web'.

- Tennis Australia – Players with a Disability
<http://www.tennis.com.au/players/players-with-a-disability/coaches>

Education and training

Educating and training coaches will contribute to understanding what is involved in assisting people with a disability to participate in a meaningful way in sport. For further information see the Office for Disability factsheet on 'Adaptive Coaches and Officials Courses' which provides information about courses established to assist in developing inclusive sporting practices.

Modifying activities

Sometimes, coaches might consider a few small changes to equipment which can make an activity more inclusive for people with a disability.

For further information see:

- Australian Sports Commission: Adapting and Modifying
http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/366901/DSU_factsheet_template_adapting_and_modifying_FINAL.pdf

Note This document is available only in .pdf, which screen readers used by vision-impaired people may not be able to read. See fact sheet 'Access to the Web'.

If you would like to receive this document in an accessible format, contact the Office for Disability:

Telephone: (03) 9208 3015
TTY: (03) 9208 3631

Email: OFD@dpcd.vic.gov.au
Fax: (03) 9208 3633

This material has been produced by the Office for Disability, Department of Human Services, for use by VicHealth as part of the 'Everyone Wins' framework.