

SNIP Training Toolkit Part 5: Adapting Activities for All Learners



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Adapting After School Activities for All Learners

Workshop Description:

Providing activities that engage all learners is an important part of a high quality after school program. In this session you will learn: what makes some activities more inclusive than others, how to use a tool to help you select and adapt activities for diverse learners, and specific tips and strategies for working with children with disabilities.

Training Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Be familiar with some of the ways to adapt and modify activities for children with disabilities.
- Practice using activity analysis as a tool to modify program activities to be more inclusive for all learners.

Agenda:

1. Introduction
2. Definition of Inclusion
3. Learning Activity
4. Task Analysis
5. Action Plan
6. Wrap up

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The Meaning of Inclusion

I. What Do We Mean by Inclusion?

SNIP is dedicated to creating inclusive environments for all children in out of school time programs. We thought it would be useful to clarify **what we mean by the term inclusion**, and why it is important for **children with special needs to be a part of the out of school time world**. Inclusion can mean different things to different people, therefore it is important to have a shared definition of inclusive practices as we undertake efforts to improve the quality of programming for all children. Several San Francisco citywide entities, including the Early Education Department of SFUSD, are using the definition that was developed by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The version that follows was adopted by the San Francisco Child Care Planning and Advisory Committee (CPAC) and is a **part of the newly developed Citywide OST and Child Care Plan**.

II. The Definition of Inclusion

Inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality programs and services are access, participation, and supports.

Access – means providing a **wide range of activities and environments** for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning and development.

Participation – means using a **range of instructional approaches** to promote engagement in play and learning activities, and a sense of belonging for every child.

Supports – refer to **broader aspects of the system** such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals to assure high quality inclusion.

III. The Importance of Including Youth with Special Needs in OST Programs

The following excerpt from the After School Alliance Issue Brief , "Afterschool Benefits Kids with Special Needs (2008)" outlines the ways participating in after school programs provides positive outcomes for children with disabilities. Read the entire article please go to http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_34_specialneeds.cfm. "Afterschool programs provide students with special needs opportunities to **increase their skills while building on their potential**. Studies show that students with special needs who participate in afterschool have:

- Improved school attendance

- Higher aspirations
- Improved social competence
- Improved behavior

Sadly, students with special needs, especially learning disabilities, typically hold positions of lower social status than their non-disabled peers. However, when these students participate in afterschool programs, they **gain many social benefits** that can't be achieved anywhere else.

- The opportunity to assume leadership responsibilities and demonstrate talents that are not always apparent during the regular day.
- A place to truly integrate with peers and friends, even after they have been mainstreamed in educational classrooms.
- Improved relationships with children of all abilities.
- The chance to be included in a wide variety of activities with their non-disabled peers.

IV. Afterschool provides access to physical activity and play.

Ten percent of children have a disability that prevents them from using most public playgrounds. It is vitally important that these children remain engaged and active and afterschool **provides a safe environment for children with special needs to physically explore their world, learn and play**. Play is vital for normal growth, development and health for children of all abilities. Further, deprivation of sufficient activity and recreation often leads to the development of secondary disabilities and conditions.

V. Afterschool supports families.

Beyond the many benefits the programs provide the children and their families, many children with special needs cannot be left unattended, so being home alone is not an option. Afterschool also provides a comfortable setting for family involvement, critical to the success of all students, and especially beneficial to students with special needs

VI. Conclusion

While all children benefit from high quality afterschool programs, afterschool gives children with special needs the chance to experience meaningful and authentic belonging. Beyond the benefits of providing learning and enrichment activities, afterschool offers children with special needs the chance to engage with their non-disabled peers in a way often not possible during the regular school day. Afterschool provides a safe haven where children with special needs can learn, play and succeed side-by-side with children of all abilities.”

The ADA and Reasonable Accommodation

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a federal law, which protects persons with disabilities from discrimination in the areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, telecommunications and transportation.

The ADA guarantees that Americans with disabilities have the same legal protection against discrimination as that provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and religion.

Who is Disabled?

The ADA defines a person with a disability as someone who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of major life activities (such as learning, walking, seeing, etc.);
- Has a record of having had such an impairment; or
- Who is perceived or regarded as having such an impairment

The protection provided by the ADA is not limited to those who are currently impaired. Rather, those who once had a disability, such as cancer or heart disease, but are no longer disabled, are still protected. The ADA also protects individuals who are perceived as disabled even if they are not, such as those with severe facial burns.

People with a hidden disability (such as HIV or learning disability) are considered disabled under the ADA if they are substantially limited in a major life activity. Finally, people who are not themselves disabled, but who are discriminated against because they are associated with someone who has a disability (such as the parents of a child with muscular dystrophy) are also protected.

What are the requirements of the ADA?

ADA requires that out of school providers give children and youth with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from their programs, services and activities. Providers have to make a case-by-case assessment of what the person with the disability requires to be fully integrated into the program. Once they know what is needed, they must assess whether reasonable accommodations can be made.

Out of school providers are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination, unless they can demonstrate that doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity being provided.

The ADA sets out four primary types of accommodations:

- Admissions policies that do not screen out or tend to screen out persons with disabilities
- Changes in policies, practices, or procedures:
- Provision of auxiliary aids and services to ensure effective communication:
- Removal of physical barriers in existing program facilities.

How to Determine Reasonable Accommodations

1. Determine if the individual with a disability meets the essential eligibility requirements of your program with or without an accommodation.
 - a. Essential eligibility requirements are those that you apply to every applicant such as program capacity, fees, age, residency, skill requirements, and rules of conduct or safety requirements.
2. Identify the accommodation needs by:
 - a. Involving the child, youth and family in every step of the process.
 - b. Employing confidentiality principles while exploring ways to provide accommodations.
 - c. Consulting with educational or other professionals if needed.
 - d. Using program descriptions and program analysis to determine essential functions of the program. For example, an outdoor program provides participants with recreational experiences such as hiking, rock climbing and canoeing; an after school program includes homework time, art, music and sports. Staff will need to identify the skills associated with each activity offered in the program.
 - e. Identifying the child's strengths, "functional limitations" and potential accommodations. For example, a child who uses a wheelchair may have little or no use of his legs and is unable to walk; another child with very low vision has a functional limitation related to seeing and reading. For each of these children, the program staff will think about how the child could participate in their activities and begin to determine which activities would require modifications.
3. Select and provide the accommodation that is most appropriate for the child/youth and program. Examples of accommodations include:
 - a. Modifying rules, policies or practices - allowing a child to wear headphones to screen out noise even though there is a rule against the use of headphones in the after school program.
 - b. Removing architectural barriers - re-arranging the room so a child using a wheel chair can move about easily.
 - c. Removing communication barriers - providing sign language interpreters or written materials in large print or Braille.
 - d. Adapting activities - using volunteer "buddies" to assist others with homework, lowering the basket for basketball, choosing games that emphasize cooperation rather than competition.
 - e. Adapting equipment - lowering the art table or for sports, using balls with bells.
 - f. Training for staff and volunteers on topics such as principles of ADA, appropriate language, program planning strategies, awareness of attitudinal barriers and use of adaptive equipment.

4. Establish an evaluation system that includes frequent observations by the manager of the inclusion placement and frequent reports by staff regarding the placement. It is through this method of formative evaluation that the setting can be shaped on an almost daily basis to provide the best support for the child.

Check results by:

- Monitoring the accommodation to see if it enables the child/youth to successfully participate in the program;
- Periodically evaluating the accommodations to ensure effectiveness.

Provide follow-up if needed by:

- Modifying the accommodation or
- Repeating the steps if appropriate

5. Establish a system that includes an end-of-the-program summative evaluation. This allows all to learn from the experience and helps everyone identify issues that may arise in the future.

Reasonable Accommodation Process in a Nutshell

1. Determine if the individual with a disability meets the essential eligibility requirements of your program with or without an accommodation.
2. Identify the accommodation needs.
3. Select and provide accommodations.
4. Establish an on-going evaluation process to check on progress of child/youth.
5. Conduct an “end of program’ evaluation where can learn from the experience.

From *Recreation Inclusion is Here...Are you Ready for It?* John McGovern, President, National Therapeutic Recreation Society, Summer 2001.

For more complete information about the ADA see: [Questions & Answers: ADA and Out-of-School Providers \(2009\)](#) (PDF, 175k) www.childcarelaw.org

Excerpt from *The Inclusion Toolkit*, at www.snipsf.org

Curriculum Adaptation Flowchart

Can the student participate in the activity in the same way as other students?

If **“YES”** – no adaptation necessary

If **“NO”**

Which of the following adaptations is necessary for the student’s meaningful participation in the lesson?

**PHYSICAL &
EMOTIONAL
ENVIRONMENT**

- Physical Structures
- Schedules
- Classroom Community

**MATERIALS &
CURRICULUM
CONTENT**

- Additional Materials
- Adapted Materials
- Assistive Technology
- Alternative Formats

**SUPPORT &
TEACHING
METHODS**

- Special Education Teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Peers
- Volunteers
- Cooperative Learning
- Team Teaching
-
- Multi Modal

**EXPECTATIONS,
ROLES & RULES**

- Quantity
- Type Of Demonstration
- Different Objective

Adapting and Modifying Activities

Activities can be structured in three ways: Competitive, Individualistic, or Cooperative. Each is legitimate and has strengths in particular situations. In inclusive out-of-school time settings, cooperative activities tend to work best. Success in cooperative activities is determined by the group's ability to include all group members in the completion of the activity.

- **Competitive:** Competition in its traditional application leads to one person in a group winning, with all other group members losing.
- **Individualistic:** In individual activities each member of a group works to improve his or her own past performance.
- **Cooperative:** In order for the group to succeed, every member of the group must contribute to the best of his ability.

How the Same Activity can be Structured Competitively, Individually, or Cooperatively

Suppose there are a group of children, with and without movement disabilities, at your summer camp. Today's activity is canoe paddling. Line the canoes up at the edge of the lake.

Competitive Structure: Place each child in a canoe with a paddle. Instruct the children to paddle across the lake as fast as they can. The first one across that lake gets the camp prize for "Best Canoe Paddler."

Individualistic Structure: Place each child in a canoe with a paddle. At the beginning of the day, have the children paddle across the lake as fast as they can and record each camper's crossing time. At the end of the day, after instruction and practice, have the children paddle across that lake as fast as they can again. Instruct the children that anyone that improves their crossing time will get a "Certified Canoe Paddler" certificate.

Cooperative Structure: Place a set of buoys up marking a lane across the lake for a canoe to stay between. Allow enough room in the lane for some error. Place a team of children in a large canoe and give each child a paddle. Tell the children that they are to paddle as well as they can across the lake and that they will all get a "Certified Canoe Paddler" certificate if they work together to get the canoe across the lake and stay between the set of buoys. Paddle alongside to determine that everyone is paddling, and they are encouraging and assisting one another. To keep the canoe straight, they will have to work together. Teamwork is a must in order for the children to succeed.

Adapted from: Rynders, J.E., & Schleien, S.J. (1991). *Together Successfully: Creating Recreational and Educational Programs that Integrate People with and without Disabilities*. Arlington, TX: ARC-USA

Although a cooperative structure is the preferred format for fully inclusive programs, this is not to imply that competitive formats are without value. We should not assume that a child with a disability is not capable of participating in a competitive activity. If this is the child's choice and she has the basic skills necessary, the child should have every opportunity to do so. For instance, a child that uses a wheelchair due to mobility limitations might have outstanding upper body strength and coordination. If this is the case, this child could possibly do very well in the competitive canoe experience example used above.

Strategies for Promoting Cooperative Interactions

- Seat participants in small, integrated groups.
- Make sure that all participants are positioned reasonably close to other group members.
- Provide an adequate amount of space that is easily accessible so that all members of the group can work together on a project.
- Make sure that all materials for a project are easily accessible to all members of the group.

- Emphasize the importance of enjoying an activity with another person rather than the speed and/or accuracy with which it is done.
- Adapt the activities to the ages and ability levels of all participants.
- Develop directions for the task in such a way that they require an interdependent (cooperative) effort, rather than independent or competitive effort.
- Model cooperative behavior.
- Reinforce cooperative interaction and encourage it when it does not occur.

Adapted from: Rynders, J.E., & Schleien, S.J. (1991). *Together Successfully: Creating Recreational and Educational Programs that Integrate People with and without Disabilities*. Arlington, TX: ARC-USA.

From a Community for All Children

The reality exists that all individuals will not be able to participate fully in every activity. An alternative to excluding an individual from an activity, or completely canceling an activity, is to aim for partial participation. Partial participation is an approach that calls for adjustments to an activity and/or environment that allows for some partial degree of involvement, to one's maximum extent possible. Adjustments or adaptations of the activity could be minor or more significant, depending on the needs of the participant and should always be viewed on an individual basis.

Suppose you are leading a group of youth volunteers in the activity of painting over graffiti on a school wall. Partial participation in this activity could be accomplished by:

- Changing or adapting the materials used in the activity (e.g., placing padding around the handle of a paint roller to make the handle larger and easier to grasp for the volunteer that has difficulty holding the smaller handle).
- Altering the sequence of steps used in the activity (e.g., having paint already poured into roller pans before participants begin activity).
- Adapting the rules of an activity (e.g., physically marking the area of the wall that the participant is allowed to paint for the participant that struggles to maintain focus).
- Providing personal assistance to an individual when adaptations are not feasible (e.g., allowing a friend, companion, tutor, or parent to assist the participant with holding the paint roller handle by placing their hands over the hand of the participant's on the roller handle).
- Providing alternative, yet essential, roles for individuals that may otherwise be excluded from the activity (e.g., having the individual, that is physically incapable of climbing a ladder, be responsible for assisting with the acquisition and preparation of the painting materials rather than painting a high spot on the wall).

The inclusion of an individual in a partial participation role in no way decreases the success for the individual, activity, or group. Success is a matter of perspective. As long as emphasis is placed on participants contributing to the best of their own abilities, every participant becomes a successful contributor to the out-of-school time program. Again, parents can be key in assisting in the identification of strengths and interests that will help to make partial participation a success for children with disabilities.

From A Community for All Children

Modifying Program Activities

This section from www.communityinclusion.org – Institute Brief No. 9, Vol. 1, Recreation in the community

All recreation programs are unique. There are some basic strategies, however, that may be useful within general activities. Providers agreed that successful strategies evolve over time, through trial and error. It is important for program directors to know that they are not alone, and that using a team approach to modifying activities yields positive results. Below are some

suggestions that were shared by recreation providers when reviewing common activities where accommodations have been used to promote full participation.

Field Trips

- Prepare participants with details of the trip.
- Provide written communication of events/trips in the person's native language, including Braille.
- Ensure that the activity site and transportation will be accessible.
- Review transportation and community sites.
- State rules simply and positively.

Arts and Crafts

- Use an assortment of items to modify a craft (e.g., name stamp for a signature, thick paint brushes, pre-cut shapes, pre-drawn outlines for coloring, tape to hold down paper, large beads, or stickers).
- Simplify directions by taking one step at a time.
- Pair-up participants who can assist one another.
- Be prepared to have back-up activities for those who finish more quickly or lose interest.
- Match activity roles with participants' interests and talents, especially when working in groups.

Free Time

- Make materials available to facilitate interaction and conversation among peers (e.g., games, magazines, computer software).
- Allow freedom to participate in activities without direct adult supervision.
- Provide semi-structured activities for those students who may need them.
- Respect all participants' choices.
- Remember to praise students for following the rules during free time.

Arrival/Departure Activities

- Take time to preview the schedule of activities.
- Remind participants each step that needs to be taken when arriving or leaving the program.
- Pair-up participants during transition times as well as during structured activities.
- Have impromptu games available to keep participants together during down time.

Homework Time

- Clearly state beginning and end of homework time.
- Select activities that will reflect what students are studying in school (e.g., if studying geography, a group could design a globe, paint a mural of the world, or ask students to describe the country they are from).
- Use volunteers or older students to assist as tutors.
- Check to make sure that students with more significant disabilities have homework, be prepared with project-based activities that relate to areas that students are working on in school.

Group Games

- Choose games that emphasize cooperation, not competition.
- Always have creative variations of games available to participants.
- When forming teams, rotate groups frequently so that participants have a chance to make new friends.
- Have players come up with modifications for teammates or for themselves.
- Remember, the goal is to have fun!

The Sports Page

*This section from www.communityinclusion.org – Institute Brief No. 9, Vol. 1, Recreation in the Community

One of the challenges recreation providers face is the reality of competition. Recreation staff may be concerned that an individual with disabilities is unable to compete with or against their peers. Providers worry about safety, and question their

qualifications as coaches to instruct a person with a disability. Keep in mind that most people join a team or participate in sports to have fun and that most modifications for sports are simple and inexpensive. Although accommodations should be made on an individual basis, here are some basic tips to make popular sports more inclusive. These modifications are based on experience of Institute staff with sports programs and coaches, not as a result of interviews.

Basketball

- Ask participants to develop rules everyone can follow.
- Lower the hoop or replace it with a waste basket.
- Allow extra time to pass or shoot the ball.
- Rotate so that every player takes a shot.
- Have each player touch the ball before shooting.
- Assign partners for each player.

Kickball

- Use different sized balls (e.g., an earth ball).
- Allow sitting in a chair while kicking.
- Offer the choice of being a kicker or a runner.
- Allow a partner to catch or throw ball.
- Use carpet squares to mark bases.
- Use partners for running bases.
- Pass three times before tagging runner out.
- Mark outfielder positions.

Swimming

- Consider being flexible with skill levels (e.g., a person with a physical disability has difficulty floating on his own; his peers play games in deeper water. If the situation is safe, allow him to wear a floatation device).
- Use the shallow end for instruction.
- Use flotation devices with supervision.
- Modify or eliminate diving starts.
- Use songs or rhymes for stroke instruction.
- Use fins or floats for slower swimmers during games.

Volleyball

- Use different sized balls (e.g., beach ball or balloons.)
- Lower the net.
- Allow players to stand closer to the net.
- Allow some participants to toss ball rather than hit it.
- Have each player touch the ball before it goes to the other side.

Cooperative T-Ball (rules adapted from David Munsey-Kano)

- Have all players in the field except for one batter and one person "on deck."
- Allow the batter to swing until s/he gets a hit and to run down either foul line.
- Place five small cones every 10 yards along foul lines.
- Score points for each cone the batter reaches as the ball is moving.
- Have the runner take field position and rotate a new person "on deck."

Cooperative Games (rules adapted from Cooperation in Sports, Inc.)

- Always have one team playing at a time; the object is to improve past scores, not to win.
- Take the fun and challenging skills in a competitive version of a sport and try to preserve them.
- Play against a clock allowing time outs.
- Create rules that allow for a range of athletic ability on the same team.
- Stress teamwork and cooperation.

WEB BASED DISABILITY INFORMATION AND INCLUSION RESOURCES

California After School Resource Center (CASRC)

<http://www.californiaafterschool.org>

The California After School Resource Center (CASRC, "cas-rac") supports quality after school programming via this comprehensive Web site, statewide circulating library of reviewed materials, online trainings, and technical assistance. For Inclusion Resources use the Special Needs Tab on this website

California Map to Belonging and inclusion

<http://www.cainclusivechildcare.org>

Welcome to the newly renovated website for the California Map to Inclusive Child Care Project, operating under the Center for Child and Family Studies at WestEd and funded by the [California Department of Education's Child Development Division](#) with a portion of the federal Child Care Development Fund Quality Improvement Allocation.

We envision a California in which all children with disabilities and other special needs have full access to quality inclusive child care that welcomes families and supports providers.

Our mission is to provide a statewide system of support, information and resources for families and providers that will facilitate barrier-free access to inclusive child care for children birth to 21. This is accomplished by working with key stakeholders to build on California's progress toward inclusive practice for all children with disabilities and other special needs in child care settings.

Kid Included Together (KIT)

<http://www.kitonline.org>

Kids Included Together (KIT) specializes in providing best practices training for community-based organizations committed to including children with and without disabilities into their recreational, child development and youth development programs.

Utilizing a blended learning style with interactive eLearning components, KIT's services are provided free of charge to its 63 affiliate organizations representing over 304 sites in San Diego County. Since its inception in 1997, Kids Included Together (KIT) has trained over 25,000 youth providers in the best practices of inclusion. Over 15,000 children with disabilities have been co-enrolled with over 265,000 children without disabilities at KIT affiliate sites. 72% of KIT's organizational budget is allocated to program expenses.

KIT National Training Center on Inclusion

<http://www.kitonline.org/html/about/ntci.html>

KIT established the National Training Center on Inclusion (NTCI) as a state-of-the-art training facility dedicated to creating and disseminating best practice information and tools to the out-of-school time field.

The [training](#) and tools provided by NTCI are designed to create positive change in the program environment through increased knowledge of accommodations and supports, building of relationships with program stakeholders and an understanding of how policies and procedures affect inclusion.

National Center on Accessibility (NCA)

<http://www.ncaonline.org>

The National Center on Accessibility promotes access and inclusion for people with disabilities in parks, recreation and tourism. Based at Indiana University and established in 1992 through a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service, NCA has emerged as a leading authority on access issues unique to park and recreation programs and facilities.

National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD)

<http://www.ncpad.org>

NCPAD's overall mission is to help people with disabilities find accessible programs. Their website contains research and information on physical activities for people with disabilities.

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY)

<http://nichcy.org>

NICHY offers a wealth of information on disabilities. They serve the nation as a central source of information on disabilities in infants, toddlers, children, and youth. The NICHY website contains easy-to-read information on IDEA, the law authorizing early intervention services and special education, and articles and publications about specific disabilities.

San Francisco Special Needs Inclusion Project

<http://www.snipsf.org>

The Special Needs Inclusion Project (SNIP) provides free training and technical assistance for out of school time programs agencies funded by the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and their Families on inclusion and disability-related topics. Their website offers free inclusion tools and tips.

Support for Families of Children with Disabilities (SFCD)

<http://www.supportforfamilies.org>

The purpose of Support for Families is to ensure that families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need have the knowledge and support to make informed choices that enhance their children's development and well-being. Support for Families of Children with Disabilities has offers information, education, and parent-to-parent support free of charge to families of children with any kind of disability or special health care need in San Francisco.