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Sport & Leisure

This fact sheet is being produced to help you find out about the various sport and leisure activities that are available to you.

Sport and leisure are very important aspects to living a full and eventful life. This is also the case for disabled people of all ages as there is now more and more access for disabled people in various forms of sport. No more is disabled sport limited to your local recreation programs. Now there are disabled sports programs at every level of skill ranging from local recreation teams to collegiate sports programs all the way up to the Paralympics and even professional sports teams. These programs provide invaluable opportunities for the disabled to socialise and relax while enjoying the benefits that sport can bring.

Finding out about sports and facilities in your area

There are many sporting organisations and groups that support disabled athletes. You can firstly try your local authority's social services or leisure department. They should have details regarding sports clubs, facilities and other initiatives in your area. Many local authorities now work in partnership with sports organisations across the country to help provide sporting opportunities and skills to people of all ages who want it.

If you are having trouble finding information this way your local library is always a good way to acquire information.

Sport England is responsible for delivering the Governments sporting objectives. The 'active places' scheme lets you find local facilities by inputting your town or postcode into the search engine. To use this function you need to be able to have access to the internet and visit direct.gov.uk and look for 'active places'.

Exercise on prescription

Exercise on prescription schemes operate as partnerships between primary health care and local authority leisure services. They allow GPs to prescribe a ten week course of exercise to people with certain conditions, including musculo-skeletal problems, such as chronic low-back pain, problems caused by falls, coronary heart disease and hypertension. Please speak to your GP for further information regarding the scheme.

Support for disabled sports

There are now a number of organisations who work towards helping disabled people in sport at every level.

Sport England

This organisation advises, invests in and also helps promote sport within your community. It is currently working hard with a range of partners to ensure the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will help leave a lasting effect on the British public.

Sport England's view is that disabled peoples' access to sport is key to the overall increase in participation and will continue to work on making sports and sporting venues more accessible and inclusive for those who need it.

The English Federation of Disabled Sport

The EFDS is the national body responsible for developing sport for disabled people in England and works closely with several national disability sports organisations.

One of the main aims of EFDS is to raise public awareness of sport for disabled people and to develop educational programmes to increase the amount of coaches who work with disabled people.

www.efds.net

The Inclusive Fitness Initiative (now apart of EFDS)

The IFI works towards ensuring disabled people gain equal access to gym-based physical activity and now has over 180 inclusive facilities across England.

Also the Inclusive Fitness Mark (IFI Mark) quality mark accreditation scheme awards this mark to any facility across the UK that meets the required standard.

www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness

Parasport

Parasport is a joint initiative between the British Paralympic Association (BPA) and the services firm Deloitte. Their aim is to increase participation levels in competitive sporting events and will help find and support talented sports people at community level.

As part of their project they will also offer funding to talented and high-potential athletes through a partnership with SportsAid as well as establishing a new Disability Sports Institute known as Parasport, run by the BPA.

www.parasport.org.uk

The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme

The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) helps talented young athletes in England to combine education and sport. TASS currently includes 50 sports and 16 of these are disability sports.

Those aged between 16 and 25 are eligible to enter this scheme and this age increases to 35 for the disabled. To be accepted you must have a valid British passport and be allowed to compete in their sport for GB.

Government Sports Initiatives

The Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) website is the place to visit should you wish to find out about Government funding, plans and initiatives in relation to sport.

The Government is committed to making sure the number of disabled people in sport increases across the UK whether that be as a participant, trainer or administrator.

www.culture.gov.uk

School Sports and Disabled Children

Sport within school should be a fun experience for children whatever their level of skill. Physical Education (PE) plays an important part in a child's growth in terms of health and social skills.

Physical Education and Disabled Pupils

PE is compulsory for all pupils' at all key stages of schooling.

Disability should not be a barrier to inclusion in any sport programmes and there should be measures taken by the school to support those with physical and learning disabilities.

This should be the case in both mainstream and special school settings and includes teacher support and when needing to buy special equipment for sports.

It is against the law to discriminate against a child for reasons related to their disability. Pupils should be treated fairly by schools and local education authorities.

Disabled pupils should be treated fairly by local education authorities (LEAs) and schools in regards to school trips, the curriculum and school sports. Schools and LEAs should make changes to any policies and procedures where they affect disabled pupils.

www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send

Disability sports contacts

There are so many different sports and impairment specific organisations available in disability sports, please contact the Information Officer at HAD.org.uk, who will investigate the different options available to meet your specific needs.

This fact sheet is one of a series, providing information and advice on a number of topics.

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