PosistiveLeisure4Youth

"Leisure time as a positivist youth peer pedagogy"

Guide for youth workers, leaders and teachers on "How to build-up an Inclusive youth community towards leisure time activities?"

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For further information related to the project please visit:

Website: www.leisure4youth.eu

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1. What means inclusive youth community and why we need to build it?

Recreation and leisure activities are a critical dimension of the quality of life for all people, including - people with disabilities. There are a vehicle through which people have fun, meet new friends, and develop skills and competencies. Yet, traditionally, recreation/leisure activities are given low priority as an area in which support and assistance are provided. Many people are still limited to segregated recreation and leisure choices. When other opportunities are offered, they often involve taking groupings of people with disabilities to large public settings (e.g., malls, theatres, restaurants), while very little support is offered for individualised participation in youth community settings that offer greater opportunities for social connections and relationships. While not all people with disabilities need support to participate in recreation and leisure activities, others, particularly those with more severe disabilities, may not have any access to integration recreation and leisure unless supports are available.

Disengaged youth are not likely to learn or stay in school, due to a lack of sense of belonging, a condition heightened by the absence of inclusive practices throughout youth work and at school (see Sport4All - https://www.st4all.eu/- project that addresses inclusive sports activities at school). Only through establishing our youth organisations as inclusive centres of youth activities can we provide leisure environments in which all youth flourish, all youth belong, and all youth have the opportunity to benefit from building relationships with a diverse peer group.

When we embed youth engagement in such an environment, nurture all youth, and create climates that are respectful, caring and equitable, we do increase the likelihood all youth will find success in their personal as well as learning journeys.

Youth leadership

Essential elements of an inclusive youth organisation are youth leadership and engagement. Inclusiveness requires youth organisations to re-think which youth are engaged as leaders and what strategies are consistently employed and assessed to ensure the involvement of all.

Youth organisations frequently identify youth leaders as those demonstrating leadership skills trusted by adults. This youth leadership should address equally issues of respect, acceptance and engagement along with the integration of inclusive leisure and sports activities, and corresponding social interactions. These inclusive leisure activities facilitate youth relationships, friendships and mutual appreciation that support personal, social-emotional, academic and civic development and achievement.

Engagement

In figuring out how best to support a person to become involved in recreation and leisure activities, it is important to begin by getting to know the person. This involves spending time with the person, and possibly with others who know him or her well, in order to learn about:

- the person's family
- his or her background

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- experiences
- customs
- traditions
- strengths
- likes or dislikes
- etc.

Some people will have had very limited opportunities to try a variety of activities in different settings with different people. Families may be hesitant about inclusion because of past experiences in which there was inadequate support either for physical participation and/or for social interactions and relationships within the context of participation. Based upon past messages from professionals, families may worry that their son or daughter will have nothing in common with peers without disabilities. Some individuals with disabilities may have difficulty communicating ideas about potential interests. Thus, exploration of interests takes time, exploring and trying out different activities and settings.

Over time, however, one can begin to "discover interests" of a person which might be further developed or pursued through recreation and leisure involvements. Interests link the personal and the social. They express individual gifts, concerns, and fascinations and call for activities, information, and tools. Shared interest founds associations. People point to interests when they describe what gives their lives meaning.

Over time, people may establish a "leisure identity". This involves developing an interest to the extent that it becomes one of the primary defining characteristics of a person.

Benefits of leisure

They are usually engaging, positive, and match the strengths of the individual. Leisure activities provide distraction from distress, increase self-esteem, improve mood, and provide structure.

Leisure activities:

- Provide structure
- Improve mood
- Improve self-esteem
- Decrease anxiety
- Provide distraction
- Provide meaning
- Give a sense of purpose
- Offers an opportunity to give back
- Increase confidence
- Improve self-perceived competence
- Increase socialisation

- Decrease stress
- Improve sense of control
- Increase personal satisfaction
- Improve quality of life
- Decrease negative self-talk
- Encourage introspection
- Foster personal growth
- Offer opportunity to reset/renew
- Activate a passion within
- Refresh and (re-)energise
- Etc.

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2. How to build-up an inclusive youth community – stages, modalities, approaches

If inclusion is embedded it will play itself out across all your youth work activities and policy areas. An intrinsic goal will be the inclusion and active involvement of diverse groups both within the organisation itself – in staff, volunteers - and in youth members. Your work will also influence the acceptance and embracing of diversity in the wider youth community. To achieve this, all staff and volunteers must understand what is involved and support it. It is about having inclusive attitudes and values which in turn lead to good practice. Notwithstanding all the good practice and indicators outlined in this resource, if it is embedded it is usually evident within a few minutes of entering a youth setting.

Embedding inclusion means being proactive about integrating groups together and encouraging connections and belonging.

In order to assist people to become involved in recreation/leisure activities, one must be aware of what opportunities or possible opportunities exist within the neighbourhood and youth community. This involves:

- finding out about use of various neighbourhood and youth community places (who uses them, when, for what purposes);
- finding out about local organisations and associations (where and when do they meet, what does it mean to be a member, etc.);
- finding out where people go and what people do who are of various ages, genders, share similar interests, etc.

This type of information can be gathered through means such as: observation of people and settings, through spending time in the neighbourhood; reading youth community newspapers, bulletin boards, and directories; and talking to a variety of people who know something about the neighbourhood and/or youth community.

In order to best assist people with disabilities to participate in integrated settings, it may be necessary to provide some supports or accommodations. Supports must be both individualised and flexible, and the types and levels of support should be based on the needs and desires of the particular person. These supports should fit into the rhythms and routines of the setting or activity. There are many different types of possible supports and accommodations, and most importantly, many of these will benefit all participants, not just those with disabilities.

Support can involve such things as physically assisting the person to be part of the activity, and/or assisting him or her to be a part of social interactions. It can involve helping the person acquire particular skills and competencies, assistance in everyday functioning, adaptation of part or all of an activity, and/or use of adaptive devices and equipment.

Support can sometimes be provided by someone who is already present within a specific setting, or it can be provided by someone who comes into the setting, on a short term or ongoing basis, specifically for that purpose. In this case, it is important to remember that the support person needs not necessarily to have a background in the field of developmental disabilities; rather, it might be

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more important that the person knows about and enjoys the activity and is able to spend time and be creative in figuring out best to support the person (with consultation from parents, and/or those in the disability field when and where needed). Related to this, it is important for this person providing support to involve him- or herself with others in the setting, not just the person with a disability. On this basis, he or she can act as a link through which others can get to know and interact with the person, as well.

Support need not entail always being directly at the person's side, as this may result in isolating the person from others in the setting (for example, an adult who supports a child with disabilities in a setting with other children may serve as a barrier to other children feeling free to interact with the child). A possible solution is the peer support by other young people without disabilities or peer support by a whole group. Moreover, peer support is still an unused resource in youth organisations even though it offers multiple benefits and contributes to the development of social inclusion of person with disabilities in society.The following outlines a number of steps to set up an inclusive youth organisation.

IMPORTANT: In practice, no youth work organisation will meet all the indicators set out in each Step. They present an ideal scenario of what your organisation can achieve. You may find that you have achieved or could adopt a number of the practices in some steps, but struggle more with others. Some steps may become long-term goals for your organisation. These steps can help you map out the direction you wish to take over the coming years by looking at what others have done and knowing what is possible.

2.1.Step 1 Organisational Review

An organisational review involves undertaking an assessment of your current practice. When looked at through an equality, inclusion and diversity lens it leads to a planning process on how to develop your inclusive youth work. Inclusive youth work practice involves taking a strategic, planned approach and deciding what would work best both for the young people you want to include and for your organisation. It always involves making some adaptations to the way you have customarily worked.

An inclusive youth service will be working toward having youth members, staff, volunteers and management that reflect the diversity of your youth community. Inclusive youth work usually involves engaging with individuals from minority and marginalised groups in your mainstream groups.

However, where requested by the young people from minority groups themselves, it can involve working with single identity groups but still within the structure of your organisation. Inclusive youth work will have programmes and practice throughout the organisation that promote equality and human rights and that build competencies in all young people to live and thrive in diverse communities. Inclusive youth work often stems from staff and volunteers personal commitment to equality and inclusion before knowing the specific needs of young people from minority and marginalised groups in the youth community where you work. An organisational review allows you to stand back and take an approach based on evidence, it helps you to build strategic links across the youth community and it helps you put the resources in place to target different groups.

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2.2.Step 2 Policies and Group Contracts

An Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy, like any other policy, is a roadmap that your organisation lays out for you and others to follow. It lays out your goals and guiding principles with an emphasis on inclusion along with how you are going to achieve this. It places the work you are doing in a legal context by citing equality and human rights legislation and how the legislation relates to your work and your responsibilities toward young people from a range of minority or marginalised communities. Youth work is seen in most EU countries' equality legislation as providing a service and under that heading there should be no discrimination (within what's termed 'reasonable accommodation') toward any person with a disability. In addition, legislation requires you to take proactive steps to actively promote equality, protect human rights and combat discrimination. As such, you are required to consider how you will advance equality for this group and how you will protect the human rights of all citizens. In this respect positive action (i.e. positive discrimination) is encouraged. In your policy these groups will all be named People with a disability.

2.3.Step 3 Space and Environment

Making your youth centre safe, approachable and welcoming is critical in attracting young people with disabilities. Try to imagine how your space and environment looks to someone who is unfamiliar with it and feels that maybe it is for other (majority) young people. Most youth organisations are not in control of their environment as much as they would like to be, but youth workers can find ways to positively affect the spaces they use. Some groups may have accessible buildings for people with a disability but even these may need adaptations to be fully inclusive. However, whatever you put in place for one group always benefits more people such as making it safer for everyone.

Think of your space and environment as stretching beyond your building into the youth community. Sometimes your space and environment will change to an outreach or street setting, sometimes to events you organise or your presence in the media or your own social media.

2.4.Step 4 Staff and Volunteers

The attitude and set of values staff and volunteers hold is critical to equal and inclusive youth work. In an inclusive setting staff and volunteers will always be open and friendly to everyone. They will have access to training and support services. 'Buy-in' and willingness from all staff and volunteers is fundamental, especially from management, in promoting inclusive youth work.

When working with young people from diverse backgrounds, it can be invaluable to have a trusted, known adult from their youth community present, at least initially, so it is ideal if some of your staff and volunteers come from diverse backgrounds and can relate directly to the young people's own life experiences.

Equality and inclusive practice often starts out as a grass roots initiative in organisations in that it comes about as a direct result of working with young people from minority and marginalised groups and expertise amongst staff and volunteers is built up through experience. Often it is led by someone with a particular interest in equality and inclusion and as a result the work can be largely personality-driven rather than policy-driven.

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Therefore, leadership from management is very important to integrate the work on equality and inclusion across the whole organisation.

Youth work staff and volunteers also need to establish clear boundaries in terms of their relationships with the young people, explaining clearly what youth work is and what your organisation provides because young people from diverse backgrounds can sometimes perceive their relationship with youth work staff to be personal rather than professional.

2.5. Step 5 Activities and Involvement of Young People

Activities that address issues of equality, inclusion and diversity are the most critical indicator of an inclusive youth service or organisation. Promoting self-esteem, looking at identity, and tackling prejudice and discrimination amongst all young people you work with are crucial. In addition, developing life skills through active participation such as leadership, decision making, and communication are critical competencies for all young people to develop especially for those from minority and marginalised groups. Where a group is relatively homogenous it is even more important to look at activities that promote diversity and inclusion to equip these young people to be able to engage well with others from diverse backgrounds in other areas of their lives. Feeling secure in our own identity is key for integration to happen within society in general.

In building competencies about inclusion and diversity, the terminology that is used is important but fears of saying the wrong thing or not being familiar with the terminology should not be allowed to get in the way of the work. The best solution is to always ask the young people directly.

Meeting young people 'where they are at' takes on a whole new meaning when we are talking about inclusion of people with disabilities as activities must be planned around the varying needs of the group members. Factors such as gender, religion, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities, culture and language, abilities, special needs, literacy skills and age, need to be considered when planning activities. Parents of children with disabilities are also more likely to have a stronger input on their children's involvement.

2.6. Step 6 Resourcing Inclusion

Youth organisations can avail of a wide range of resources to support their equality and inclusion youth work. Many organisations also develop new resources such as activity packs and videos.

Some examples:

- Your most valuable resource is your staff and volunteers, the welcome they give, the skills they bring and their creativity in working with groups on issues related to inclusion.
- Finding funds or materials to run a specific inclusion project can be an issue. You have to think creatively, beg and barter, and share resources such as equipment, space and venues with other organisations.
- Small grants can boost your inclusion work and many have an inclusion focus, such as Trade Union grants, One World Week grants, etc.
- Bring in volunteers with the skills you need for specific inclusion projects but where at all possible do pay people for their specialised skills.

- Other organisations may be able to fund specialised staff to work with you on one off projects.
- When you divide out your existing resources amongst your various groups 'inclusion proof' your decisions so that your inclusion work is not left short or treated as an add-on rather than integral to your work.
- Taking part in training or attending events is an invaluable source of new information. It gives you a chance to meet other youth workers and discuss problems and solutions and to use one another as resources.
- Link in to national and international networks who disseminate resources and information.
- Use your own communications – such as newsletters, magazine and e-news to always include something about inclusion and diversity and make sure that tools for communications such as a website are user-friendly (accessible for screen readers, etc)
- Set up a shared resource library on your computer network so that staff and volunteers can collect and share any inclusion related resources they find.
- Establish a cooperation with other active youth organisations who work with people with disabilities.
- Youth Information Centres are useful sources of information.

2.7. Step 7 Networking and Partnerships

The measure of your equality and inclusion practice often rests with how well you collaborate with others to ensure that the needs of young people from minority and marginalised groups in your youth community are met. To target and support young people with disabilities, it is important to build relationships with local stakeholders including local partnerships, networks of groups that work with your target groups, and youth community leaders, including leaders in religious communities. It is also important to link in with schools, health services and to network with other youth projects, clubs and services so that you can share your skills and resources and together meet more needs in the youth community. There will most likely be strategic networks already in existence or you could consider setting one up that addresses a range of your needs.

Your other key network is the parents and families of young people with disabilities, many of whom may be more protective of their children or they may not know about your organisation and what you have to offer.

A critical reason for building good working relationships is to fill gaps in services and not duplicate the work of others. Networking also needs to be strategic and in line with your organisational review.

Partnerships involve working in a more sustained way over time, usually to carry out a specific piece of work together. Partnerships are best when they are based on mutual need with each partner bringing something different but complimentary.

2.8. Step 8 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating your youth programmes through an equality and inclusion lens allows you to see if you are meeting your stated aims and if you are achieving other unexpected outcomes. It pinpoints problems at an early stage and it helps you pick up and articulate emerging issues.

Working within an outcomes framework is a relatively new but increasingly familiar way of working. Logic models are used as a tool to focus on the expected outcomes we are working toward and to set out the indicators that will measure success along the way. By focusing on outcomes we shift our reporting beyond recording the outputs (activities, actions and quantitative data) to assessing the real changes we are seeking to make. This way of working also puts our focus back on the young people and the changes that they want to make in their lives.

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3. Significance of leisure

Participation in leisure experiences is a prerequisite for human development with the potential to satisfy basic social psychological needs for people with disabilities. The opportunity to participate in physically active leisure experiences has now been recognised through legislation as a fundamental 'right' for all people with disabilities, and a vital component that contributes to their quality of life.

The main benefits people with disabilities obtain through participation in physically active leisure experiences are: escape from their family or others; involvement in group or structured activities; involvement in casual participation; challenge their abilities and achieve goals; meet others; entertainment or fun; and to relax.

Below table shows the contrasts, when applying inclusive leisure activities, opposed to non-inclusive leisure activities.

Characteristics experienced by people who separated from a youth community	Characteristics arising from inclusive leisure experiences
A feeling of separateness from the real world	Belonging to and being part of communities
A life of constant boredom	Adventure and challenge
Loneliness	Companionship, increases social networks, new and stronger friendships
Dependence or total isolation (independence)	Interdependence
Restricted freedom	Sense of freedom
Being controlled	Control and power over own lifestyle
Failure	Improved self-image through achievement of goals
No sense of a future	Hope and enthusiasm for the future
Limited scope for growth and new challenges	Experimentation

With supports available to them, children and young adults with disabilities can choose to participate in a full range of recreation and leisure activities based upon their personal interests and desires.

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4. Safety measures while conducting leisure time activities

Possible risk factors of children/youth with disabilities are isolation, discrimination, dependency, less physically able to defend themselves, communication challenges, cognitive ability, status in society, and low self-esteem. These risk factors must be addressed to ensure leisure activities can take place in a safe environment.

The first step in designing, implementing and monitoring a comprehensive risk management strategy is creating a safe environments working team within your youth organisation. This includes identifying a focal point and a working group to lead the change-making process and for ensuring colleagues are supported and held accountable for creating safe environments.

The best practices for creating a prevention team are:

- Involve leadership and decision makers to ensure decisions are followed through and colleagues are held accountable.
- Select leadership and decision makers from your different teams.
- Ensure all the team members are educated on the abilities and barriers of youth with disabilities, but also on the prevention of abuse, violence, bullying and harassment of people with disabilities.
- Decide what relationship your organisation's focal point will have with the working group.
- Ensure both youth with and without disabilities are involved and represented in the working group.
- Set aside an appropriate budget for the working group, if so required or needed.
- Establish clear terms of reference with timelines for the working group.
- Decide whether you require external support in the design, implementation or monitoring of the strategy and what relationship any external support will have with the working group.
- Establish a reporting/accountability line for the working group that reports to the organisation's leadership.

A **checklist** may be very helpful in this case:

- Does your organisation have a written policy on inclusion of people with disabilities? If yes, does the policy address:
    - o Organisational structures?
    - o Youth staff composition?
- Is the policy on inclusion fully integrated into the youth organisation's plans and operations?
- Are people with disabilities employed in senior decision-making positions?
- Are people with disabilities involved, as staff or consultants in proposal writing, program implementation, and monitoring and evaluation?
- Is disability integrated into the organisational diversity sensitisation program? IF YES:
    - o Are people with disabilities represented from a rights-based perspective, that is, are issues of people with disabilities are viewed as human rights issues?
- Does your youth organisation have a financial plan to reasonably accommodate people with disabilities in member programs and activities? For example: Are reasonable costs of inclusion of people with disabilities (e.g. costs of personal assistance, an adaptation of

working material, interpreter of sign language) incorporated into project proposals and organisational budgets?

- Are mechanisms established to promote inclusion of people with disabilities in programs?
- Are images of people with disabilities incorporated into outreach and program materials?
- Are mechanisms established to monitor inclusion of people with disabilities in programs?
- Does your youth organisation hold member programs and activities in accessible locations to the maximum extent feasible?
- Have project staff been educated on barrier free approaches to program planning?
- Are accessible locations (including venues on ground floor, with ramps or few or steps or working elevators, wide enough doorways, accessible bathrooms) prioritised for member programs and activities?
- Are simple adaptations implemented to make activity locations accessible (ramps, doorways widened, etc.)?
- Are accessible transportation options available to program locations to the maximum extent possible?
- Does your organisation provide materials and communications in alternative formats as applicable?
- Are all youth leaders/members trained to use, arrange for and produce materials and communications in alternative formats as applicable?

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5. The barriers and facilitators of different kinds of disabilities

In the following, we look at a range of disabilities and how they affect leisure activities (suitable facility, health and safety, logistical accommodations, etc.), as well as how the inclusive leisure activities can be facilitated.

5.1.Intellectual disabilities

- Challenges:
  - Physical:
    - Facility: Lack of sports facilities, lack of activities and programmes, waiting lists.
    - Health and safety: Fatigue, longer to develop skills, lack of physical skill, becomes harder as children get older, obesity, congenital heart defects, communication impairments, low energy level, lack of ability to understand rules and interpret instructions, recurrent chest infection, ear infection, asthma, vision impairments, hearing deficits, continence, arthritis, spinal problems, leukaemia, poor motor skills, lack of coordination, hypotonicity.
  - Logistical:
    - Geography: Distance required to reach the leisure activities place, transportation.
    - Expenses: Lack of financial resources and the extra costs associated with raising a child with disability.
    - Support from others: Need of extra support to participate, lack of practical instructor training.
    - Communication: limited partnerships between sectors and time restraints, lack of advertised events, parents lack knowledge or means and the fact that children and parents are not asked about how they can participate.
  - Psychological:
    - Personal perceptions: Frustration or loss of confidence when child compares self to peers, non- compliance, preference for a passive activity.
    - Attitudes from others: Overprotecting parents, parental exhaustion and therefore, the parents themselves discourage, not feeling accepted by others, negative societal attitudes towards disability, inaccurate stereotypes.
- Facilitators:
  - Physical:
    - Facility: leisure places, including e.g. gyms without architectonic barriers, inclusive pathways, policies & programs.
    - Equipment: leisure places with specialised equipment (e.g. sport machines).
    - Health and safety: Improving health, change in position of the body, increasing physical strength, enhancement of physical skills and cognitive ability to understand rules.
  - Logistical:
    - Geography: Local activities, transport.

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- Support from others: Being with peers, and trying to them, positive influence of the child's environment, positive encouragement from others, family involvement, skilled instructors, organising sports activities during school hours, disability groups and councils.
- Communication: Enjoying social interaction, good verbal communicators,, having enough information, special schools provide information on activity and partnerships between schools.
- Suitability: Structured activity programmes, individual and team activities, meaningful and appropriate activities

  o Psychological:
    - Personal perceptions: Fun, internal motivation, sense of success, sense of enthusiastic and determined individuals.
    - Attitudes from others: Peer acceptance, having proactive parents, parents as role models and time spending.

5.2. Physical disabilities

- Challenges:
  o Physical:
    - Facility: Lack of opportunities, no place to exercise, environment not adequately adapted, low availability of programmes, lack of appropriate facilities.
    - Equipment: Expensive or inappropriate equipment, it takes a long time to acquire the equipment after purchasing it, carrying equipment in public transport is exhausting.
    - Health and safety: Disability itself, physical injury/complication, lack of energy/fatigue, lack of motor skills, oxygen cost of walking, lack of athletic ability, coordination and skills, issues related to toileting,, child's behavioural problems or lack of social skills.
  o Logistical:
    - Geography: Bad weather, distance to facilities, transportation problems.
    - Expense: Costs of transport, expensive equipment, expensive entrance of facilities, lack of funding.
    - Support from others: Lack of professional support, dependency upon others, lack of parental support, low maternal level of education, lack of role models, lack of personal assistance, lack of partners to play with, relative supportness of the social and attitudinal environments, deficiency of guidance.
    - Communication: Lack of information/knowledge on where to exercise or how to exercise, resisting asking for help, don´t know to use equipment, lack of adequate communication between youth workers, interpreter and child, lack of information about the benefits of leisure activities, lack of agreement between organisations about who is responsible for integration and whether integration or segregation was preferable.

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- Suitability: Too much effort, having to wake up early, opening hours, crowdedness, activity not adequately adapted, characteristics, layout and design of built and natural environments, lack of recreation opportunities that involve the whole family, focus on competitive team sports or activities not competitive enough.
  - o Psychological:
    - Personal perceptions: Not perceiving any health benefits, feeling uncomfortable or ashamed, motivational barriers, other priorities, leisure activities not being fun, lack of interest, awareness of differences from peers, not accepting (extent) of disability, female gender, inconvenient of sweat/combing, previous unpleasant experience, lack of confidence, lack of independence, fear of being stigmatised or teased, fear of injury, fear of incontinence, fear of being out of control.
    - Attitudes from others: Unequal time distribution of the parents between children with disabilities and siblings, presence of bullying or social marginalisation, parental actions, behaviours or concerns, physical activity is not part of the family's daily life or they have other family priorities, family has a lack of energy to engage in activity, lack of friends or unsupportive peers, peers view them as helpless or doubt their abilities, people's misconceptions of child's physical condition or ability, negative attitudes by staff, lack of adequate staff who are willing and empowered to work with children with disabilities, staff too focussed on competitive sports, institutional conservatism.
- Facilitators:
  - o Physical:
    - Facility: Chances to join competition, opportunities for sport, sport facility (having good trainer, communication between trainers and coaches, training in small groups), accessible youth community recreation facilities, better utilisation of existing facilities, new facilities in rural areas.
    - Equipment: Having necessary equipment,assistive technologies
    - Health and safety: Maintenance of fitness/ muscle strength, maintenance of functional independence, walking ability, wheelchair skills, perceiving health benefits, physical appearance, weight loss, endurance, biomechanical walking economy.
  - o Logistical:
    - Geography: Active transportation, nice weather.
    - Expense: Better funding of programmes and play areas, financial assistance for parents.
    - Support from others: Social supports, parental support, sports teachers and instructors supporting, motivation from friends, parents/sibling involvement, involvement of peers, knowledgeable youth staff, youth community education campaigns, special agency support to provide information, therapeutic advice, design advice.

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- - - Communication: Social contact, asking for help, information and awareness, information on activity provided to parents by school, collaborative approach between organisations andcommunities, dissemination networks between parents, voluntary advocacy association to provide demonstration programmes, political lobbying and advice.
    - Suitability: Activity type, access to suitable facilities, disability-adopted programs, increased accessibility, more youth community-based programmes and opportunities to be active, better programmes, that are structured, sensitive to children with special needs, age appropriate and include a variety of things to do, non-competitive programmes that promote fun and socialisation, programmes that are not therapy oriented, activity relates to a game, programme emphasis on development of social skills and development of self-confidence, emphasis on skill development and child's ability
  - Psychological:
    - Personal perceptions: Fun, relaxation, attitude, motivational facilitators, feelings of fulfilment, physical challenge, achieve goals/ wanting to win, clear the mind, happiness, learning new skills and experience, feeling accepted as part of a group, accepting disability, having perseverance, activity gives sense of freedom, child's desire to be fit and active, practice to gain skills, practice competence, gaining confidence.
    - Attitudes from others: Family resilience, doing PA with parents, parental encouragement and motivation, making friends, positive attitudes from schoolmates, teachers and other people, praise from parents and friends, increasing awareness and education of children without disabilities and their parents, positive encouragement from others.

5.3. Developmental disabilities

- Challenges:
  - Physical:
    - Facility: Lack of opportunities, lack of physical activity programs to join, waiting list, child is not allowed to play matches.
    - Equipment: Lack or unsafe equipment.
    - Health and safety: Lack of energy/fatigue, an attractive sport is too difficult, pain, fear of increased risk of an injury, learning the required motor skill is too time consuming, lack of skill or motor control.
  - Logistical:
    - Geography: Lack of access to transportation, having to be driven somewhere, inclement weather.
    - Expense: Financial restrictions.
    - Support from others: Lack of a peer exercise partner, parents do not have time, trainer often not aware of the complexity of the child.
    - Communication: Hesitating to ask a trainer to support their child, lack of awareness of possibilities, not knowing what "suits" the child.

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- - - Suitability: Time of training is inconvenient, teams are too big, not "open" for children with disabilities, no team that "suits" the child (level and age).
  - o Psychological:
    - Personal perceptions: Having the opinion that being active is not good for the body, attitude of the child, feeling insecure or ashamed, child does not accept the disability, perception of physical activity and sports as not being 'fun', fear of child not fitting in, lack of time, other preferences, feeling tired, feeling bored.
    - Attitudes from others: Parent not accepting the extent of the disability, parental dissatisfaction with the environment, not being accepted by peers, not being accepted by other parents, being bullied, parental challenges with observing the child struggling with sport, being underestimated.
- Facilitators:
  - o Physical:
    - Facility: Access to physical activity or sports in the youth community, good surface for walking or running, parks and playgrounds available in the youth community, school prepares for after-school physical activity.
    - Equipment: Direct exercise equipment, supportive exercise equipment.
  - o Logistical:
    - Geography: Good weather.
    - Support from others: School encourages physical activity, having a good trainer, friends are supportive or physically active, family is supportive or physically active, doing chores at home, pets are physically active.
    - Communication: Awareness of opportunities for sport and physical activity, good communication between trainers/coaches.
    - Suitability: Training in small groups, playing individual/dual sports, playing Wii sports/Fit, playing team sport, involving favourite figures/interests.
  - o Psychological:
    - Personal perceptions: Perception of relaxation, belief that exercise has health benefits, desire to be active, positive attitude towards being challenged, acceptance of the disability, view of sports and physical activity as an opportunity for social interaction, having perseverance, feeling accepted as part of a group, feeling confident, experience of enjoyment, view of exercise as an opportunity to 'clear the mind', feeling rewarded, feeling refreshed.
    - Attitudes from others: Parental awareness of the benefits of physical activity, parental perseverance, parental assertiveness, being accepted by peers, being accepted by other parents.

5.4. Every kind of disability
- Challenges:
  - o Physical:
    - Facility: No accessible buildings/facilities.

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- ▪ Equipment: Lack of accessible exercise equipment, lack of suitable equipment.
- ▪ Health and safety: Pain, lack of energy, health conditions, lack of strength.
- o Logistical:
  - ▪ Geography: Lack of transportation, buildings or facilities located far away.
  - ▪ Expense: Programme and equipment costs.
  - ▪ Support from others: Unqualified staff who cannot modify or adapt individual and group exercise classes for people with disabilities, no encouragement from rehabilitation services, not having necessary staff or support, not having knowledgeable staff, lack of interest from the administration to adapt activities.
  - ▪ Communication: Lack of specific knowledge about the benefits of physical activity, lack of knowledge about how to exercise, lack of information about physical activity, no counselling.
  - ▪ Suitability: High level competition, emphasis on winning.
- o Psychological:
  - ▪ Personal perceptions: Self-consciousness about exercising in public, perception that exercise is too difficult, negative mood, depression, anxieties, fears.
  - ▪ Attitudes from others: Discriminatory practices at fitness centres and other recreational venues, other people´s negative attitudes, not having a role model.

6. Developing inclusive leisure time activities

For the most part, two approaches to social inclusion are in practice today whereby people with disabilities can become active leisure participants. The selection of these approaches depends upon individual needs and program availability, and should not be dictated by the preferences of service providers or the service delivery system itself.

6.1. Integration of generic programs approach

This approach can be defined as helping an individual with a disability to select an existing age-appropriate community leisure service that was designed originally for participants without disabilities. The support person works in cooperation with a program leader to identify and eliminate the differences between program skill requirements and the individual's capabilities. People with disabilities participate in activities alongside a natural proportion of peers without disabilities. Participation in existing age-appropriate leisure services has the potential to help people with disabilities to acquire skills required for contemporary, appropriate, high-interest activities in the community.

A significant advantage offered by this approach is the potential to develop social relationships between participants with and without disabilities. Generic programs serve the majority community culture unlike segregated programs that often exist in relative isolation, outside the usual community network.

6.2. Reverse mainstreaming approach

A second approach is referred to as "reverse mainstreaming." In this approach, segregated programs exclusively for people with disabilities are modified to attract peers without disabilities. The success of reverse mainstreaming often depends on restructuring a program to make it highly attractive to all participants. Once the participants without disabilities are "in the door," participating alongside their peers with disabilities, we can facilitate social interactions and friendship. For participants with disabilities, interactions and exposure in familiar surroundings and among friends with disabilities remains manageable.

But what's next? We should look at inclusive leisure approaches that allow leisure service providers, integration facilitators and families/consumers to deploy the necessary strategies they need to make full social inclusion of all members of a community a reality.

6.3. Inclusive leisure approaches

The following seven-step process identifies some of those strategies:

6.3.1. Assessing individual leisure preferences and needs.

The first step in identifying leisure services for participation is to assess carefully what a person does or wants to do in her or his free time, identifying activities that could be enjoyed at home, in the youth community and with friends and family.

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6.3.2. Selecting an age-appropriate, community leisure activity

Consider the following variables when helping an individual select an age-appropriate leisure activity:

- physical characteristics and age-appropriateness of activities,
- availability of leisure materials and access to agency,
- home environment (e.g. presence of siblings, family socio-economic status),
- the indicated preference of the individual herself or himself,
- safety,
- long-term versus short-term relevance,
- potential for social inclusion and making friends.

To help you, Annex 1 provides a leisure interest checklist.

6.3.3. Determining the environmental constraints and demands of the activity

Conduct an environmental analysis inventory to determine the constraints and demands of an activity. The inventory should include a general analysis of the program and a determination of how well the participants' current abilities match the physical, cognitive and social demands necessary to participate in the activity.

6.3.4. Assessing skill levels and deficits relative to the identified demands of the activity

A commonly used method of measuring leisure skills and skill deficits is a task analytic assessment. You can compare the results of this assessment, that is, the identified individual skills and skill deficits, to the demands of the targeted leisure activity.

6.3.5. Developing strategies to overcome individual deficits and program barriers

You can identify strategies as extrinsic or intrinsic, based on the identified barrier to participation:

- Intrinsic strategies, intended to prepare or educate the individual, centre around skills instruction. These strategies may include behavioural teaching methods, such as task analysis, that break down an activity into smaller components for easier learning.
- Extrinsic strategies for social inclusion are strategies that are designed to prepare the social environment to accommodate the participants.

6.3.6. Implementing by "integration specialists"

"Integration specialists" should work in collaboration with service providers when implementing strategies to promote relationships. Whereas leisure service providers contribute expertise in programming, teaching and leadership, the integration specialist assumes a "facilitators" or "bridge-builder" role. This role involves helping participants connect with other people in the program by providing long-term, interactive support. In this manner, the provider assumes the role of a participant and interacts equally with all members, not just with individuals who has disabilities.

6.3.7. Evaluating integrated programs

A variety of evaluation methods-interviews, observations, scientific inquiry--to provide continuous feedback and flexibility in the program is required. This ongoing evaluation process allows the

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programmer to modify the program, as necessary, in order to maximise all of the participants, leisure and social experiences.

6.3.8. Circle of friends

Sometimes an individual has great difficulty gaining access to a group, perhaps because of an interfering disability. In such a case, it may be useful to use a "circle of friends" intervention technique. This process prepares a small group or circle of friends to assist the individual or focus person. The circle of friends is comprised of volunteer group members, friends and significant people in the focus person's life (e.g. parents, siblings). These new and old friends have intimate knowledge of the focus person. A group leader can gather peers without disabilities and organize a group discussion of the new member's dreams, nightmares, likes, strengths, gifts, abilities and needs. By carefully directing the discussion, the leader can guide the group through the perceived barriers to inclusion, helping the group create solutions that could promote group acceptance. The circle of friends, the focus person and the group leader work together to create successful participation for all. The primary focus of the circle-of-friends strategies is to encourage participants without disabilities to think creatively about how they can improve opportunities for peers with disabilities and then to empower them to implement their plans and act upon their own ideas.

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7. Guidelines for youth workers, leaders and teachers

Based on the performed comparative analysis of findings in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria and Turkey, following consolidated guidelines have been identified.

7.1. General youth policy

- An inclusive policy means that the leisure participation for all children and young people falls under the youth policy.
- An inclusive youth policy not only facilitates participation in a specific youth work and leisure offer, but mainly focuses on maximum participation with peers within the general leisure and youth work offer.
- Diversity as a policy concept cannot be divided into socially vulnerable, poverty, disability etc.
- The invisibility as a 'target group' for youth policy currently works against them: they are not represented and often dependent on representatives who do not take it up for them, in contrast to social vulnerability, poverty, foreign origin, LGBTQIA , etc.
- Participation of children and young people with disabilities is a point of attention for all subsidized activities. When funding and evaluation naturally form part of the general policy plans, the likelihood that the subsidized workings also starts from a self-evident participation increases.
- A youth-oriented leisure offer for all young people is diverse and diversified, recognizable and reliable. It prioritises the natural leisure environments that are as close as possible to the interests and environment of various children and young people. Existing participation thresholds should be eliminated as far as possible by doing justice to the reasonable adjustments that children and young people with disabilities sometimes need to fully participate. Leisure and youth activities need support and encouragement.
- In order to generate sufficient and necessary support and to spread existing know-how, youth policy should make maximum use of cooperation and networks between:
  - general and specific workings;
  - leisure and youth work and local care providers;
  - parent associations and leisure and youth work.
- A youth policy aimed at all children and young people also focuses on a specific offer with adapted activities that broaden the leisure participation and opportunities. A specific offer that, beyond the reception or animation function, also focuses on self-development, full social participation, and opportunities for taking citizenship.
- Children and young people with disabilities need to be actively involved in youth policy, so that they can actually make their voices heard in various advisory boards. Not only through replacement representatives from the specific circuit, but by actively participating in public participation. If necessary, reasonable adjustments must be made here (e.g. coaching).
- Is it possible to work with testing labs where experimenting within the general supply with care and support from the specific supply or leisure care or care providers, or optimizing cooperation between different parties and actors.

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7.2.Specific Leisure And Youth Change Offer

- Care is a necessary means, leisure activity or youth work the goal. In a specific leisure or youth work offer, the care and support offered must also be at the service of full-time leisure participation, activity or youth work methodology.

- A specific offer for children and young people with disabilities should only exist if it does not take place in isolation and does not lead to the segregation of children and young people and that there is therefore sufficient connection with the supply in society or general workings.

- In the specific offer, too, sufficient attention must be paid to the various youth work methodologies. Even though the animating reception function for certain children is a first step in their emancipatory process, they also have the right to contribute more to their emancipatory potential, for example through self-advocacy, participation, ...

- Collaboration at different levels between the specific supply and the general offer should be rewarded and stimulated by policy.

- There is a need for a breakdown between general and specific supply: continuous cooperation, developing complementary offerings, providing alternating combinations (weekly versus holiday), exchanging activities, spaces and supervisors. This can range from organizing common activities, exchanging support, material, place and resources to a far-reaching collaboration, where the specific supply goes into an offer for all young people.

- It is important that children and young people with disabilities can also take up their citizenship. There are no organizations that unite, support and guide children and young people with disabilities in their opportunities for participation and learn to stand up for their rights. They can in turn form a direct interlocutor, who can report and help to eliminate or mitigate obstacles that impede their participation.

7.3.Local youth policy

- Every family, every child or every young person is a stakeholder in the neighbourhood or municipality where he or she lives and has the right to leisure participation in the neighbourhood. The inclusive playground operations are the best example of this.

- Local policy should focus on sensitization of local leisure and youth activities with regard to the right to leisure participation of children and young people with disabilities in the local leisure offer.

- The stereotypical perception of this target group must be broken and, in accordance with the UN Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, segregated leisure activities must be avoided.

- The local leisure and youth activities should show in their communication that all children and young people with disabilities are welcome and can participate in their offer. The participation of children and young people with disabilities should be seen as a matter of course.

- To this end, local policies should ensure that the information and actions are disseminated, shared or announced to parents, schools, care facilities, who are important intermediaries in the full-fledged leisure participation of children and young people with disabilities. The more directly the information or action reaches the young, the greater the chance of participation.

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- Local operations lack direct and targeted support at the moment when it is needed. In order to provide maximum support for local operations, local partnerships and networks should be developed between specific workings, general workings and possible welfare provisions and care providers in the municipality.
- Collaboration between the specific supply and the general supply could be rewarded and encouraged from the policy. Collaboration can go from organizing activities together, to exchanging support, material, place and resources, to a far-reaching cooperation, where the specific supply goes into an offer for all young people.
- Whereas local policy is sometimes too small from its scale level, initiatives could also be developed at an inter-municipal level on aspects such as information flow, networking with supra-local support, advocacy, sensitization, and the like, and possibly also granting.
- Children and young people with disabilities need to be actively involved in local youth policy, so that they can actually make their voice heard in the youth council. Not only through replacement representatives from the specific circuit, but by actively participating in public participation. If necessary, adequate support for equal participation of young people with disabilities have to be ensured (e.g. coaching).

7.4. Specifically for children with disabilities and their parents

- Parents must also be included in the paradigm shift from the medical care model to a socio-cultural citizenship model. For leisure activities this means, among other things, taking care of and supporting parents in the socialization of leisure care, familiarizing themselves with the local general offer as an opportunity for leisure activities, without sacrificing the quality of care.
- Parents need a trustworthy leisure offer and lack a local support network that allows the leisure participation of their children or young people.
- Parents and children and young people with a disability are increasingly looking for suitable activities themselves. To do so, they need an overview of the local leisure options (specific and general) for their child.
- There is a need to 'unleash' the role of intermediary links / persons. Caregivers, therapists, teachers in special education, etc. try to make parents think too much from a medical or care perspective. As confidential counsellors, they have a big influence on parents and children. Participation in organized leisure and youth work could be stimulated more from their role as confidential adviser.

7.5. Specifically for schools

- Schools can play an important intermediary role in the leisure participation. They can be a pivotal figure in the leisure participation of their pupils. For schools that want to use this, cooperation with the general and specific offer is necessary.
- Schools can take up even more the role of supervisor, guide in the leisure landscape, and make their students familiar with the diversity within the general and specific leisure offer. Schools now set up their own leisure activities, where children and young people become acquainted with various activities and domains. However, inflows rarely follow and depend on the goodwill, knowledge and commitment of the individual supervisors.

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- Schools for special education have a fundamental responsibility for breaking stereotypes about their pupils. Guiding and supporting pupils towards a full-time leisure participation outside the school can contribute to this, as well as cooperation with regular schools, for example within the context of a 'broad school' (e.g. organizing a leisure offer together).
- The same applies to the internalized dependence and the self-image of students with a disability. Pupils should become familiar with their rights and possibilities through their education, with the participation thresholds that exist for them and how they can bridge them, how they can unite and make their voices heard and how organized leisure activities can contribute to this.

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Annex 1: Leisure interest checklist

- ☐ Acting
- ☐ Amusement parks
- ☐ Animals
- ☐ Antiquing
- ☐ Arcade games
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Astronomy
- ☐ Attending the circus
- ☐ Attending concerts
- ☐ Attending a fair
- ☐ Baking
- ☐ Ballroom dancing
- ☐ Barbecuing
- ☐ Basket weaving
- ☐ Beekeeping
- ☐ Beading
- ☐ Bicycling
- ☐ Bird watching
- ☐ Blogging (online journal)
- ☐ Board Games
- ☐ Boating
- ☐ Book binding
- ☐ Bowling
- ☐ Brunch
- ☐ Buying fish & caring for them
- ☐ Cake decorating
- ☐ Camping
- ☐ Candle making
- ☐ Canoeing
- ☐ Caring for plants
- ☐ Caring for pets
- ☐ Carving
- ☐ Chess
- ☐ Cleaning
- ☐ Cooking
- ☐ Collecting
- ☐ Coloring
- ☐ Community clubs

- ☐ Computer games
- ☐ Computer programming
- ☐ Crafting
- ☐ Craft fairs
- ☐ Creative writing
- ☐ Crochet
- ☐ Cruising
- ☐ Dancing
- ☐ Dating
- ☐ Decorating
- ☐ Decoupage
- ☐ Dining out
- ☐ Discussing books
- ☐ Dog training
- ☐ Doodling
- ☐ Drawing
- ☐ Dressmaking
- ☐ Driving
- ☐ Embroidery (needle work)
- ☐ Entertaining
- ☐ Event planning
- ☐ Exercising
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Fantasy football
- ☐ Film making
- ☐ Fishing
- ☐ Floral arranging
- ☐ Flying a kite
- ☐ Gadgets
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Genealogy
- ☐ Getting a massage
- ☐ Geo-caching
- ☐ Gift giving
- ☐ Glass blowing
- ☐ Glass etching
- ☐ Going on a picnic
- ☐ Going out for coffee

- ☐ Going out for lunch
- ☐ Going to parks
- ☐ Going to the aquarium
- ☐ Going to the gym
- ☐ Going to the pet store
- ☐ Going to the theatre
- ☐ Going to the spa
- ☐ Golfing
- ☐ Haircut
- ☐ Hair styling
- ☐ Ham radio
- ☐ Having discussions
- ☐ Hiking
- ☐ Home decorating
- ☐ Horseback riding
- ☐ Hot air balloons
- ☐ House repairs
- ☐ Ice skating
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Jewellery making
- ☐ Jigsaw puzzle
- ☐ Jogging
- ☐ Journaling
- ☐ Juggling
- ☐ Karaoke
- ☐ Kayaking
- ☐ Knitting
- ☐ Landscaping
- ☐ Laser tag
- ☐ Laughing
- ☐ Learning a foreign language
- ☐ Learning something new
- ☐ Leatherwork
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Line dancing

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- Listening to others
- Listening to music
- Looking at photographs/albums
- Macramé
- Magazines
- Magic tricks
- Manicures/pedicures
- Meditating
- Meeting new people
- Metalworking
- Model building
- Model trains/railroads
- Model ships
- Motorcycles
- Museums
- Music
- Needlework
- Online shopping/browsing
- Origami
- Organising
- Painting
- Paint ball
- Paper crafts
- Paper making
- Parks
- Parties
- Party planning
- Pinball
- Pinterest (website)
- Playing cards
- Playing pool
- Photography
- Pottery
- Practicing karate
- Practicing yoga
- Printmaking

- Playing a musical instrument
- Playing sports
- Puppets
- Quilting
- Quilting
- Reading books
- Reading the newspaper
- Refinishing furniture
- Relaxing
- Religion
- Repairing things around the house
- Riddles
- Rock Collecting
- Sailing
- Sand sculpting
- Scavenger hunts
- Sculpting
- Scuba diving
- Senior centre
- Sewing
- Shadow boxes
- Shopping
- Sightseeing
- Singing
- Skating
- Skateboarding
- Sketching
- Skiing
- Sky diving
- Snowboarding
- Solving riddles
- Spelunking
- Sports
- Stained glass
- Stamp collecting
- Story telling
- Sunbathing
- Surfing

- Swimming
- Tai chi
- Talking on the phone
- Taking trips
- Taking a bath
- Taking classes
- Taking a vacation
- Teaching
- Technology
- Theatre (plays, musicals)
- Travelling
- Treasure hunting
- Video games
- Visiting with family
- Visiting with friends
- Volunteering
- Walking
- Watercolours
- Watching movies
- Watching television
- Weaving
- Window shopping
- Whittling
- Word puzzles
- Writing (stories, books, poetry)
- Woodworking
- Working out
- Yard work