



The Ways You Can Play!

A Review of Recreational Equipment
and Programming

June 17, 2026



Meet the Presenters



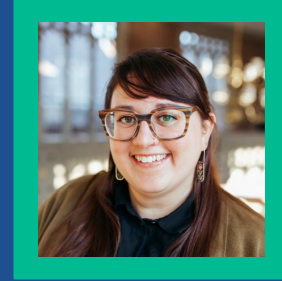
**Maebh Barry-Reardon,
APE Teacher**



**Matt LaCortiglia
APE Teacher**



**Emily Weber,
PT, DPT**



**Lauren Kling,
PT, DPT**

Emily and Lauren are physical therapists and Maebh and Matt are adapted physical education teachers at Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts. Working in the Deafblind School at Perkins, they have the pleasure of working with many individuals with CHARGE syndrome. The PT and APE team members love to design fun activities that motivate their students to be physically active and develop their gross motor skills. Their daily work supports students' participation in recreation and leisure activities both at school and in the community. Outside of work, they love to help the disability community access the outdoors and engage youth in sports!

Disclaimers

The choice of what language to use can be very impactful and lead to strong emotions. The language used by a person to identify themselves is their personal choice that should be respected by others. These presenters affirm the right of individuals to choose and use the language that they prefer and denounces the use of derogatory or discriminatory language. Both “disability-first” and “person-first” language are used in the following presentation.

We created this presentation as people without physical disabilities. As able-bodied people we acknowledge that we cannot represent the lives or lived experiences of people with physical disabilities.

What are we talking about today?



**Benefits of
physical activity**



**Home and community
activities**



**Activity selection
and accessibility**



**Equipment, funding, and
programming resources**



Benefits of Physical Activity



Sensory Regulation

- Stimulate the vestibular system
- Provide proprioceptive input
- Develop visual-motor coordination
- Create opportunities for movement in a safe and appropriate way



Motor Skill Development

- Balance!
- Motor coordination
- Bone health
- Prevention of pain, muscle tightness, skeletal changes, etc.



Social/Emotional Benefits

- Meeting peers with similar interests
- Team responsibility
- Communication skills and self-advocacy
- Choice-making
- Confidence
- Lifelong healthy habits
- Family and community inclusion



Active kids become active adults!

The Right to Accessible Play

- Disability rights activists advocate for self-determination and community access
- Medical Model vs. Social Model of Disability
- Dignity of Risk

People with disabilities, like everyone else, have the right to:

- Make mistakes
- Learn from experience
- Grow more independent



<https://www.neurodiversitysg.com/medical-model-vs-social-model.html>

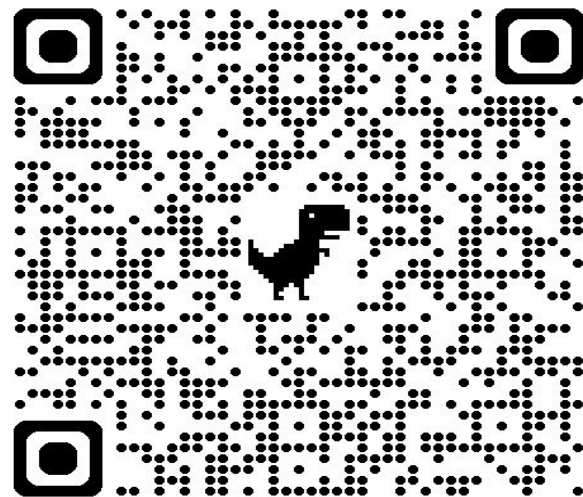
Activity Selection



Recreation Activity Guide for Community-Based Activities

A guide to help select community-based physical activities and determine accessibility

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DAMAt2ZKleTrVd7GXqcJHO5wqSH4XCXJ2yj7wa0LTIQ/edit?tab=t.0>



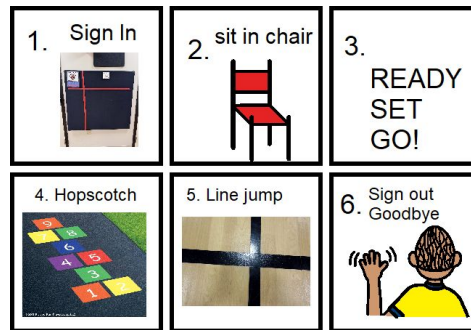
Popular Activities

- Swimming/ water-based activities
- Scooter activities (proprioceptive input, taking balance out of the equation)
- Dance/ Drumming, rhythmic activities
- Sports/games with a predictable routine and a clear beginning, middle, and end



Other Physical Activities

- Change your environment! Improved weather, bring your exercise stations outside. This can help with generalizing skills
- Get family members and friends involved, make it a fun group activity
- Video-based activities (movement videos on Youtube), “Seconds Pro” app, watching a show while standing
- Some equipment we find most popular and cost efficient includes: Zip ball, sandbells and scooters





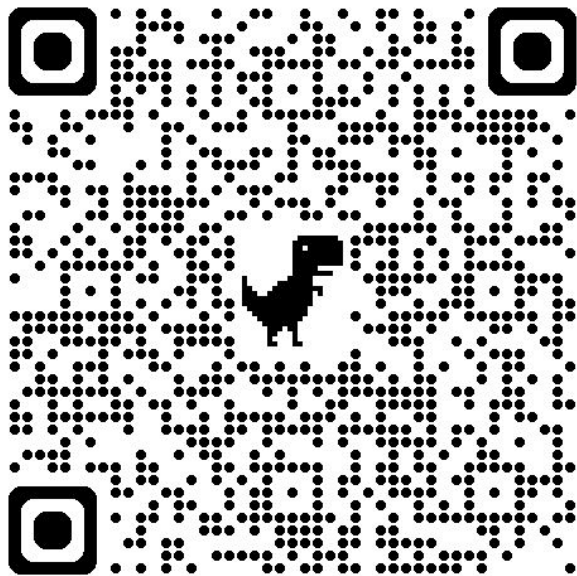
Adapted Sports and Recreation Resources



Community Resources

- Look at state and locally funded programs in your area
- CHARGE Syndrome Foundation website - <https://www.chargesyndrome.org/>
- Perkins resource page (Scan QR code) - <https://www.perkins.org/resource/accessing-community-sports-and-recreation-opportunities-program-and-funding-sources/>
- NW Association for Blind Athletes - <https://nwaba.org/>

Perkins Resource Page



Adaptive Equipment Rentals

- All Out Adventures (Northampton, MA)
- Massachusetts DCR Universal Access Programs (equipment available at various locations in MA)
- Northeast Passage (Durham, NH)
- SMILE Mass (equipment available at various locations in New England)
- Waypoint Adventure (Lexington, MA and Black Mountain, NC)





Grants and Funding



Grant and Funding Resources

General Funding Sources for Adaptive Athletes:

- AdaptX
- Challenged Athletes Foundation
- Chive Charities
- GoHawkeye Foundation
- The Hoyt Foundation
- IM ABLE Foundation
- J-Rob Foundation
- Move United
- Surfgimp Foundation
- Welger Foundation
- Wheels for Wheels

Diagnosis-Specific Sources for Adaptive Sport & Rec:

- CHARGE Syndrome Foundation - Ethan Wolfe Recreational Assistance Program
- Flutie Foundation - Autism community
- Foreseeable Future Foundation - Visually Impaired athletes
- Victoria's Victory Foundation - People living with mobility disabilities caused by spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, stroke, MS, cerebral palsy, and rare diseases

Takeaways!

- Sports are for **everyone**!
- Participation in sports and recreation improves the health and well-being of the individual with disability!
- Participation in sports and recreation also has positive impacts on the family, caregivers, and community!
- Early access is important!
- There are providers and organizations ready to help and break down barriers!
- Finding the right fit is key to long-term participation!



Questions?

References

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