

# Implementation Guide

Guidelines for Including People  
with Disabilities in Health  
Promotion Programs





# WELCOME

Facilitator, Mary White

Introductions

Chat facilitator



# What is Your Current Role?



## What is your current role?

Health Educator

Program Manager

Direct Service Provider

Community Partner

Disability Advocate

Other

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# Today's Speakers



Mary White

Facilitator



Kelly Bonner

Lead Trainer



Allison Tubbs

Moderator



Paige Denison

Sound  
Generations  
(partner)

# How this Guide was developed:



Worked together since January 2024 to develop this new resource.



# Process for Development



**Reviewed existing Guidelines to determine gaps and needs related to considerations for people with IDD.**



**Hosted a virtual focus group with people with IDD and service providers.**



**Hosted Inclusive Health Programs Survey for Health and Research Professionals.**



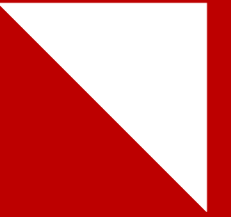
**Reviewed and analyzed all data and feedback to inform the new Guide.**

**JOIN OUR FOCUS GROUP:**

**Making Health Programs  
Inclusive for Everyone**

**Give health means everyone, including people with intellectual disabilities the same health programs and services as everyone else.**

# Newly Developed Resources



## **Implementation Guide + Quick Factsheet**

Guidelines for  
Including People  
with Disabilities in  
Health Promotion  
Programs.

## **Commit to Health: Addendum for Disability Inclusion**

Pilot project of the Guidelines  
in partnership with the  
National Park and Recreation  
Association (NRPA) and  
Peoria Grown, a community-  
based organization.



# How to Use this Guide





# Today's Objectives

- Learn about disability and inclusive health based on the Social Model of Disability.
- Understand and apply the updated 8 Guidelines for including people with disability.
- Learn how to GRAID your program for inclusion and a checklist.
- Hear from an organization that has done this work.
- Leave with actionable next steps for your organization or program.





# Why Disability Matters

Currently

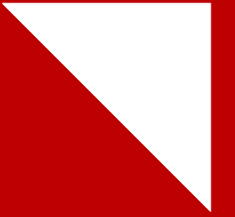
61 Million Adults

1 in 4 Adults



CDC 2024, Disability Impacts us All

# Disability Is Common In



**2 IN 5**

Non- hispanic American  
Indians/ Alaska natives  
have a disability



**1 IN 4**

Women have a  
disability



**2 IN 5**

Adults age 65 years  
and older have a  
disability





# Reality for Youth with a Disability

CDC, NIH, Government Accountability Office



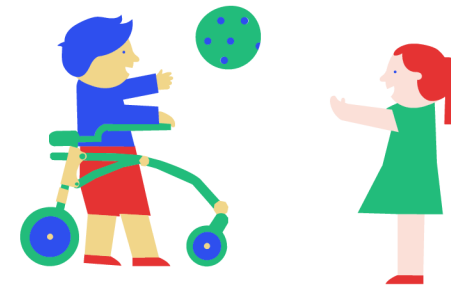
**>3 MILLION**

Children in the US  
have a disability.



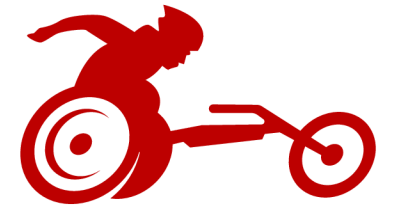
**38% HIGHER**

Obesity rates for  
youth with a  
disability.



**70% OF YOUTH  
WITH IDD**

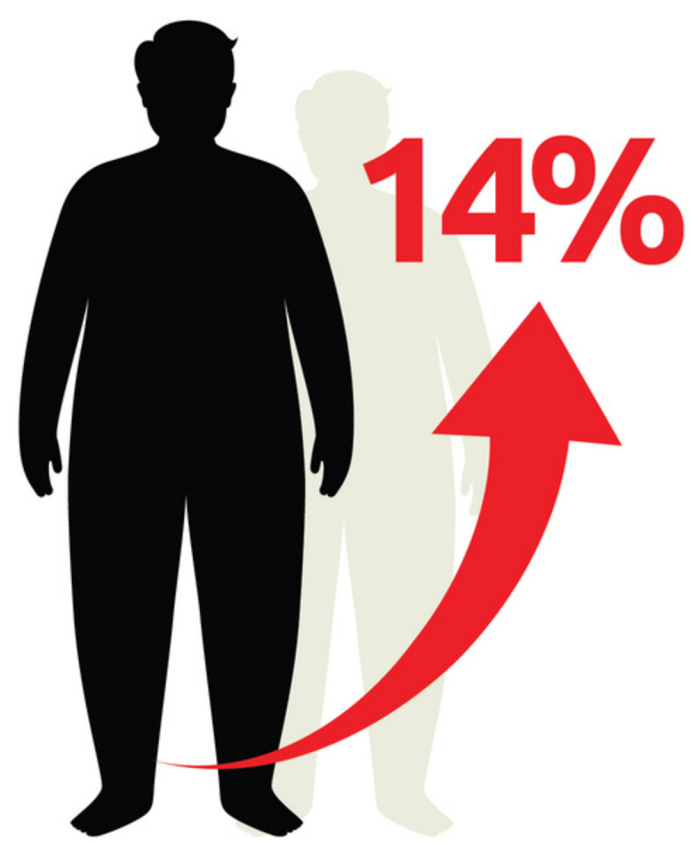
and 40% of youth  
with a physical  
disability felt they  
get the same level of  
participation in PE.



**4.5 TIMES  
LOWER**

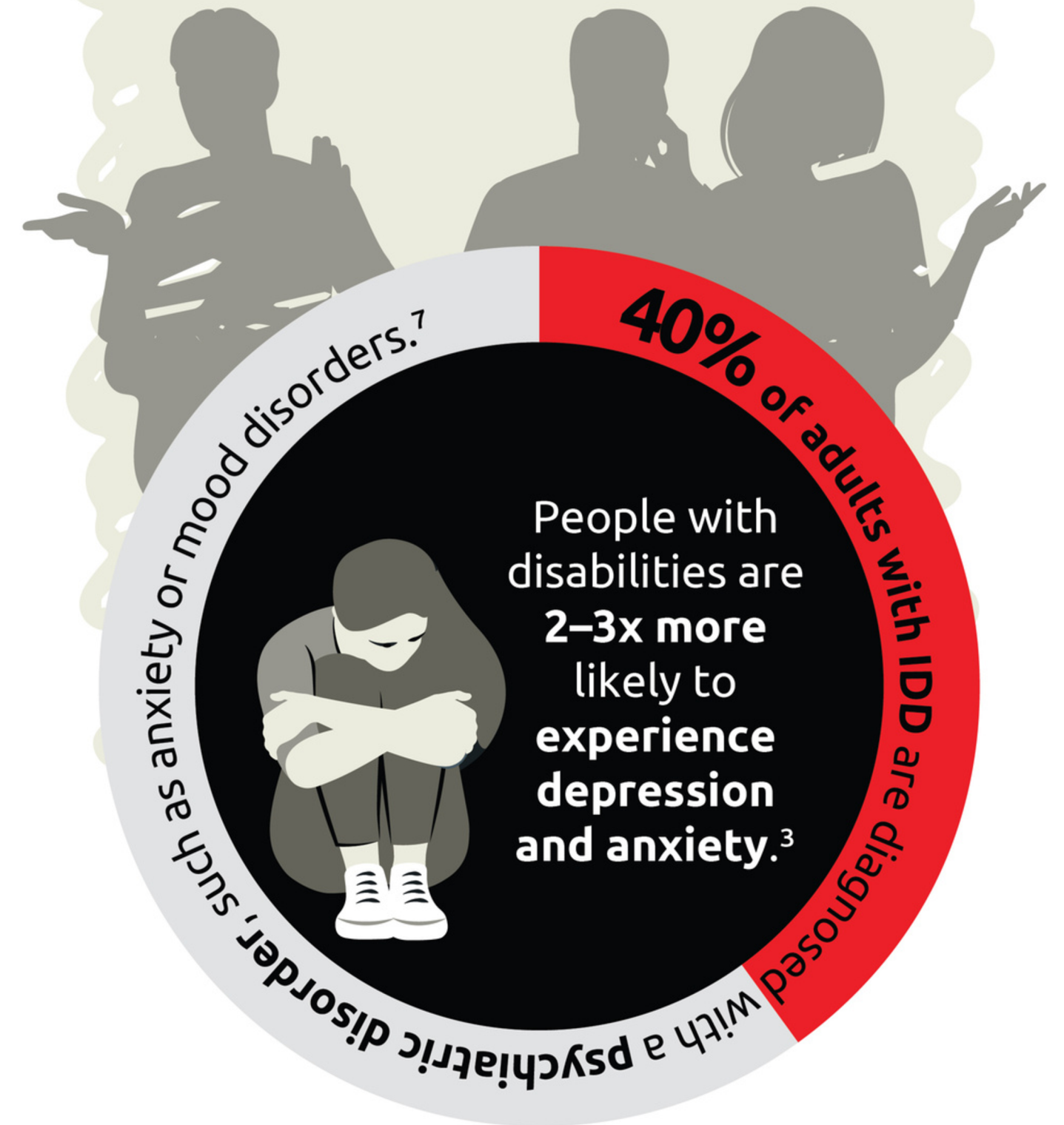
Physical activity  
levels for kids with a  
disability.

**Adults with IDD have obesity rates 14% higher** than adults without IDD.<sup>8</sup>



Children with IDD are also at higher risk of overweight and obesity.<sup>8</sup>

**Social isolation** is a significant contributor to **poor mental health** outcomes, especially among those with IDD who often lack inclusive community opportunities.<sup>5</sup>



8. American Journal of Public Health (AJPH), 2018 – "Obesity and IDD"  
<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/Full/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304245>

3. CDC - Mental Health in Adults with Disabilities

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/features/mental-health-for-all.html>

5. National Council on Disability – "Health Equity Framework for People with Disabilities" (2022)

<https://ncd.gov/publications/2022/health-equity-framework>

7. CDC – Health and Healthcare for People with IDD

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/features/health-of-people-with-IDD.html>



# People with Disability



Are 3x more likely  
to have chronic  
health conditions.



Have less access to  
preventative care.



Face major barriers  
in public health  
programs.



## Medical Model Understanding of Disability



The problem is  
the disabled person

So you see  
it's the barriers  
within society that  
disables you

## Social Model Understanding of Disability



The problem is the barriers within society

PHYSICAL AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
BARRIERS

INSTITUTIONAL &  
ORGANISATIONAL  
BARRIERS

INFORMATION &  
COMMUNICATION  
BARRIERS

ATTITUDINAL  
BARRIERS



# What are some barriers that a program or organization might be creating for someone with a disability?

## Answer in the chat!



Transportation



Programs



Architectural



Attitudes




Cost



# 8 Guidelines

For including People with  
Disabilities in Health Promotion





# Commit to Inclusion



## Why should you do this?

To meet an inclusion standard, programs need to state that people with disabilities are included and welcomed in the program.

## How do you do this?

Sample: "At [Program/Organization Name], we are committed to creating a welcoming environment for all participants. The target population for this program includes people with a range of different disabilities, including cognitive, intellectual, developmental, mobility, visual, hearing, and mental health disabilities. We actively work to ensure that disability adaptations are embedded in all aspects of our planning, policies, and activities. Our leadership is dedicated to promoting accessibility and full participation for individuals with disabilities in every part of the program."



The statement of commitment should be represented both internally by organizational leadership and externally as a public statement.

Make an Internal Commitment from Organizational Leadership	Make an External Public Statement about your Commitment to Inclusion
Your commitment must ensure staff will receive training on disability education and inclusion.	Clearly define your target audience in your program objectives to include people with disabilities.
Your commitment must ensure that a budget or funding is available to address adaptations or accommodations.	Be specific about physical, sensory (vision and hearing), and intellectual disabilities, including how your program is inclusive of each.



**Has your program or organization ever made a public or internal statement like this?**

Yes

No

Not sure

In progress

Submit

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# Consider Cost & Feasibility



## Why should you do this?

Financial barriers can disproportionately impact individuals with disabilities and should not prevent participation in health promotion programs.

## How do you do this?

Examples: sliding scale fees, pay what you can, free caregiver admission, apply for grants to offset program costs, help participants connect with their insurance provider to ask about health programs that might be covered.

Offer activities in public places like parks and trails, use cost-effective adaptive equipment solutions like pool noodles or ace bandages.



**Does your program or organization offer cost modifications?**

Yes

No

In progress

Submit

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# Plan for Inclusion



## Why should you do this?

Programs should be designed with direct input from people with disabilities.

## How do you do this?

Collaborate with disability organizations, such as Independent Living Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Special Olympics Programs, Local Arc Chapters, State Councils on Developmental Disabilities, People First chapters, or specific disability groups like the MS Society or Spina Bifida Association.



# Partner with People with Disability



## **Nothing About Us Without Us:**

Always include people with diverse disability experiences in all phases from planning to implementation to evaluation/sustainability.



## **Become an effective ally and advocate:**

As an ally and advocate, you are supporting the movement and working WITH the disabled community.



## **Community Toolkit**

[How to Connect and Engage with Disability Advocates.](#)

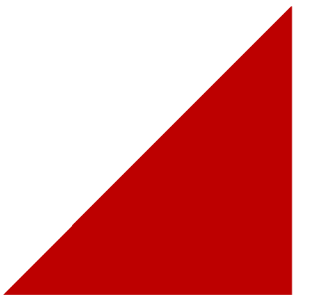


## **Developing Partnerships Article**

[Developing Partnerships with the Disability Community.](#)

Respond in the Chat...

**Who could you invite from the  
disability community to help  
shape your program?**





# Train Program Staff



## Why should you do this?

Staff should receive disability education and inclusion training that addresses disability history and culture, communication and language, accommodations, accessibility, plain language, universal design, and training on how to effectively utilize technology.

## How do you do this?

- Include disability education and inclusion training as part of your organization's annual training policies and onboarding.
- Involve PWD as trainers, co-trainers, or speakers and in the creation of training content.
- Provide evaluation and feedback loops to gather participant feedback.
- Partner with disability organizations that provide this training.

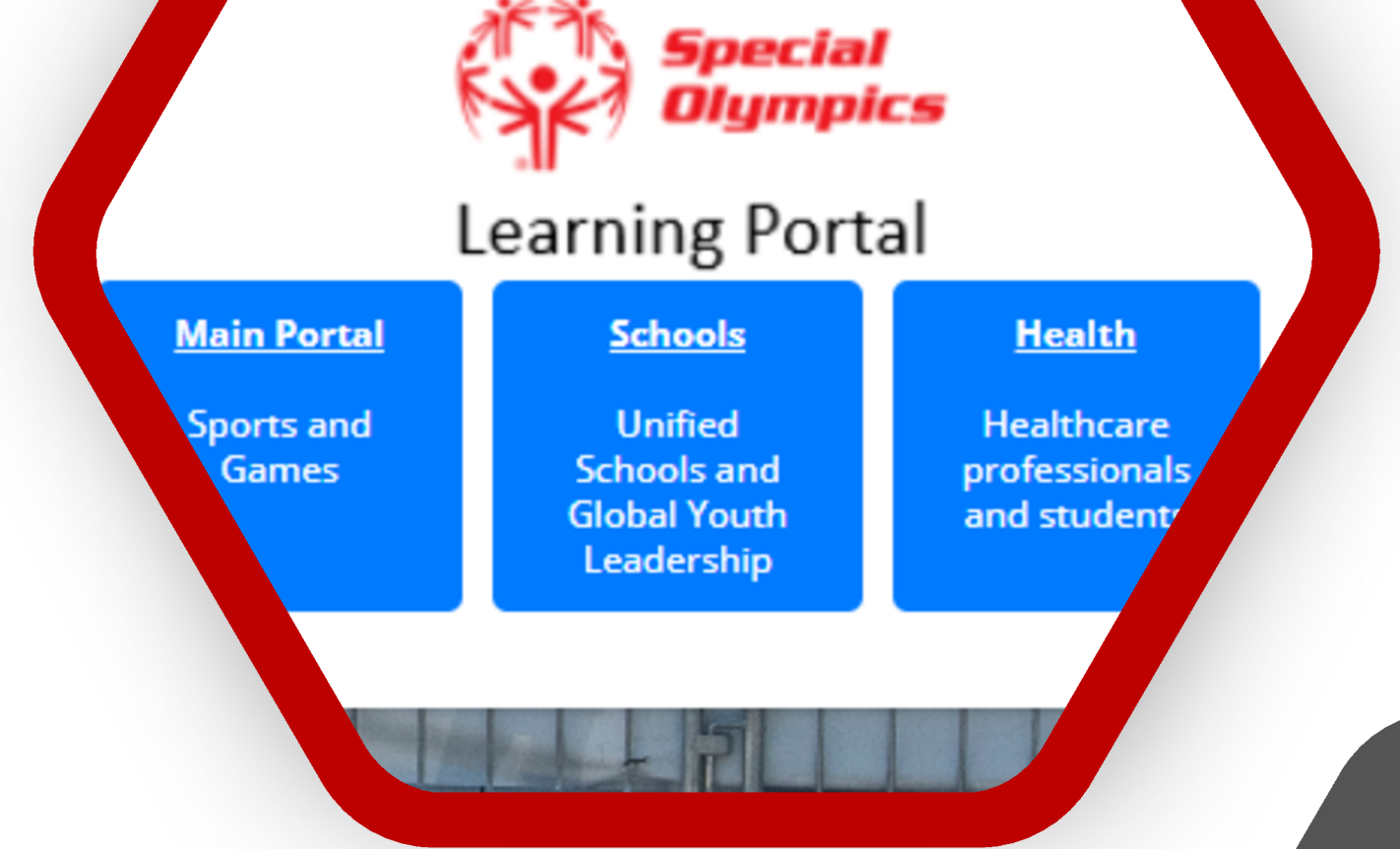
# Where to find Disability Education and Inclusion Training

## Special Olympics Inclusive Health Fundamentals

<https://elearn.specialolympics.org/learn>

## Disability Organizations

- Collaborate with disability organizations to offer training or to work with you to develop the training.
- See examples and links on the “Plan for Inclusion” slide.
- Consider the format that best meets your organization and staff needs, such as in-person, virtual/webinar, asynchronous digital or video-based training.





# Person First



Puts a person before diagnosis, describing what a person “has” rather than asserting what a person “is”.



Seen as a type of disability etiquette.



Intention to avoid using labels, to see the person as a person first and their attributes second.

# Identity First



Comes from self-advocacy movements- a culture of shared experiences.

For advocates of identity-first language, talking about being a “disabled person” is fundamentally empowering because it acknowledges that their disability is vital to their position in the world and who they are.



# Choosing Respectful Language

## Words to Avoid:

- Crippled
- Wheelchair-bound/ confined
- Handicapped
- Physically challenged
- Stroke Victim
- Suffers From
- Normal

## Words to Say:

### Individual who:

- Uses a wheelchair
- Has a disability
- Had/ experienced a stroke
- Dwarf/ Little person
- Non-disabled
- Accessible

**WORDS**

**HAVE**

**POWER**



# Mary's Top 10

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## Communication Tips

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoWNenEObu0>





# Ensure Program Accessibility and Universal Design



## Why should you do this?

Programs should be physically, socially, and behaviorally accessible to maximize participation. Accessibility ensures initial access to programs or services and is mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

## How do you do this?

Use checklists provided in the toolkit to evaluate the accessibility of key components.

# Program Accessibility and Universal Design

## Title II and III

1

State and local government programs as well as public places must make services accessible.

## Reasonable Accommodations

2

Legally required adjustments made to ensure that individuals with disability have equal access to programs services and activities.

## Universal Design

3

Environments and products that are useable by all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation.

## Conduct Reviews

4

Accessibility reviews, walk/move audits, surveys in partnership with people with disabilities or disability organizations.



**Have you ever conducted  
an accessibility audit of  
your program space or  
materials?**

Yes

No

Submit

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# Offer Accommodations



## Why should you do this?

Accommodations are changes or adjustments to environments, programs, or materials that help a person with a disability participate fully and equally.

## How do you do this?

- Ask about accommodations.
- Offer multiple ways to register.
- Allow for caregiver to participate.
- Track accommodation requests to identify trends and reoccurring needs.



# Preparing for Accommodations

## ASK

Ask if any accommodations are needed during registration process.

## QUESTIONS

Questions should focus on accommodation needs not if they have a disability or not.

## CHECKLIST

You can include a checklist in your intake form based on the program you are offering.

## EXAMPLES

- Large Print
- Wheelchair access
- Closed Captioning
- An Interpreter
- Advanced copies
- Digital copies for a screen reader

# Ensure Accessible Recruitment and Communication



## Why should you do this?

Recruitment materials should demonstrate that people with disabilities can benefit from this program just like anyone else. Using inclusive language, accessible documents, online material, engaging social media content, and images of individuals with apparent disabilities are effective methods to recruit participants with disabilities into your program.

## How should you do this?



# Accessible Recruitment and Communication Best Practices



- Use plain language and images of people with disabilities in promotional materials.
- Use language that is respectful, affirming, and acknowledges the diversity of the audience. Avoid jargon.
- Distribute information through disability organizations and advocacy networks.
- Ensure online content is WCAG-compliant ([Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#)).
- Include a clear statement on recruitment materials about accommodation requests and that the program is accessible to people with disabilities.
- Marketing materials should be available in a variety of accessible formats and translated to other languages based on your target audiences.
- Marketing or recruitment materials should use high contrast colors, sans-serif fonts, large font, one idea per line, and icons to aid in understanding.



# Can you identify the inclusive marketing?



**PLAY UNIFIED**

## SOTX RGV SUMMER FUNDAMENTALS SERIES

**FUN & CREATIVE ATHLETIC  
ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS  
WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

**6-23-23 & 7-21-23  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm**

**FUNdamental Sports**  
SPECIAL OLYMPICS TEXAS

FUNdamental Sports is an updated program for individuals with challenging multiple and physical disabilities that preclude them from participating in traditional Special Olympics sports,

**HIDALGO CO. PCT. 2  
SPORTS COMPLEX**  
3600 Athol St.  
Pharr, Tx 78577

For more Information 956-379-7721 @ytrinidad@sotx.org



**DC Public Library**

**Disability Pride Comedy Night!**

**Wednesday, July 30th  
7 p.m.  
MLK Library, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**\*ASL Interpretation & CART provided**  
For other reasonable accommodations, contact  
DCPLaccess@dc.gov or 202-727-2142

**Comedians:**  
Brittany Carney  
Bria Beddoe  
Kenny Rooster  
Lee Swanson



# Evaluate and Refine



## **Why should you do this?**

When evaluating and refining programs designed for people with disabilities, it is essential to adopt inclusive, respectful, and participatory approaches.

## **How do you do this?**

- Collect data on participant experiences and accessibility challenges.
- Track participation rates and health outcomes through program data and/or self-responses.
- Offer multiple formats for data collection such as interviews, focus groups, and surveys.
- Ensure informed consent processes are accessible and understandable.
- Establish advisory groups with people with disabilities and disability organizations to guide and review the evaluation process.
- Adapt and re-fine programs based on evaluation findings. Share findings with stakeholders.
- Communicate back to participants how their input influenced changes.

**Do you collect feedback  
from participants with  
disabilities?**

Yes

No

In progress

Submit

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# Guidelines Recommendations and Adaptations Including Disability (GRAIDs)

A practical tool and framework to adapt your program for inclusion.

## **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Ramps  
Signage  
Curb cuts  
Parking lots  
Counter Heights  
Water Foundations  
Path of Travel

## **INSTRUCTION**

Training and  
education  
techniques used  
to enhance  
learning like plain  
language and  
visuals.

## **SERVICE**

Person to person  
assistance that  
increases  
participation.  
Interpreters, Aids.  
Disability  
representation

## **EQUIPMENT & TECHNOLOGY**

Products or Tools  
used to promote  
participation.  
Adapted cooking  
or gardening  
tools.

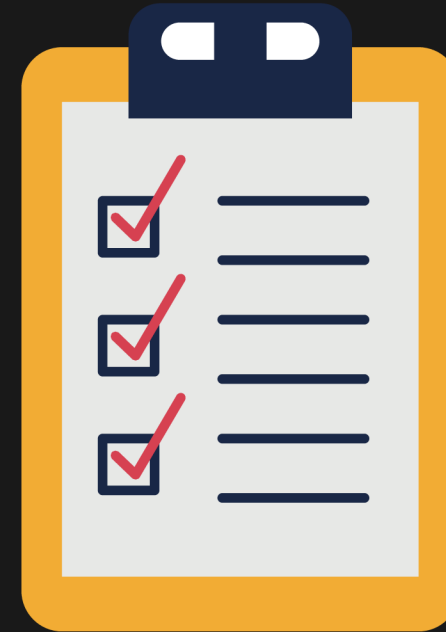
## **POLICY**

Laws, rules  
regulations,  
protocols and  
procedures  
designed to guide  
or influence  
behavior.



# How to GRAID your Program for Inclusion

A Checklist



**The 8 Guidelines +  
the 5 Inclusion  
Domains work  
together to  
address inclusion!**

- Use the Checklist to guide the adaptation of your health promotion program for full inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Consider each question within the five GRAID inclusion domains.
- If you cannot answer “yes” to all questions on this survey, identify which items need to be addressed and start to plan for how you will address them.
- The Checklist uses the 5 Inclusion Domains as sections and references back to a related Guideline for more information.





Evidence-Based Program designated as:

- Arthritis Friendly – CDC, Osteoarthritis Action Alliance
- Fall Prevention – ACL, National Council on Aging
- Cancer Control – National Cancer Institute
- [www.projectenhance.org](http://www.projectenhance.org)



*Serving older adults nationwide with proven improvements in strength, balance, social connection and more*

Inclusion is not about making room; it's about recognizing that everyone already belongs.





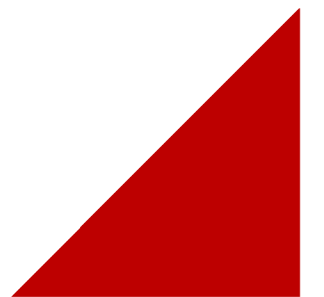
# Key Takeaways

- Disability Inclusion must be intentional.
- Use the 8 guidelines for including people with disabilities and GRAIDs checklist as practical tools.
- Small changes can lead to big impact.
- Involve the disability community every bit of the way.

Respond in the Chat...

**Drop your questions in the chat  
or Q&A box now.**

**What is one action you will take  
in the next 30 days to make your  
program more inclusive?**





- Today's presentation will be recorded and made available as an on-demand training opportunity.
- The Implementation Guide will be sent in a follow up email to all participants.

**Thank you for your time, energy, and commitment to inclusion!**

