

Tackling inactivity in disabled young people



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Introduction

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, disability requires an individual to have mental, physical, sensory impairment and chronic diseases to be classified disabled. Therefore, the individual's disability is considered to have long-standing influence on their ability to carry out the normal day-to-day activities (EA, 2010). Carlon *et al.* (2013) and Frey *et al.*, (2008) both state that the challenges that disabled children face in everyday life can mean that they see sport and physical activity as something which is beyond their reach.

Children with disability participate less in physical activity compared to their peers. ' Less than 2 in 10 disabled people (18 %) in England are taking part in sport once a week meaning that disabled people are more than half as likely to be active as non-disabled people (39%) (EFDS, 2014). This data is based on adults with disability, which reflects on young children with disability. The reasons for inferior levels of partaking in physical activity or sport for children with disability are diverse (Heah et al, 2007). The aim of this report is to identify and analyse the key barriers faced by disabled young people at each of the stages using the Behaviour Change Model, by recognising two barriers at each stage that are placed in the context of existing research or reports. As well as reviewing and justifying, the most effective actions to reduce or remove barriers faced by disabled young people at every stage, by drawing evidence based solutions to overcome those barriers from past programmes, research or reports.

An individual's impairment influences on their ability to carry out the normal day-to-day activities, so it is generally not something that inspires them. However, their attitudes and motivations are more likely to be driven by one or more of the following key values of; Maintaining health, independence, having relationship, progressing in life, having fun and having a positive self-image (EFDS, 2014). For that reason, persuading and inspiring children with disability to participate, the opportunities provided to them needs to be connect with these values that are important to them rather than their impairment (EFDS, 2014).

Pre-contemplation

At this stage, sport is not even considered a possibility; a lack of awareness of other individuals with a disability taking part in sport can act as a barrier and may not be aware of others participating in sport. Where these individuals have had limited or no exposure to others taking part, it brings about the assumption that people with disability either cannot or do not do sports. As a result, sport is not seen as an option for them (Porter, 2001).

Maloney *et al.*, (1993) found that the key barrier to participation was an individual's impairment, those with several impairments were less likely to be involved compared to those with one impairment. Societal stereotypes negative attitudes, of disability and a lack of acceptance by others are also well recognised barriers to participation according to Jones, (2003) and Kang *et al.*, (2007) as they inhibit interest in physical activity among children with a disability (Tsai and Fung, 2005) In addition, Sports and disability convey negative stereotypes that are often represented by the media, these

generate social barriers for the disabled, in the extent of social perception (Barton, 2001).

Those hurdles can be overcome with more positive exposure in the media, such as a similar campaign as “ This Girl Can” but for those with a disability (Sport England, 2017) The 2012 Paralympics Games has provided inspiration and role models for people with disabilities to become involved in sport at all levels, as well as helping to change the perceptions of many amongst the non-disabled population regarding what people with disabilities are capable of (Ferrara et al, 2015)

Contemplation

At this stage, the individual is aware of possible benefits and start to consider the possibility of participating in sport. However, they have not made the decision to participate yet, they are still weighting the pros and cons of taking part (Porter, 2001).

Attitudes of significant others is crucial at this stage, parents and families are key to whether a child with disability is physically active. Parents are a child’s key supporter in their participation both practically and financially (Troost et al, 2003). in spite of this, they can act as a barrier if they share concern or lack of confidence about the individual with a disability participating in sport. According to Porter (2001) this is a problem for Dependents and Unconfident’s; Dependents lack confidence and tend to be reliant upon others. Unconfident’s are the middle ground of Dependents and Independents and are more willing to participate. Another barrier faced at this stage is lack of awareness of appropriate sporting environments. Arthur <https://assignbuster.com/tackling-inactivity-in-disabled-young-people/>

and Finch (1999) found that lack of information held by individuals with a disability prompted to low awareness of the possible appropriate sport facilities and sporting activities.

Both barriers can be overcome by Effective Advertising that could inspire participation by including information on skill levels, instruction, program goals, transport and staffing (Anderson et al, 2005). As well as distributed locally where the target group can get hold of it, it should be inviting particularly for first time users (Anderson et al, 2005 and Hunter, 2009). Also, programmes such as the 5 Star Disability Challenge, they use sport to positively challenge negative attitudes and misconceptions about people with disabilities. 37, 319 children from 256 schools and community organisations participated in the project since it's been launched in 2009. The programme uses disabled sports people to deliver an awareness raising presentation to pupils in schools and parents, followed by a practical sport sessions that allows children the opportunity to complete a circuit of fun based challenges each based on a Paralympics sport (DSNI, 2014)

Preparation

At this stage of the behavioural change, they still have not started participating. However, they starting to value potential benefits and are considering what is available (Porter, 2001). A barrier at this stage is lack of appropriate activities. Paciorek and Jones (2001) state that access to facilities and the equipment required are the reason that the majority do not take part.

Programmes such as Disability Sport Donegal set up in Ireland can overcome those barriers; this association intends to give kids a chance to take part in various activities that incorporate Boccia and martial arts. They build up the program for inclusion into physical activity for children with disability likewise form an association with nearby schools to incorporate youngsters in sport. With the inclusion inside schools, they can then create programmes outside of school and offer chances to impaired youngsters and grown-ups to participate in sport clubs that provide fun, safe environment and facilities that are required to provide a more extensive range of sporting activities for those with a disability (Sport Ireland, 2007).

Action

At this stage, individuals have started participating in sport for the first or first few times, a barrier could be the attitudes or behaviour of others. Adversities towards people with a disability include other facility users. DePauw and Gavron (1995) established that students held negative and stereotypical attitudes for people with a disability being included in sporting Activities. Arthur and Finch (1999) saw a relation concerning the negative attitudes of other facility users, which shaped the lack of motivation and confidence for those with a disability. This doesn't effect Independents as much, since they do not let their disability define them and do not allow it to limit their approach to life nor are they influenced by attitudes of others (Porter, 2001)

Changing attitudes is difficult, however contact theory proposes that the experience of becoming more acquainted or working with somebody with a

disability, can emphatically change dispositions (Shields et al, 2007). Another barrier as reported by Lockwood and Lockwood (1997) and Doll-Tepper (1999) the subsistence of inadequately trained service providers, inflexible programmes and unsuitable activities are of concern. As stated by Anderson *et al.* (2005) and Stuart *et al.*, (2006) disability awareness and training programmes for staff and peers may limit misconstruing about the necessities and capacities of individuals with a disability. Moreover, it can help in developing knowledge and skills on how to facilitate sporting activities for those with a disability (Jones, 2003) and encourage peer interaction to create a welcoming environment. Positive interactions offer opportunities for friendship for children with disability such as building relationships, which is a key value for them (Hunter, 2009).

Confirmation

At this stage, the individual would be Active, regularly participating with the values and benefits of sport confirmed (Porter, 2001). A barrier at this stage is Withdrawal of Support or Discontinuation of Activity. DePauw and Gavron (2005) state the loss of physical and emotional support is a factor that can cause people with disability to withdraw from taking part in sport, one example being that the individual has no-one to go with to the sporting facility. According to Arthur and Finch (1999) this represents an issue for the Dependants and Unconfident's, as they require assistance and moral support. Whereas, Independents don't let their disability define them and do not allow it to limit their approach to life nor are they influenced by attitudes of others (Porter, 2001) Furthermore, lack of infrastructure to support development in sport is also a barrier at this stage, ' For those looking to <https://assignbuster.com/tackling-inactivity-in-disabled-young-people/>

participate at a higher level there is often a lack of awareness as to how to proceed to the next stage, a lack of support or encouragement from either significant others or official sporting bodies, as well as a lack of opportunities for identifying individual coaching or development needs.' (Porter, 2001)

These Barriers can be overcome by providing programmes such as Red Star Athletics club in Scotland. They provide coaching every week for your chosen sport to all types of people with disability by trained staff. They provide links to athletes into mainstream clubs; encouraging athletes to be involved in all aspects of the club such as players/athletes and coaching. Provide opportunities to gain coaching qualification and for those who want to develop further they provide elite sports development. Finally, they provide good role models in the wider community (Porter, 2001)

Conclusion

With the Programmes and initiatives already in place, more work needs to be done to make them successful, without those programmes people with disability would not be able to participate in sport or physical activity. More initiatives should be developed as well as making existing initiatives more accessible by improved promotion and information. Regular exercise and consideration for inclusion in physical activity for people with a disability is as vital as it is for their active peers. Experts working with individuals with disability ought to enthusiastically motivate participation in sports and physical activities. An improvement for individuals with disability in sport and physical activity is needed, as there is a considerably low level of participation in sport for reasons beyond their control. Therefore, more

should be done to eradicate barriers that society has placed (Barton, 1989). According to Yuen *et al.*, (2007) the development of initiatives can increase participation and disability in sport can progress and offer opportunity to individuals where participation would be inaccessible.

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