

Accommodating Students with Severe/Multiple Disability

Although most students with mild and moderate disabilities can be accommodated with relatively minor changes to the core physical education curriculum, students with severe/multiple disability have unique learning characteristics that usually require significant modifications to the curriculum.

Learning Characteristic	Curricular Implications
Slow rate of learning	Teach fewer, carefully selected objectives
Poor retention	Teach functional skills that are very likely to be practiced regularly in "real life" and offer regular opportunities for practice in the physical education setting
Limited ability to generalize learned skills and knowledge to "real life" settings	Teach skills in a variety of educational settings, including "natural" settings such as community sport and recreation facilities

The most important consideration when identifying objectives for students with severe/multiple disability is to enhance quality of life. In particular, students should learn the tools that enable a healthy lifestyle, facilitate socialization, and contribute to self-efficacy. Like all students, they need a sufficient level of competence for successful participation in family and community activities as adults. This long-term goal requires careful selection of activities and sports that the student enjoys and is capable of learning, systematic instruction of lead-up skills in the early grades, and practice in community sport and recreation settings as the student ages and becomes more competent. Students with severe/multiple disability also need instruction in related "community skills" such as using public transportation, paying admission or showing a membership card, using locker room facilities, and demonstrating appropriate etiquette for the selected activities.

A sample physical education curriculum for students with severe/multiple disability is attached to this document. Although the sample curriculum suggests appropriate goals and program objectives for students with severe/multiple disability, there will be some students who are not capable of achieving these goals and objectives even if provided the best quality of instruction, adequate instructional time, and ideal learning conditions. Some students will learn to perform some skills independently, other students will require partial assistance, and still others will require complete assistance. Quality of life, however, may be enhanced through even small improvements in level of performance and attainment of only selected objectives.

Sample Physical Education Curriculum for Students with Severe/Multiple Disability

This curriculum was published in Dummer, GM, DeYoung, LL, Karakostas, T, Mattar, R, Neat, DR, and Sochacki, KM. (1990). Curriculum development in adapted physical education, *The Michigan Journal* (Michigan Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance), *Fall*, 8-10, 17. The curriculum was intended to serve as guidelines for students with severe/multiple disability. However, because of individual differences in student characteristics and educational needs, it is essential to individualize and prioritize objectives for each student. The objectives in this curriculum can be taught in a variety of educational settings ranging from "regular" physical education classes in neighborhood schools (inclusion) to "special" adapted physical education classes in special education settings (segregated settings).

Program Goal - To demonstrate competence in selected body control skills.

Objective Areas:

1. To demonstrate efficient sitting, standing, and walking posture.
2. To demonstrate the ability to perform selected nonlocomotor skills (e.g., pushing, lifting, carrying, and pulling) in functional settings.
3. To demonstrate and maintain balance while performing locomotor patterns (e.g., walking or wheelchair use over different terrains)
4. To demonstrate rhythmical locomotor patterns and to perform movement patterns to simple musical rhythms and beats.
5. To demonstrate the ability to maneuver around, under, over, and through obstacles.

Program Goal - To demonstrate competence in selected fundamental motor skills.

Objective Areas:

1. To demonstrate competence in selected object-control skills (e.g., throw, catch, kick, roll, bounce, and strike).
2. To demonstrate competence in selected locomotor skills (e.g., walk, run, jump, roll over, and slide).

Program Goal - To demonstrate competence in selected lifetime sports, games, and activities

Objective Areas:

1. To demonstrate the ability to participate in at least one individual lifetime sport (e.g., mall walking, tricycling/bicycling, or swimming) and at least one group lifetime sport (e.g., aerobics, golf, roller skating) that contributes to physical fitness.
2. To demonstrate the ability to participate in at least one group lifetime sport (e.g., bowling, softball, dancing, hiking, miniature golf, volleyball) that provides opportunity for socialization and fun.

Program Goal - To demonstrate competence on selected indicators of physical fitness.

Objective Areas:

1. To demonstrate sufficient muscular strength, power, and endurance for daily living activities (e.g., to maintain posture, for work tasks, to propel wheelchair or crutches, for sport activities).
2. To demonstrate sufficient range of motion for daily living activities and for prevention of injury (e.g., flexibility needed for dressing/undressing and for reaching objects from high and low places).
3. To demonstrate sufficient cardiorespiratory endurance for daily living activities (e.g., sufficient stamina to perform throughout the work/school day and for sport activities).
4. Either independently or with partial assistance, to select and eat an appropriate quantity of foods from each of the four basic food groups every day.
5. To drink sufficient fluids for environmental conditions (e.g., extreme temperature, during vigorous or sustained activity).

Program Goal - To demonstrate knowledge of selected cognitive concepts.

Objective Areas:

1. To demonstrate performance of a routine of activities (e.g., spectator behavior, pay admission, use locker rooms, use vending machines) in at least two familiar community sport or recreation facilities.
2. To recognize environmental hazards (e.g., slippery surfaces, sharp objects, broken equipment, hot/cold temperatures) and to follow simple safety rules (e.g., walk on pool deck).
3. To recognize and report suspected injuries and to use simple first aid techniques (e.g., wash the injured area, use band-aids, use ice).
4. To demonstrate by personal lifestyle/behavior that regular aerobic activity is important to health and well-being.
5. To demonstrate the ability to communicate wants, needs, choices, refusals, etc., in sport and recreation settings.
6. To demonstrate knowledge of basic rules, clothing needs, and equipment needs for selected sports and games.
7. To demonstrate knowledge of terminology related to major body parts (e.g., heart, lungs, head, arms, legs, hands, and feet) and planes of movement (e.g., forward, backward, and sideways).
8. To demonstrate the ability to follow one-part and two-part directions.

Program Goal - To demonstrate competence in selected activity-related personal-social skills.

Objective Areas:

1. To demonstrate personal hygiene skills (e.g., showering, hair care, and deodorant use) in locker room settings.
2. To demonstrate conversational etiquette (e.g., greetings, thanks, congratulations, and encouragement) in sport and recreation settings.
3. To demonstrate good sportsmanship (e.g., appropriate responses to wins/losses and various game situations, following rules, and performing one's role on a team).
4. To demonstrate appropriate personal behavior (e.g., waiting for turns, sharing equipment, and appropriate touching and physical contact) in sport and recreation settings.
5. To demonstrate enjoyment of physical activity (e.g., regular participation, effort, smiling, laughing, making positive attributions toward self, and choosing to participate).
6. To demonstrate the ability to use personal adaptive equipment (e.g., braces, wheelchair, special flotation devices, or special grip device) in sport and recreation settings.
7. To demonstrate proper care of sports equipment and clothing (e.g., rinsing swim suit, put dirty clothes/towels in laundry, and handle and store equipment appropriately).
8. To demonstrate the ability to care for personal belongings (e.g., transport personal belongings and sports equipment to and from a sport or recreational setting, and to pack and unpack a sports bag, checking that all belongings are included).