

Diversity & Inclusion: *Building Inclusive and Supportive Environments*

Presented by:

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Session Outline

- * This session will look at considerations to providing inclusive practices.
- * The goal is to embrace diversity to increase participation in all aspects of canoe/kayak both recreationally and competitively.



“Inclusion isn’t a “thing” or something that “we do,” rather it is an all-embracing societal ideology. It is a way of life which includes supporting every human being, regardless of ability.”

– *Education Team Allies* www.educationteamallies.com



Considerations in Building an Inclusive Environment

- * Have a mission statement and strategic plan that embraces inclusion.
- * Have leadership/administration who value and demonstrate an inclusive approach

<https://nbacl.nb.ca/module-pages/becoming-an-inclusive-recreation-provider-the-8-requirements/>

Photo: <http://recreationsa.org/inclusion/>

HOW INCLUSIVE ARE YOU? Follow these steps to be a more inclusive organisation

- Promote a commitment to inclusion**
 - I will encourage the formal recognition of inclusion on our website and social media
 - I will make new participants aware of our commitment to inclusion
- Celebrate inclusive practices**
 - Share positive inclusion stories from your centre and recognise inclusive practices, achievements and programs at presentation events
- Provide equitable opportunities across all centre roles**
 - I will support individuals to access their choices
 - I will encourage people to take roles I believe they are capable of
 - I will be flexible to the needs of individuals
- Lead by example**
 - I will treat everyone as an individual
 - I will personally recognise positive contributions to inclusion
 - I will be open to new ideas and possibilities, when I don't have the answer I will seek one out

All organisations can benefit from a focus on inclusivity.

Government of South Australia
Office for Recreation and Sport

RECREATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA
AQUATIC OUTDOOR
COMMUNITY FITNESS & HEALTH

inclusive sport SA

Organizational Benefits to an Inclusive Mandate

- * Positioning your organization as a champion of inclusion will:
 - * Enhance your brand and reputation.
 - * Ensure consistency in 'walking the talk' to meet your strategic objectives.
 - * Allow you to meet sport regulatory obligations.
 - * Increase governance and risk management and decrease potential legal risks.
 - * Increase membership.

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-what-is-it>

Organizational Benefits to an Inclusive Mandate



- * Increase sponsorship opportunities.
- * Increase public support and volunteer base.
- * Ensure greater publicity and positive public image.
- * Provide a better connected and diverse sports community.
- * Break down barriers and promote social inclusion.

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-what-is-it>



Awareness

- * Navigating resources can be an obstacle for many with a disability/impairment and/or other area of diversity.
- * It is important to create marketing pathways that promote your inclusive sport opportunity.



Navigating Community Resources

- * How do individuals and families find the information they need to participate?
- * Is it clear how to request support for oneself or a youth participant?
- * Are resources reflective of encouraging diversity?
- * Is there support for funding or equipment? Is it clearly identified?
- * Are there options other than technology to learn of resources?



Promoting Inclusion

- * Does your marketing support the diverse communities you serve?
- * Can all members of your community see themselves in the promotion of your services?
- * Does your marketing connect with your mission, vision, values and policies?



Accessibility Considerations

* **Environment:**

- * Are your built and natural environments accessible to those with mobility impairments?
- * You may consider washrooms/change areas, club access, dock access and easy transfer to the boat, safety boats.

* **Attitudinal:**

- * Embrace a solution-focused approach and focus on the strengths of all participants.
- * Provide training as necessary to encourage a culture shift which organizationally (at all levels) embraces the principles of inclusion.

* **Financial:**

- * Consider ways to support individuals with barriers to participation due to financial burdens.
- * Organizationally be creative with funding opportunities to build your resources of equipment.

First Involvement Checklist

- * Create safe, welcoming environment including instruction, adaptive equipment, and accessible facilities
- * Training coaches, volunteers and staff
- * Develop accessibility checklists (universal accessibility)
- * Develop partnerships with local organizations for persons with a disability, healthcare and advocacy groups
- * Evaluate: follow-up with new participants

Learning About the Participant

- * Create an intake as part of your registration process
- * Meet the individuals ahead of the start of the program to ensure the appropriate supports/approaches are in place
- * Debrief with instructors and include the participant

<https://www.canchild.ca/en/research-in-practice/participation-knowledge-hub>

First Contact: Helpful Hints

- * Be person-centred
- * Focus on strengths and abilities
- * Be proactive in anticipating needs
- * Make inclusion part of your culture
- * Remember that your participants are your best resource
- * Relax! No one expects you to be an expert in everything
- * Create a welcoming environment



Coaching Athletes with a Disability

“Many coaches who have never worked with athletes with a disability feel that, to be effective, they need highly specialized skills, knowledge, or training... **The challenge is to truly understand the person, to focus on their abilities, and to see what they can achieve.**”

<https://coach.ca/coaching-athletes-disability>



Photo credit: Doris Corbin

Paracanoe

- * Paracanoe is the sport of flat water canoe and kayak for individuals with a physical disability. A wide range of adaptations are utilized to support an individual in minimizing their limitations and optimizing their performance.
- * Many federations have broadened their inclusiveness and opened criteria to include athletes who may not currently be eligible internationally. This may include athletes who have an intellectual impairment, cerebral palsy, visual impairments, upper limb impairments etc.

Adaptations

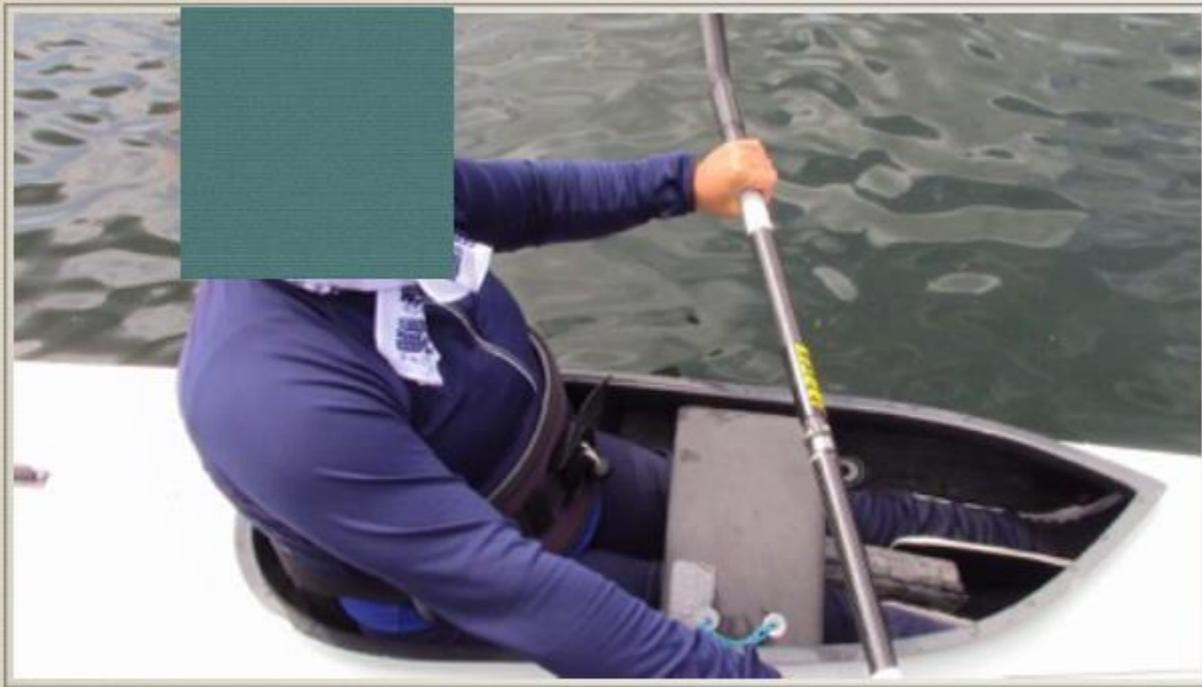
- * All equipment used by an athlete must also be quick release
- * If during classification or competition there is a concern for safety, the athlete must demonstrate the ability to free themselves in a tip



Adaptations



Adaptations



Adaptations



Adaptations





Safety



- * Knowing the participant will help you to reinforce safe practices which can respond to their individual needs.
- * It is always important that athletes demonstrate and ability to swim or wear a PFD.
- * Athletes should also be able to free themselves from their boat upon tipping. On water safety, is essential. This is especially important for those with higher level spinal cord injuries, uncontrolled spasticity or the potential for seizures.



canoephoto.com/Bence Vekassy(ICF)

ABILITY



STRENGTH



ADAPTABLE



DETERMINATION



Keep Building



Small Group Activity



- * **Red Light:** Consider processes, systems, practices that should stop or change at your club/organization. Are there any?
- * **Yellow Light:** What are some ideas for change even where some barriers may slow you down?
- * **Green Light:** What are your must do ideas for optimizing inclusive practice?



References

- * <https://nbacl.nb.ca/module-pages/becoming-an-inclusive-recreation-provider-the-8-requirements/> (New Brunswick Association for Community Living; Becoming an Inclusive Recreation Provider)
- * <http://recreationsa.org/inclusion/> (Recreation South Australia; Inclusive Recreation;:Are you implementing best practice?)
- * <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/sport-policies-acts-regulations/policy-persons-with-disability.html> (Government of Canada; Policy on Sport for Persons with a Disability)
- * <https://coach.ca/coaching-athletes-disability> (Coaching Athletes with a Disability, Sport Canada)
- * <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-what-is-it> (Play by the Rules, South Australian Department for Sport and Recreation)
- * https://ala.ca/moving-inclusion?fbclid=IwAR1EUVwuzYXPWbeRYsvvEbRV-CScK9hE2H7XhgyPndSiv_qOqJ5hqhiDnWE (Moving to Inclusion Training)