

Advantages for Involvement in Sports for Disabled Children

Players with Physical and Cognitive Disabilities



Introduction

Improved health and fitness are universal goals. Regular physical activity has proven benefits for people of all ages, including those with physical and cognitive disabilities. The goals of exercise, fitness, and sports activities in persons with disabilities are similar to those of all active people:

- Maximize health benefits and ensure safe participation
- Prevent injuries and provides appropriate injury care
- Improve performance

The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) encourages regular exercise for all persons, including those with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Individuals have the choice of achieving optimal health within their unique circumstances. Although individual differences are more pronounced among people with disabilities than those without, all have the capacity to improve their health and personal potential through regular exercise.

The goals of exercise are the same for everyone. The disabilities are often irreversible and the activities and activity restrictions are different out of necessity.

These goals of exercise include:

- Reduce secondary health risks (such as obesity and cardiovascular problems)
- Maintain and enhance functional independence
- Provide opportunities for leisure, enjoyment and fun
- Enhance the overall quality of life and improve self-i

Benefits of Regular Physical Activity

Current U.S. government guidelines recommend moderate physical activity each day for at least 60 minutes (children.) All individuals, including those with disabilities, can often meet this standard should they engage in physical activities or sports that they enjoy. This will make it easier to stick with their activity program.



It is not necessary to be a world-class athlete in order to receive health and personal benefits from exercise and fitness activities. Exercise provides the following physical and physiological benefits:

- Improve strength, flexibility, mobility and coordination
- Help build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Improve one's ability to perform the activities of daily living
- Increase and maintains cardiac (heart) and pulmonary (lung) efficiency
- Improve and maintains bone structure and strength
- Assist in weight control
- Reduce risk of chronic diseases, such as high blood pressure and osteoporosis

Besides these physical and physiological benefits of exercise, there are also positive psychological effects:

- Appreciation of an athletes' body and acceptance of it
- Reduce stress, depression, anger, and disruptive behavior
- Enhance self-image
- Improve the quality of life and sense of well-being
- Encourage greater participation in individual, social, and community activities
- Foster self-discipline