



FACT SHEET 12a

INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN YOUR CLUB (GUIDELINES)

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INTRODUCTION

Northern Ireland experiences the highest prevalence of disability in the UK with 20% of the population experiencing some form of disability or health related condition; that is one in five of the population.

However, because of a complex range of economic, attitudinal and physical barriers people with disabilities as a 'group' experience the lowest participation rates in sport. Indeed, a recent research conducted by NISRA in July 2007 found that people with disabilities in Northern Ireland are half as likely to participate in sport and physical activity as non disabled people, with only 10% participating regularly. A further 5% take part occasionally, leaving an astounding 85% of people with disabilities who never take part in any form of sport or physical activity.

These guidelines have been prepared by Disability Sports NI to provide guidance to Club officials and volunteers on how they can make their sports Club more inclusive of people with disabilities.

SECTION 1 INCLUSIVE CLUB DEFINITION

A Club which is inclusive of people with disabilities is one which has:

'Proactively planned the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of the Club and has taken practical steps to bring about positive change.'

This means a Club which has:

- Adopted a positive attitude about the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Planned how people with disabilities can best participate in all aspects of the Club's activities (e.g. playing, coaching and Club administration.)
- Pro-actively implemented an action plan.

SECTIONS 2 INCLUSION GUIDELINES

In order to develop a more inclusive environment Clubs should consider the following issues:

2.1 PLANNING

Although most Clubs say they are open to everyone in the community, the reality is that very few people with disabilities are actually members of sports clubs in Northern Ireland. Although no research has been conducted in Northern Ireland, recent research in England found that only 12% of young people with disabilities are members of sports Clubs compared to 46% of all young people (Sport England: Young People With a Disability Survey 2000.)

It is Disability Sport NI's experience that in order to attract people with disabilities, Clubs need to proactively plan the inclusion of people with disabilities in their programmes. Ideally, this should be done as part of the Club's development plan.

2.2 ACCESS TO BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Clubs need to consider if their buildings, facilities and sports equipment are accessible to people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities.

The following guidance documents which provide advice related to the design and management of sports facilities are available from Disability Sports NI on request:

- Access to Sports Facilities for People with Disabilities: Design Guidance.
- Access to Sports Facilities for People with Disabilities: Management and Sports Development Guidelines.

Disability Sports NI understands that many smaller Clubs will find it difficult to meet all recommendations, but Clubs should be mindful that under the Disability Discrimination Act they are required by law to make 'reasonable adjustments' to their facilities to ensure they are accessible to people with disabilities.

2.3 PARTICIPATION OPTIONS

From experience Disability Sports NI believes that many people with disabilities can participate in most sports with little or no adaptations. However, it may be necessary to adapt some sports (rules, playing surface, court size, etc) to ensure the full inclusion of people with disabilities, particularly those with higher levels of impairment.

Clubs should consult Ulster Branch Tennis Ireland or Disability Sport NI about the options for including different people with disabilities in tennis.

As an example some participation options for the sport of association football are provided below;

- **Mainstream Participation:** Players with disabilities training and competing in a mainstream Club (e.g a deaf footballer or an upper limb amputee playing for a mainstream Club.)
- **Integrated Participation:** Disabled and non disabled people participating in the sport with some adaptations to rules or equipment (e.g. children in a youth Club playing a 'zoned' indoor version of football.)
- **Disability Specific participation:** Disabled performers competing in a competition solely for that particular disability group (e.g a seven a side football competition for players

with cerebral palsy or five a side indoor football for visually impaired people- both of which are paralympic sports.)

2.4 INFORMATION AND PROMOTION

Clubs should encourage more people with disabilities to participate in their activities by consulting with local disability groups, and by specifically targeting people with disabilities when promoting the Club's programmes and activities. Local disability groups, special schools and adult centres will usually help with this by distributing information on behalf of your Club.

All promotional literature should also make it clear that people with disabilities are welcome at the Club. It is also a good idea to use positive images of people with disabilities participating in tennis.

2.5 COACH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Although most coaches/volunteers have the skills to include people with disabilities in their particular sport, they often lack the knowledge or confidence to work with people with disabilities. To help overcome this knowledge/confidence gap, Clubs should encourage key personnel from their Club to attend appropriate Disability Awareness Training.

Disability Sports NI runs a range of 'Disability Inclusion Training' courses including one course specifically designed for sports Clubs. Further information on how to book a course is available from Disability Sports NI.

Club coaches should also complete their governing body's disability specific coaching module or course. If the governing body does not currently have such a course, the Club should write to their governing body encouraging them to develop such a course.

In addition, Coaching Ireland has recently developed a 'Coaching People with Disabilities' workshop which is aimed at existing coaches. Further information on how to access this workshop is available from Disability Sports NI.

2.6 CLUB ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

In order to identify members with disabilities and any particular needs they may have, Clubs are advised to include some questions on 'disability' in the membership forms. A template Club membership form is included in Template 4. By using this form Clubs can capture relevant information and plan their programmes accordingly.

It is also good practice to use font size 14 in all membership forms to aid anyone who is partially sighted, as well as providing the forms in alternative formats on request (e.g large print, etc.)

Clubs should also consider if their current pricing policy (e.g. membership fees) is disadvantaging people with disabilities. As most people with disabilities in Northern Ireland tend to be on benefits/low incomes, they may find it difficult to afford Club membership fees. Ideally, Disability

Sports NI recommends that Clubs have a waged/unwaged pricing policy. If this is not possible they should consider alternative pricing policies or initiatives which encourage membership by people with disabilities.

SECTION 3 COACHING GUIDELINES

3.1 INCLUSIVE COACHING TIPS

Many people with disabilities will have to participate fully in coaching skills and drills with little or no adaptations.

However, for some people with more limited functional ability or for those with limited experience of basic movement skills, it is important to adapt your skill sessions, drills and playing sessions to fully include them. Remember, if you are not sure what a person's ability level is, ask them what they can/cannot do and adapt your drills/sessions accordingly.

Generally speaking, this can be achieved by either modifying the rules used during training and or competition or by adapting the equipment normally used in your sport. A list of general coaching tips is provided below but Clubs should also contact Ulster Branch Tennis Ireland about coaching advice specific to tennis.

Modifying Rules

- Make the game easier or harder by altering some of the rules
- Adjust the size of the playing area
- Vary the size of the goal/target area
- Create different zones for players of different abilities
- Alter the ways to score
- Allow the sport to be played from a seated position
- Vary the distance that needs to be covered (bearing in mind that being closer to a partner when catching or passing allows less response time.)
- Allow the practice of skills from a static position before introducing movement
- Allow players to play in different ways (e.g. seated on the floor)
- Give players more reaction time by allowing more than one bounce before hitting is required.

Adapting Equipment

- Use larger or softer balls to make hitting, catching and throwing skills easier
- Slow games down by using balls with less bounce
- To aid partially sighted people use brightly coloured balls or balls with internal bells
- To vary the speed of play use slower balls or objects like balloons, bean bags or sponges
- To assist retrieval by people with mobility difficulties use balls that have a string attached
- Use bats or racquets with a larger contact area to give participants quicker success
- In racquet sports, use a tee stand so the ball can be served or hit from a stationary position
- To facilitate wheelchair users, use longer hockey sticks or bats
- Grips can be added to equipment to make it easier to handle and control
- For those with very limited grip, bats and racquets can be strapped to the players hand or wrist.

3.2 COMMUNICATION TIPS

Good communication skills are vital in any coaching situation. When coaches are working with players/athletes with a disability they should consider the following points:

Communicating with people with Physical Disabilities

- Speak in a manner appropriate to the age of the player/athlete with a learning disability
- Always ask the player/athlete for specific information. Only speak to their carer/parent if they are unable to supply the information themselves
- When giving instructions, use simple straightforward words and language and avoid jargon. If possible use symbols and colours instead
- Break skills/drills down into easily learned steps and repeat them often and in a variety of ways
- Avoid drills that rely heavily on numeracy skills
- Always demonstrate skills/drills
- Be patient and give participants time to learn skills.

Communicating with Blind or Partially Sighted People

- Remember most blind/partially sighted people have some degree of sight so the use of equipment/courts with good colour contrast will help most players/athletes
- Use the person's name to gain attention and make sure the player/athlete knows when you are finished and when you are moving away from them.
- It is important that players/athletes hear your instructions clearly. To achieve this always face the person and speak directly to them
- Before beginning your coaching sessions always familiarise the player/athlete with the environment. This includes explaining the layout of the area, the number and location of other participants and the location of potential hazards (equipment etc)
- Give clear, accurate descriptions of each task/drill and always ask the player/athlete if they understand your instructions
- If possible, supply written information in suitable formats. For example, large print, tape, CD or Braille. Ask individual participants what format they find most suitable.

Communicating with people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Remember there are varying degrees of deafness. Some people have no hearing (deaf) but most have some level of hearing (hard of hearing.)

Ideally, deaf people require an interpreter to ensure effective communication. However, if this is not possible you can still communicate with deaf players/athletes. For example, many deaf people can communicate by reading lips, by using a hearing aid, by making gestures and signs or by writing information down.

The following tips will be useful when talking to most deaf or hard of hearing people:

- Make sure you have the listener's attention before you start speaking
- Position yourself in front of the player/athlete and maintain eye contact. Remember not to turn your face away from the person
- Speak clearly but not too slowly and don't exaggerate your lip movements
- Don't shout. It's uncomfortable for a hearing aid user and it looks aggressive
- If someone doesn't understand what you've said, don't just keep repeating it. Try saying it in a different way and check they understand what you said.
- Where possible, use visual aids to explain technical points
- Where possible, use demonstrations to explain skills/drills.

DISABILITY

ADHD

Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are over-active, impulsive and have difficulty paying attention. Although most children demonstrate some of these behaviours some of the time, those with ADHD will display them consistently across all situations and will continue to display them to some extent into adulthood. Children of all level of ability can have ADHD and it is five times more common in boys.

Although you can use the same techniques to deal with hyperactivity in the majority of children it is important to avoid assuming that every hyperactive, inattentive child had ADHD. Some children with ADHD regularly take medication to help them control their impulsive behaviours. The most common of these are Ritalin and Concerta. ADHD manifests itself in many ways and varies from child to child. Common symptoms may include, but are not limited to:

- Difficulty following instructions and completing tasks
- Difficulty 'sticking to' an activity
- Easily distracted and forgetful
- Often doesn't listen when spoken to
- Restless, fidgety, can't sit still
- Interferes with other children's activities
- Can't stop talking, interrupts others
- Runs about when inappropriate
- Difficulty waiting or taking turns
- Acting impulsively without thinking of the consequences
- Daydreams
- Easily frustrated
- Mood swings
- Sleep problems
- May engage in difficult activities
- Low self esteem
- Defensive/ blames others

Coaching ideas

- Make eye contact when speaking to the child. Use the child's name when giving instructions.
- Keep instructions simple, use as few sentences as possible
- Catch the child being good as often as possible, give very specific praise such as 'good stance, your knees are bent perfectly' rather than 'good work'.
- Keep calm, if you get angry the child will mirror this emotion and this may lead to a temper tantrum or dangerous behaviours.
- Ensure the child knows the rules, keep them clear and simple and rehearse them regularly.
- Use the same methods of discipline used with the other students although methods such as a 'time out' may be necessary if behaviour becomes dangerous or the child has a temper tantrum.
- Give the student special responsibilities, such as using them for demonstrations, so that others see them in a positive light and the student develops a positive self-image.
- Use a variety of activities in every class and change activities regularly. The use of physically draining activities such as a thorough warm up can take the edge off the child's hyperactive behaviours.

- When doing work involving a partner ensure the child is partnered with a more responsible student. During these activities it is important to monitor the child closely to ensure they stay on task, do not become overly aggressive, and do not disrupt other groups.
- Children with ADHD may perform better in smaller groups if assistant coaches are available.

Children with ADHD can be some of the most difficult students, and because of this they are also some of the most rewarding. These children are used to being shouted at and told 'no' all day so anything we can do through Tennis to enhance their self-esteem can have a huge effect. Tennis provides a structured activity through which a child with ADHD can release their energy and frustration in a safe environment.

Additional Resources

www.netdoctor.co.uk/diseases/facts/adhd.htm

(Medical site with general info)

www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/adhd.cfm

(National Institute of Mental health website)

www.addiss.co.uk

(Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service website)

Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Autism is one of a group of pervasive developmental disorders and there are several theories on what causes it. It is unlikely that there is one single cause but rather a series of complex factors including biological, physiological and behavioural components.

Asperger's Syndrome: It is now widely acknowledged that there is a spectrum of autistic difficulties. At one end of the spectrum will be the child with severe autism and profound learning difficulties and at the other, children of average to above average intelligence and milder autism, known as Asperger's Syndrome (note that many parents rightly hate the term 'mild' when referring to the difficulties experienced by their child). As coaches it is likely that the majority of students will have Asperger's syndrome rather than classic autism. Although the underlying deficits are present in all individuals with autism the expression of these can range in severity and the emerging picture depends not only on the degree of impairment but the particular pattern of impairments.

The main difficulties associated with autism are often known as the 'Triad of Impairments' and include difficulties with social interactions, social communication and imagination.

Social Interaction: This refers to how the individual with autism reacts to others. Difficulties in social interaction will always be present in autism but the way they manifest themselves will vary from person to person. Children with autism may seem to behave in an 'odd' manner and some may behave aggressively towards others. Many children with autism have trouble understanding social situations and may become angry or upset. They often have difficulties empathising with others and recognising that other people have thoughts and feelings different to their own. Some children may be withdrawn and aloof and find it difficult to initiate or maintain interactions/friendships with others. Other

children may approach people indiscriminately and will treat their coach in the same way as they treat their peers or relatives.

Social Communication: Children with autism often do not understand the two-way nature of conversation and indeed some may talk 'at' people rather than to them. A common feature is a lack of social distinction in that people with autism may speak to a parent or coach in the same way that they would speak to their peers giving the impression that they are rude or disrespectful. Individuals with autism also have problems with non-verbal communication and many find eye contact extremely uncomfortable. They find it difficult to understand gestures or derive meaning from facial expressions and many find it extremely uncomfortable to make eye contact when speaking to someone. Many children with autism tend to interpret things literally and may not understand sarcasm/ irony and certain phrases or jokes which can cause upset or distress. Some children with autism never develop language while others may simply repeat things they have heard from their parents/ films etc. It is important to note that although a child may have good expressive language they may still have comprehension difficulties.

Imagination: This can affect every area of thinking, language and behaviour. The aspect of this most relevant to tennis is that many children develop repetitive and/or obsessive interests and rituals. They may become preoccupied with a certain technique and be reluctant to change activity. Changes in rules or routine can often cause distress as children with autism use routines to help make sense of their environment.

Additional Difficulties: These can include repetitive activities such as rocking or hand flapping. Sensitivity to noise, smell, light or touch is another common feature and may cause disruptive behaviours if the student experiences sensory overload. Aggressive or hyperactive behaviours may be found in some children as well as irrational fears or phobias. Some children may walk with an odd gait and be physically awkward in their movements.

Coaching Ideas

- Talk to the parents!! Trust me this is vital as they will know the intricate details of their child's behaviours and can help you predict and prevent behavioural outbursts and avoid things that may cause distress. You may want to ask the parent to stay for the duration of the class until you get to know the child.
- Be flexible. Although two children may have the same diagnosis their strengths and difficulties can be widely different.
- Prepare them for any changes well in advance. This may include class cancellations, the introduction of a new coach or if a different coach will be coaching on a particular night.
- Try to refer to the pupil by name as they may not realise that class instructions are meant for them.
- Be precise with instructions. Keep them short and simple.
- Children with autism are often visual learners so be sure to demonstrate the exercise as well as describing it, even if you feel it is a technique the student is familiar with.
- Acknowledge the need for personal space and try to space the students out where possible.
- Be aware that the child may be oversensitive to certain conditions such as lighting or excessive noise. This may cause distress or disruptive behaviours. Parents will be able to inform you of any particular sensitivities.
- Some students may have an unusually high or low pain threshold and this should be taken into account when doing certain exercises.
- Ensure the child knows the rules and the consequences for breaking them. Some students with autism will thrive on rules while others will be resistant to them or take them very literally and become upset if certain behaviours do not result in certain consequences in every case for every student.
- The child may need a 'time out' if they become distressed or overwhelmed. Ensure the child knows where this is and how to let you know if they need to use it. Parents will inform you if they feel this is necessary.

- Partner work may be particularly problematic due to the peer relation difficulties experienced by students with autism. They are often unpopular partners due to their 'unusual' behaviours and may be bullied by other students. They may adhere strictly to instructions which cause friction with their partner. Where possible pair with an older, more mature student who may be more patient with them but be aware that this student may become frustrated if they are selected to be the partner every time.
- If the student finds eye contact uncomfortable DO NOT force them to look at you or at other students.
- Introduce only one skill at a time and be sure to repeat things frequently.
- Some students with autism may have excellent rote memory which can be used to their advantage when learning patterns.
- Above all be patient, positive and calm!!

Additional Resources

www.nas.org.uk

(National Autistic Society Website)

www.autismuk.com

(Autism Independent UK. UK charity for training and information)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autism

(Very comprehensive guide to Autism)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asperger's_syndrome

(Again a very comprehensive overview)

Dyslexia

Dyslexia literally means difficulty with words. Although this is obviously more problematic in educational settings Dyslexia does impact on tennis due to difficulties with gross motor skills. Common problems include:

- Poor short-term memory
- Sequencing difficulties
- Organisational difficulties
- Tiredness
- Uneven performance profile
- Behaviour problems (Often a result of frustration)
- Poor self-esteem

Coaching Tips

- Praise the child as much as possible to help improve their self esteem. This may also prevent behavioural outbursts.
- Give the child special responsibilities in class, such as using them for demonstrations, as this will also boost their self esteem.
- Give short simple instructions and allow time for practice and repetition of techniques.
- Students with dyslexia may take more time to complete techniques and should not be criticized for this.

- The student may forget techniques they have recently learnt or may forget things. Again they should not be criticized but should be encouraged to make a list of the things they need for class and to display it at home.
- Even older children may have problems with hand eye co-ordination, co-ordinating both arms and legs or even distinguishing left from right. These things can be developed using simple games and repeating basic exercises.
- At times the student may seem unmotivated and it is important to be aware of the intense effort and concentration that they require to cope at school and to allow for the fact that they may have had a particularly demanding school day.
- Frequent changes of exercise are recommended as the student may become frustrated after a period of time doing one technique, especially if they are finding it difficult and this can lead to disruptive behaviours.
- It is important to remember that the student will have many strengths and may out-perform others in some areas. These skills should be praised and encouraged!!
- These students may find theory particularly difficult to learn and may need in-training support.
- It is worth noting that many children with dyslexia excel at individual sports and will have no difficulties with the physical aspects.

Additional Resources

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

(British Dyslexia Association)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dyslexia

(Comprehensive overview)

Developmental Co-Ordination Disorder

Hearing Impairment

This is a generic term to describe all types of hearing loss. There are several types of hearing loss and varying degrees of hearing loss, any of which may be encountered in a student of tennis.

- **Types**

Mon Aural: This is hearing loss in one ear only. This is relatively easy to cope with as long as the coach is aware of which ear is the 'good ear'.

Conductive Loss: This occurs when the mechanism by which sound travels to the nerve endings in the cochlea is impaired. This type of loss may be caused by a build up of wax in the ear, a foreign object in the ear or an excess of fluid in the middle ear. This is common in young children and parents should be made aware if you feel a child's hearing is deteriorating.

Sensory Loss: This is caused by damage to the nerves. In most cases hearing aids are prescribed to help improve hearing. Some children with profound hearing loss may have a Cochlea implant inserted.

- **Degree of Loss**

Mild: The student will pick up the vast majority of what is said but may mis-hear if not looking directly at the coach.

Moderate: The student will have difficulty hearing what is said unless the speaker is close by. They may rely on lip reading and visual cues.

Severe: Students with this level of loss will most likely have a hearing aid. They may use lip reading, body language and visual cues to help them make out what is being said. Children with this degree of hearing loss may also have difficulties with their own speech although the coach is likely to understand better as they become more familiar with the child.

Profound: Children with this level of hearing loss will need a hearing aid and may also use sign language to communicate. Again visual information will also be used to communicate. The students own voice may seem incomprehensible to unfamiliar people.

Coaching Tips

- The techniques used will depend on the degree of hearing loss.
- Talk to the student and to parents to ascertain the type and level of hearing loss.
- Children with hearing loss will often have balance difficulties and may need more space to carry out techniques.
- Ensure you are in the child's direct line of sign when speaking, to allow the student to lip read.
- Speak slowly and clearly to make lip reading easier.
- Use the child's name to attract their attention before giving instructions.
- Encourage the student to wear their hearing aid in class if they have one.
- Be sure to demonstrate techniques as well as describe them.
- It may be advisable to learn some basic sign language if this is something the student uses to communicate.
- Be aware that the student may have difficulties working with others if their own speech is affected. Try to encourage friendships in the club through games etc.
- Remember that children with moderate, severe or profound hearing loss may not be able to hear others around them during unstructured activities such as games and may not hear the stop command in the case of an accident. You may need to associate a gesture with this command.

Additional Resources

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hearing_impairment

(Comprehensive overview of all types of hearing loss)

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/articles/article.aspx?articleid=518

(NHS hearing loss site)

www.rnid.org.uk/information_resources/aboutdeafness/

(Very informative site)

Language Impairment

It is important to understand that some words and phrases commonly used to describe people with disabilities may increasingly cause offence.

Because acceptance of the language used in society differs between individuals and cultures and changes over time there are no hard and fast rules. However, the following guidance has been prepared based on what is currently found most acceptable by people with disabilities in Northern Ireland.

- Do not use medical labels to describe people with disabilities (e.g. 'spastic', 'epileptic'.) Medical labels are often misleading and tend to reinforce stereotypes of people with disabilities as 'sick' people dependent on the medical profession. Most people with disabilities find being described in terms of a medical condition as dehumanising. Instead, put people first, not their disability (e.g. 'a person with epilepsy' or 'a person with cerebral palsy'.)
- Use language and words which emphasises abilities not limitations. For example, say 'wheelchair user' rather than 'wheelchair bound.' Remember that a wheelchair can represent personal freedom for its user.
- Do not use emotional or sensational language to describe people with disabilities e.g. 'unfortunate', 'pitiful', 'afflicted', 'crippled', 'suffers from' etc. Remember the vast majority of people with disabilities have the ability to lead full and active lifestyles and to contribute fully to society.

Listed below are some words commonly used in Northern Ireland which many people with disabilities will find unacceptable or offensive, together with an alternative preferred by people with disabilities.

LIST OF 'UNACCEPTABLE' WORDS AND PHRASES AND PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

UNACCEPTABLE	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Handicapped/cripple/invalid/special needs	Person with a disability or disabled person
Wheelchair bound/confined to a wheelchair	Wheelchair user
Mentally Handicapped	Person with a learning disability
Deaf and Dumb/Deaf Mute	Deaf person
Epileptic/Diabetic	Person with epilepsy/diabetes
Dwarf*	Person with restricted growth
Mental	Person with mental health difficulties
Spastic	Person with Cerebral Palsy

*Please note that in recent years organisations promoting sport for people with restricted growth have used the term 'Dwarf' e.g. 'Dwarf Athletics Association' and 'Wold Dwarf Games.' However, many people with restricted growth continue to prefer the use of 'restricted growth' in everyday conversation.

ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES

- Treat people with Disabilities as Adults: Make appropriate contact with disabled people according to the situation. Do not be over familiar and only call a person by their first name if you are doing the same to others present
- Talk Directly to People with Disabilities: Do not assume anyone accompanying this person is a 'carer.' Relax and talk directly to the disabled person.
- Do not be embarrassed about using everyday expressions such as 'see you later' or 'going for a walk' in the company of disabled people. Most disabled people use these phrases.
- Do offer Assistance to People with Disabilities, but only if they appear to need help and always wait until your offer is accepted. Do not assume you know the best way of helping- ask the person and listen
- Do Not be Over-Protective. People with disabilities are not fragile- do not underestimate their capabilities. If you are not sure ask the person concerned.

Remember to be Open Minded- Positive Attitudes Are Key To Change.

Visual Impairment

Communicating with Blind or Partially Sighted People

- Remember most blind/partially sighted people have some degree of sight so the use of equipment/courts with good colour contrast will help most players/athletes
- Use the person's name to gain attention and make sure the player/athlete knows when you are finished and when you are moving away from them.
- It is important that players/athletes hear your instructions clearly. To achieve this always face the person and speak directly to them
- Before beginning your coaching sessions always familiarise the player/athlete with the environment. This includes explaining the layout of the area, the number and location of other participants and the location of potential hazards (equipment etc)
- Give clear, accurate descriptions of each task/drill and always ask the player/athlete if they understand your instructions
- If possible, supply written information in suitable formats. For example, large print, tape, CD or Braille. Ask individual participants what format they find most suitable.

About Disability Sport N.I.

Disability Sports NI (DSNI) is Northern Ireland's main disability sports organisation. Established in 1997, the organisation is representative of the vast majority of Northern Ireland's disability sports Clubs and organisations and works to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities to take part in sport and physical activity at a level of their choice.

Disability Sports NI organises a wide range of projects, events and training courses, all designed to give people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities the opportunity to lead an active life through sport and physical activity, as well as supporting more talented disabled sports people to train, compete and perform in their chosen sport.

Further information on the work of Disability Sports NI is available from the DSNI website:

Contact Details: Disability Sports NI

Adelaide House

Falcon Road

Belfast

Telephone: 02890 387062

Fax: 02890 387063

Textphone: 02890 387064