



VERMONT EARLY MOBILITY TIP SHEETS

ACCESSIBLE RECESS

GENERAL IDEAS

BUILD A MUSIC WALL

- *Collect junk as your instruments:* muffin tins, tin cans or mugs, colanders, or hubcaps. Use cutlery for wind chimes.

CREATE A DRAMATIC PLAY STATION

- *Where do you want to go today?* Try different scenarios, such as a lemonade stand, food truck window, or vet's office.

PLAY TAG GAMES

- *Pool Noodles!* These can be cut and used to increase the reach of a student in a wheelchair. Pool Noodles can be attached to a wheelchair or other mobility device, so the student doesn't have to use their hands or arms. All students can use Pool Noodles. (Pre-teach safe tagging).

WORK AT ELEVATED SAND TABLES

- *Ideal for providing sand and water sensory experiences in a garden or playground:* Make sure there's space next to and underneath the table for wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

PLAY BALL GAMES

- *Use a variety of objects and balls:* bean bags large and small, balloons, beach balls, textured balls, balls that make sounds, balls that have lights.

- **Play pool noodle soccer or hockey:** You can attach the noodle to chair or mobility device!



- **Change the height and distance of targets for throwing games:** play cornhole, or use a clothesbasket on a bench for beanbag toss. Hang a low basketball hoop.



- **Explore bowling:** use a ramp or throw a ball; think of fun things to knock down! Or use a piece of plastic gutter as a ramp. This is also a tool for racing toy cars.
- **Create tools:** to play catch with smaller balls/bean bags. A milk jug can be cut open, and the student can use the jug handle to catch. The size of the jug and the hole can be varied. The jug can be attached to student's chair.

CREATE CHALK DRAWINGS

- Outdoor walls and surfaces are great surfaces for chalk.

BLOW BUBBLES

GO ON SCAVENGER HUNTS AND NATURE WALKS

TABLETOP ACTIVITIES

Ensure the playground has a picnic table, or other form of outdoor table, with adequate space for a student to wheel up to and share the surface with peers.

Activities could include: board games, puzzles, arts and crafts, card games, social games.

WINTER-SPECIFIC IDEAS

PREPARATION: Plow the basketball court (or similar defined open area) and the path to it, to allow an accessible area of play. Plow a path to the picnic table.

EQUIPMENT:

- Place a tray on the student's lap for snow play.
- Use an adapted sled; include/invite peers to pull or push.

ACTIVITIES:

- Snow art: use colored water in a spray bottle; peers can join in or help
- Snow gardening; use garden tools and fake plants to make a garden (ex: wheelchair user can use a pool noodle to create holes for plants, or even point to where plants should go)
- Repurpose sand toys
- Snowball toss – into buckets
- Snowball bowling

- Snow person making (ex: wheelchair user can help build a head on their lap)
- Invite peers for an indoor activity if it's too cold outside

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Including Children With Disabilities
A quick, easy reference for adapting playground, low-organizational and sports activities for children with physical and mental disabilities.

Some General Guidelines

1. **Consult directly with person/participant with the disability.** They know best about their disability and what strategies can be developed to make them feel comfortable. Ask lots of questions and make sure the participant is involved in every step of the inclusion process.
2. **Make adjustments to the activity only when necessary.** Many people with disabilities require few or only minor adjustments to participate fully in activities. Adaptations should aim to increase the person's participation, success and enjoyment. Allow the participant to inform you of what he/she needs.
3. **Approach inclusion on an individual basis.** People with specific disabilities require specific adaptations to be made. Do not approach adaptations using general strategies—this can lead to making unsuitable or redundant adjustments.
4. **Reduce new skills down to their smallest components.** This allows the participant to master each new skill component individually and build their skill set in a progressive fashion.
5. **Approach adaptations as temporary.** Consider adjustments made to the activity as a springboard for developing new skills that allow the person to participate more fully and without relying on the adaptation in the future. This prevents the participant from becoming reliant on adaptations when they are actually able to participate without them.
6. **Be fair.** Any modifications to the activity should be fair to all participants involved, regardless of ability. Modifications which single out those with disabilities only contribute to isolation and enforce stereotypes.
7. **Make sure equipment is available.** If adaptations are based on specific equipment, and that equipment is not available, this may limit the participant's opportunities to get involved.

Legend

- balls of various size, weight, colour and texture
- extend # of tries/attempts
- adjust size of playing area
- allow a partner to assist
- lengthen or shorten the playing time
- give verbal clues and oral prompts
- lower and/or increase size of target
- vary the tempo
- mark positions on playing field

Playground Activities

Four Square

- allow double bounces
- draw larger squares for better mobility and easier shots
- fix player positions in one spot
- use an over-inflated or misshapen ball

Hop Scotch

- use a large, easily handled marker
- allow stepping on lines
- allow players to hop on two feet
- allow two hops in one square
- use brightly coloured chalk for lines

Schlockey

- variation of hockey played in a 4' x 4' area with side and end boards, an excellent playground game for those with limited mobility

Tetherball

- allow participants to catch ball
- set a time limit instead of playing until completion

Low Organizational Activities

Catching Games

- use Velcro mitts with a tennis ball
- throw using underhand toss
- stand close together and move progressively further apart
- stand in front of wall or netting to stop missed balls
- use a beeper ball

King's Court

- use large, slow moving balls such as beach balls
- have participants count to five before throwing
- have all players throw with their weakest arm (i.e. 'righties' throw with their left)

Follow the Leader

- perform activity in partners
- on whistle blow, switch leaders
- use different movements (example: animal movements)

Tag

- use pool noodles to tag
- use beanbag/gator balls to tag
- use 'freezing' and 'unfreezing' to allow more chances to play continuously
- provided 'safe areas' where players can go without being tagged
- blindfold half the players, with the other half as 'buddies' or guides

Frisbee Games

- use games that require players to hit target with frisbee, but not to catch it (i.e. modified Frisbee Golf)
- substitute frisbee for a ball in other games (ex. Frisbee Baseball)

Relay Races

- use scooter boards; add invertubes for extra protection against bumps
- use mats pulled along the ground
- have participants knock objects off cones instead of maneuvering around them
- use large, padded obstacles

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This worksheet by CiraOntario.com features a number of great ideas for inclusive play, all in one place. All information is copyright CiraOntario.com and is provided here for informational use only.

INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND RESOURCES

- [ADA checklist](#) (.pdf)
- [Inclusive Playgrounds](#)
- [Landscape Structures](#)