

ADAPTING BASKETBALL INSTRUCTION: INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Basketball is a vigorous sport that requires participants to be very physically active in the standard game. However, many adaptations can be made to allow all participants to be involved. The sport is a great source of exercise and an excellent group activity. After learning the modifications, families and friends can come together to enjoy this activity and receive the necessary workout that many Americans need.

The skills taught in the activity can help those with disabilities to stay active and hopefully become stronger through an enjoyable activity. With correct instruction and adaptations all students can take part in basketball activities. Students with different fitness levels can push themselves to their highest performance levels with the help of their peers and the teacher.

Basketball is usually learned in the elementary age outside of school. Fundamentals are taught in the middle schools through physical education and school-related sport. Whether an individual has a disability or not, all students should receive the same opportunities in the physical education classroom.

Assessment

Evaluate each student's present level of basketball skill for probability of success. Assess previous experience, fitness level, motor functioning, attitude toward his/her disability, and willingness to participate.

Safety Considerations

1. Present all activity according to the student's physical characteristics and capabilities, as well as his/her mental age.
2. Deafness and hearing impairment: Play inside a gym with few students (outside and background noises should try to be eliminated if possible).
3. Orthopedic impairment: Those with less control over their wheelchair should use wider wheels to prevent tipping.
4. Asthma: Keep the prescription (inhaler) close to the activity area.
5. Visual impairment: Use a brighter color for sidelines to prevent off court collisions.

Instructional Adaptations

The following ideas are designed to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities into general physical education during instruction in basketball. Successful participation for some students require equipment which has been adapted to their particular needs. Requests for purchase or construction of equipment can be facilitated through the Individualized Education Program (IEP). If special equipment is necessary

to help a student progress education, then it should be identified at the Case Conference and included on the IEP form.

General adaptations can include:

1. Baskets may be lowered and/or enlarged.
2. A smaller or lighter ball can be used.
3. Rule adaptations could include multiple steps between dribbles.

Specific adaptations for associated disabling conditions are listed below. The adaptations are provided in categories by disability in order to facilitate easy access to the information. However, each student with a disability is unique and capable and should not be limited within a category.

Cognitive and Sensory Disabilities

Deaf/Hearing Impairment

1. Brighter ball helps to make up for a player calling your name to pass you the ball.
2. Lights to signal a whistle.
3. Make hand signaled plays not verbal.
4. Give a written outline of the day's events.

Mental Retardation

1. Repeat instructions clearly and slowly.
2. Quick/simple instructions.
3. Give motivation for small goals (three dribbles) then work higher (a basket).
4. Enhance success rate by awarding points for passes and catches.
5. Many rules can be changed (allow double dribbling, no time limit in the lane, etc.).

Visual Impairment

1. Orient player on the court and give an area to cover.
2. Brighter colored equipment.
3. Brighter boundary lines.
4. Beeper in the ball.
5. Lighted hoops.
6. In drills, use a ball retrieving device or set up in partners.
7. Catch the ball with arms extended to feel the ball and bring into the body.
8. Call the person's name before passing to them.
9. Bounce passes are easier to track and slower pace.
10. Place a beeper behind the goal to help in aiming at the target.

Psychomotor Disabilities

Orthopedic Impairment

1. Use the two-hand chest pass.
2. When shooting, do not go head on; easier to go slightly to the non-dominant side.
3. Adaptations to the game
 - a. Travel if more than two pushes are taken with ball in lap.
 - b. Can only dribble twice then must pass, shoot, or take two additional pushes.
 - c. Remain seated at all times.
 - d. Place all players in wheelchairs.

One Arm Involvement

1. Trap the ball with the body to catch the ball.
2. Throw with one arm.
3. Overhead passes for long throws.
4. Stop dribble then place ball on the hand for a shot.

One Leg Involvement

1. Bring the ball to the side of the body instead of towards the body to catch the ball.
2. Students who use crutches can use the one arm throw.
3. Students who use crutches are successful with the one arm shot.
4. One regular crutch and one Lofstrand crutch helps to free one arm quickly.

Barriers to participation in basketball and other sports by individuals with disabilities are decreasing. More than ever, physical education teachers must endeavor to read professional journals, attend conferences and workshops, and join professional organizations to avail themselves of information on how to teach specific sports to their students of varying skill levels. Being an informed professional is half the battle in allowing students with disabilities to gain access to team activities like basketball.

Resources

Darst, P. W., & Pangrazi, R. P. (2006). *Dynamic physical education for secondary school students* (5th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Pearson Education.

Dunn, J. M., & Leitschuh, C. A. (2006). *Special physical education* (8th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Schmottlach, N., & McManama, J. L. (2006). *The physical education activities handbook* (11th ed.) San Francisco, CA: Benjamin Cummings.

Zakrajsek, D. B., Carnes, L. A., & Pettigrew, Jr., F. E., (2003). *Quality lesson plans for secondary physical education* (2nd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

This information was compiled by Jenny Walter,
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The adaptations and teaching strategies contained in this document are only
suggestions. Each student must be considered individually, and in many cases,
a physician's written consent must be obtained.