



GUIDING ADAPTED PRINCIPLES FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED PHYSICAL CHALLENGED PERSON

INTRODUCTION

No one type of adapted physical education programme is suitable for all school levels or district schools. Possibly, this is why there is a very limited amount of material written about the organization and administration of physical education for the differently abled. Good organization and administration are essential if differently abled children are to be included in our schools and colleges and make them to grow and flourish at a time when educational costs are rising and when pressures exist to examine carefully the total curricular offerings at all school levels.

If one believes in the importance of providing worthwhile physical education programmes for all students at all school levels, it is then equally important to offer athletic and extramural activities for gifted students regular physical education and intramural sports for average and differently abled students. Differently abled students, who probably need physical education and recreational experience more than the gifted or the average students, have in the past been provided with inadequate experiences.

In 1951 the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation the Joint Committee on Health Problems in Education of the American Medical Association and the National Education Association prepared an excellent set of principles that should prove worthwhile to persons interested in organizing, promoting, and evaluating programmes of adapted physical education.

Physical education curricula should include individual sports skills like team sports, aquatic, dance, physical and motor pattern skills are prerequisites to community-based recreational sport and physical activity. Thus physical education should assure differently abled children of functional sport and physical activity that could be used in recreational activity in the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

It is the responsibility of the school to help the differently abled children in ways possible to develop the potentials of each individual entrusted to its care. This is a basic tenet of our democratic structure.

1. There is a need for common understanding regarding the nature of adapted Physical education.
2. There is a need for Adapted Physical Education in schools and colleges.
3. Adapted physical education has much to offer to the individual who faces the combined problem of seeking an education and living most effectively with a handicap. In Adapted Physical Education the individual can:
 - a) be observed and referred when the need for medical or other services are required.
 - b) be provided with opportunities to improved psychological adjustment and social development.

4. The direct and related services essential for the proper conduct of Adapted Physical Education should be available to our schools. These services should include:
 - a) adequate and periodic health examination
 - b) classification for physical education based on the health examination and other pertinent tests and observations
 - c) guidance for individuals needing special consideration with respect to physical activity, general health practices, recreational pursuits, vocational planning, psychological adjustment and social development,
 - d) arrangement of appropriate adapted physical education programmes
 - e) evaluation and recording of progress through observations, appropriate measurements and consultations
 - f) integrated relationships with other school personnel, medical and its auxiliary services and family to assure continuous guidance and supervisory services
 - g) cumulative records for each individual, which should be transferred from school to school.
5. It is essential that adequate medical guidance be available to teachers of adapted physical education. The possibility of serious pathology requires that programmes of Adapted Physical Education should not be attempted without the diagnosis, written recommendation and supervision of a physician. The planned programme of activities must be predicated upon medical findings and accomplishment by competent teachers working in medical supervision and guidance. There should be an effective supervision and guidance, and referral service between physicians, physical educators, and parents aimed at proper safeguards and maximum benefits of the student.
6. Teacher of Adapted Physical Education have a great responsibility as well as an unusual opportunity. Physical Educators engaged in teaching Adapted Physical Education should:
 - a) have adequate professional education to implement the recommendations provided by medical personnel.
 - b) be motivated by the highest ideals with respect to the importance of total student development and satisfactory human relationship.
 - c) develop an ability to establish a rapport with students who may exhibit social maladjustment as a result of the special needs.
 - d) be aware of the student's attitude toward his/her special needs.
 - e) be objective in relationships with students.
 - f) be prepared to give the time and effort necessary to help students overcome their difficulty.
 - g) Consider as strictly confidential information related to personnel problems of the student.
 - h) stress similarities rather than deviations and abilities instead of disabilities.
7. Adapted Physical Education is necessary at all school levels. The student with special needs faces a dual problem of overcoming the special needs and acquiring an education that will help him/her to take a place in society as a respected citizen. Failure to assist a student with problems may retard the growth and development process.

Offering Adapted Physical Education in the elementary grades and continuing through the secondary school and college, will assist the individuals to improve their functioning and make

adequate psychological and social adjustments. It will be a factor in obtaining maximum growth and development within the limits of their special needs. It will minimize attitudes of defeat, fears and insecurity. It will help the student in facing the future with confidence.

ESTABLISHING AN ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The legal obligation to differently abled children are different from normal children. In the past, Adapted Physical Education programmes have been developed to accommodate students who have temporary injuries (e.g. preoperative and postoperative cases), weak musculature or problems with posture or body mechanics. Under the law many of these students are not considered differently abled but school may provide special programmes for these students. Student classified as differently abled are to be provided with IEPs in the least restrictive environment or the regular class.

School administration are aware of the mandate to provide classroom instruction and vocational training for differently abled students. But frequently they do not understand that the same provisions must be made for physical education of their differently abled students. When an appropriate Physical Education Programme is not provided, it is imperative that steps be taken to bring the school curriculum into compliance with the law. Before an Adapted Physical Education three things must be accomplished.

- 1) It is important to determine the number and types of children classified as differently abled in the school or district.
- 2) School administrators must be made aware of the federal requirement.
- 3) The school or district administration must agree to begin planning to provide appropriate physical education experience for their differently abled students.

A brief discussion of procedures for the first two of these steps and a more extensive discussion of the third step follow.

DETERMINING THE NUMBER AND TYPES OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED STUDENTS

It is important to determine the number and types of differently abled children in the school system. Because this information provides clues to the types of physical education programmes needed. If only mild mentally differently abled students are being served by the school or district, chances are that their needs can be met through mainstreaming. However, if more seriously impaired students are enrolled, a separate Adapted Physical Education Programme may be needed. The number of differently abled students and their conditions should be a matter of public record. This information should be available from the school psychologist, special education director, school principal or superintendent. It is not necessary at this point to learn the names of the students. Data concerning their ages, number and types of the conditions should be gathered. If it is learned that differently abled students are enrolled in the school district, the next step can be undertaken.

BRINGING ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEM

School officials' awareness of the need for inclusion of appropriate physical education can be increased through discussion of the situation with the principal, superintendent, and director of special education. If any of those administrators are unaware of the exact content of the law, they should be provided with a copy of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. Their attention should be drawn to the specific sections of the law that pertain to physical education arguments that occupational or physical therapists are meeting the physical education needs of the

differently abled students and argument that the law says that all differently abled students should be mainstreamed in physical education should not be accepted. The same provisions that are being made for classroom instruction of differently abled students apply to physical education. That is, whether or not a differently abled student needs a special physical education programme must be determined through testing of the physical and motor functioning of the child.

If school administrators continue to ignore the need to provide appropriate physical education for differently abled students, assistance can be obtained from the local, district or state professional teachers' association and the office of special education in the State Departments of Education. Persistence may be necessary, but with enough effort the problem will be recognized as an important one. Once the school administrators recognize the need for appropriate physical education services, steps must be taken toward establishing a programme.

PLANNING PROGRAMMES

The most important step in providing appropriate physical education services for differently abled students is long-range planning. Programmes that are carefully planned have a much greater chance of meeting the students' needs than the programmes that are hurriedly put together. Long-range planning involves

- 1) identifying an individual who will be responsible for the programme
- 2) appointing an advisory committee
- 3) the supervisor and advisory committee survey the district to establish goals for the programme, interpret the need for the programme, secure support for the programme and agree on general policies for the programme.

There should be a long-range plan of organization, whether a new programme is being formulated or a well-established one is being evaluated and changes are being suggested for it. Responsibility for the programme should be delegated to one person, usually a supervisor at the district level or a well-qualified teacher if the programme will be limited to one school. In either case, this person should be aided by an advisory committee or council. This committee helps in such matters as establishment of policy formation of long-range plans, selection and release of students (at the school level), and interpretation and promotion of the programme.

CONCLUSION

The adapted physical education students must be guided to make the most of their social assess like improving appearance, manners, posture and personal hygiene. Although desiring to withdraw from a potential painful social situation, they should be encouraged to take part in group activities whenever possible. Also, it is particularly important that handicapped students learn many specific game and exercise skills as well as the joy of winning and the ability to lose gracefully. Adapted physical education offers excellent opportunities for assisting handicapped students in self-understanding and in acquiring a more rewarding lifestyle.