

Inclusive Sports in Ohio – What Makes it Hard

Why did we do a needs assessment?

To learn about inclusive sport, dance, and physical activity options in schools for Ohio youth with disabilities.



How did we get the information?

Sent a survey to athletes with disabilities, family members of athletes with disabilities, and school staff.



Talked to experts in Ohio about inclusive and adaptive sports.



Talked to athletes with disabilities and their families over Zoom about inclusive sports in Ohio.



What makes it hard to participate in inclusive sports?

ACCESS

- Participants told us there are not enough sports programs in schools that are made for athletes with and without disabilities to play together.
- Participants told us many sports programs do not know how to make accommodations for youth with disabilities.
- We learned many programs are not easy to access for athletes with physical disabilities and are not changed to be more calming for athletes with sensory processing disabilities.



ATTITUDE

Many youth with disabilities and their families told us they do not feel welcomed or included by schools and coaches in school sports.



We also learned many coaches and staff do not understand youth with disabilities or believe they can play sports.



KNOWLEDGE

Participants told us coaches do not know how to include athletes with disabilities in school sports.

We also found many coaches and staff are not comfortable working with students with disabilities, and sometimes there are not any staff to help coach athletes with disabilities.

Parents of athletes with disabilities often volunteer to coach their child or a team when there are not any trained coaches.



This project, which is conducted by the Ohio Colleges of Medicine Government Resource Center, is supported, in part by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, under grant number 23CH01FA23 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.

