

top 10

SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE YOUR RUN CLUB MORE INCLUSIVE

1 RUN, WALK, ROLL

- We love to run! But it's not an accessible movement skill for every child. Consider allowing participants to ride their bike or scooter or to roll their wheelchair (motorized or manual!). Some participants running gaits might be unique; allowing them to take their time will create space for kids who move differently to participate.

2 RUNNING ROUTE

- Consider the surface of your running route — is it flat or smooth? Does this accommodate all runners' mobility differences?
- Is your route well marked for runners who need visual direction support? Are there accessible bathrooms along your running routes?
- If your route is long, could you make it a few loops in order to pass by accessible bathrooms in your school at the halfway distance mark?
- How far is too far for kids of varied abilities? Could you set up a few different routes or loops?

3 COMMUNICATION

- All About Me sheets will give you insight into how your runners communicate best. You might also use the Ever Active Schools Visual Schedule resource, for students who process differently.
- Check in with your participants. They are the experts of their lived experiences. Make sure to ask them how they are doing and how they feel about various parts of the club (i.e. practices, fun runs, etc.), especially around the modifications you're making to create a more inclusive space- they'll be able to tell you if your modifications are working!

4

RUNNERS CHOICE

- Build opportunities for your runners to choose! Create different loops or distances for your running routes and let the kids choose the distance best for them, which will be fun and motivating for kids of all abilities.
- Allowing your runners to co-create and collaborate allows them to form relationships and gain peer support (perhaps coming up with a warm-up game for the day). This is likely to help keep interest in the activities of the club.
- Let students choose the name of your youth run club. This can help them to better identify with it.
- If you are using a Visual Schedule, you can use the Runner's choice icon to help increase motivation and interest of participants.

5

TAKE YOUR TIME

- Some kids process instructions faster or slower than others; give all your participants the chance to get caught up to speed!
- Give your participants time to practice and complete the task.

6

GROUPING

- Consider different grouping strategies for the games and activities you play. Having friends and feeling like a legitimate participant are associated with feelings of inclusion by children with disabilities in physical activity programs.

7

MAKING MODIFICATIONS

- When making modifications or adaptations to an activity, offer them to all students so as to avoid inadvertently creating a less inclusive space. If only one or two students are offered a modification it could lead to them feeling excluded from the group.

8

5 SENSES

- Be a sensory detective! Think about each of your 5 senses. Kids process sensory information differently. Some kids don't respond well to loud noises (whistles could be distracting!); some kids don't like to hold hands or give high fives. Consider the sensory elements of your space and put your detective hat on: sensory triggers might not be immediately obvious to you, but we know your detective skills are strong!

9

ALL ABOUT ME!

- We have created 'All About Me!' sheets, which create the opportunity for students to privately tell you about themselves. Incorporate what you learn about your runners into your practice plans to create a FUN and meaningful run club that students want to keep coming back to!

10

COACHES

- The more the merrier! If your run club is at recess or lunchtime, Educational Assistants might be able to support student participation. High school students, older siblings, and friends of the school community are great volunteer coaches — they can provide additional support and bring their diverse experiences and expertise to your club!
- Try to have diverse coaches and volunteers working with your club. Inclusion and belonging includes the coaching and volunteer team! What might be some of the barriers to volunteers joining and their participation? The useful tips on this sheet can also be incorporated within your coaching team!
- Encourage your staff to participate in your run club or start a staff run club!

