

A Family Quick Guide to Recreation & Leisure



“LIFE (Leisure Is For Everyone)!”

5 Ideals for Recreation & Leisure:

1. Normalization – as close to typical services as possible
2. Social Role Valorization – positive social role in the community
3. Self-determination – freedom of individual to select the recreation or leisure activity
4. Interdependence – relationships between a person with a disability and typical peers
5. Inclusion – social co-involvement in the community

Where to start:

- Activities should be safe, fun, and meaningful to the person with a disability
- Focus on your child’s interests, but explore other activities as well
- Network to find available options (Rec. Centers, YMCAs, Parks, Agencies, Churches, etc.)
- Develop a proactive plan
 - Meet the coach or leader ahead of time if possible
 - Share information in advance about your child to avoid stereotyping
 - Participant profile/*About Me* document
 - Help establish a “Person Centered” experience for your child
 - Be prepared to educate others on the manifestations of your child’s disability
 - Join an activity with a sibling or friend
- Consider Inclusive/Integrated vs. other recreation program options
 - Inclusive program – with typical peers
 - Equal opportunity to participate may require program accommodations
 - Adapted program – with other peers with a disability
 - Therapeutic program – facilitated by a qualified professional
- Teach your child to self-advocate
- Encourage Social Skills development
 - Foster new friendships
 - Develop community connections
- Focus on “ability” not “disability”
 - Be flexible and adaptable and request the same from providers
 - Focus on your child’s unique potential
- Do not give up, even though every experience may not be positive
 - Be persistent and try new recreation or leisure activities
 - Remember connections take time

References:

1. Bullock, Charles C., Charles L. Killingsworth, and Michael J. Mahon. *Introduction to Recreation Services for People with Disabilities: A Person-Centered Approach. 3Rd Edition.* Urbana, IL: Sagamore, L.L.C., 2010. Print.
2. Osterfeld, Scott, OADSP. *Making a Difference: The Art of Community Connecting.* Rep. N.p.: n.p., 2011. Print.

Some options include:

- Sports
 - Competitive
 - Recreational
 - Adapted
- Community Recreation Centers
- Parks (Day Camps, Hiking, Education, Community Gardening, etc.)
 - Inquire about Outreach programs
 - Ask about accessibility
- Playgrounds
 - Join or start a playgroup
- Libraries (Book Clubs, Teen Clubs, etc.)
- Museums
- Theatre Groups
- Arts & Crafts
- Social Groups (Gaming Clubs, Card Clubs, etc.)
- Church Groups (Choir, Clubs, Special events, etc.)
- Agency Sponsored Programs

School Age

- Join School Clubs or Sports Programs
- Reach out to Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Adapted Physical Education (APE) Teachers, and Parent Mentors for ideas and resources
 - Assistive Technology (AT) needs
 - Adaptive Equipment needs
 - Social Stories or other Communication needs
 - Sensory needs

After Graduation

- Explore Family Centered Leisure Activities
- Research Leisure Education
- Develop a Leisure Action Plan to promote independent activity selection
 - Choice Book – preferred activities
 - Action Plan Cards – Agenda like entries that may include, “What”, “With Whom”, “Where”, “When”, and necessary equipment
- Explore Adult Services

[Full Recreation Directory: A Family Guide to Recreation & Leisure activities for individuals with disabilities.](#)

“You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result.” – Gandhi

References:

1. Bullock, Charles C., Charles L. Killingsworth, and Michael J. Mahon. *Introduction to Recreation Services for People with Disabilities: A Person-Centered Approach. 3Rd Edition.* Urbana, IL: Sagamore, L.L.C., 2010. Print.
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