

Ohio Inclusive Sports Assessment - Summary

Why did we do a needs assessment?

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

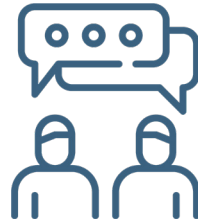


How did we collect information?

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 did we find?

What's working:

Community Programs

There are many adaptive sports and inclusive dance programs in the community with trained staff and coaches that do a great job.

Good inclusive sports and dance programs have:

- Support from people in the community.
- Support from school leaders, athletic directors, coaches, and teammates.
- People with disabilities who are in charge of the program.

The best programs include:

- A program that is created for everyone to take part and accommodations are made.
- Sports that have individual events (such as swimming and diving, bowling, track and field, and dance) instead of a competitive team sport (such as soccer, football, and basketball).



What makes it hard for youth with disabilities to play sports in schools

ACCESS:

Most of the time school sports are not accessible.



ATTITUDES:

Many youth with disabilities and their families say they experience bias when playing sports and feel unwelcome.



KNOWLEDGE:

Coaches and school staff need more training around inclusive sports.



What schools can do better

Create a place where athletes with disabilities are welcomed, included, and important.



Training:

- Most school staff have not had any inclusive sports training.
- Most school staff want inclusive sports training.
- Most school staff said they think school districts would be supportive of inclusive sports training.
- Most agree that coaches and staff need inclusive sports training.

Opportunities:

- Athletes, families, and school staff said they want more opportunities for inclusive sports in schools for youth with disabilities.
- There are lots of resources people don't know about in Ohio.
- A good place to start is to include more youth with disabilities in school sports such as swimming and diving, bowling, track and field, and dance. There are many examples of school districts that are already doing this well and it might be easy for other school districts to do the same.



What will we do now?

We will work with a team of experts to develop an inclusive sports training for school staff, based on what participants said needs to be improved, and connect schools with good resources and programs that already exist in Ohio.



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