A report about people with disability taking part in sport

This information is written in an 'easy to read' way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

This document is published by the Australian Sports Commission. It is a summary of a longer report.

You can find the longer report on our website at www.ausport.gov.au.
Sport is an important part of our way of life

In Australia, sport is an important part of our way of life. Many people enjoy taking part in sporting activities.

People with disability also enjoy taking part in sporting activities.

They love to play, to watch and have fun.

The Australian Sports Commission wanted to find out more about the way that people with disability take part in sporting activities.

Throughout 2010 and 2011, we did a lot of research.

We read other documents and reports from around Australia and the world.

And we asked people questions through a survey on our website.
Over 1,000 people shared their thoughts with us.

This report is a summary of the things we learned and the things people told us.
What we learned

Our research taught us that some of the most important things about sport for people with disability are:

• taking part in the community
• meeting new people, making friends and sharing in social activities.

“The benefits I receive from doing my sport are a sense of achievement and the fact that I have the opportunity to contribute to my community.”


Taking part in the community and having good relationships with others are important parts of leading a happy life.

People told us that, if they are not taking part in sporting activities, they feel like they are missing out on something.
Top 10 benefits of sport

These are the top 10 things people with disability told us are the benefits of taking part in sport.

1. A sense of achievement
2. Do something stimulating
3. Improve health
4. Have a chance to socialise with others
5. Enjoy the company of friends
6. Increase my energy levels
7. Improve self-esteem – make me feel better about myself
8. Improve my heart and lung fitness
9. Be with other people who are having fun
10. Spend time with friends
What stops people with disability from taking part

While some people with disability play sport, some people don’t – or can’t.

We found out that disability is not the main reason some people don’t play sport.

Instead, people told us that money is the biggest thing that stops them from being involved in sport.

People need to pay for:

- transport fees to get to and from a sport
- fees to register or join up with a club
- support worker fees.
People also said there are other reasons they don’t play sport. These included:

- no suitable transport to or from a sport

- difficulty getting to a sporting venue

- sports staff not being very helpful

- difficulty finding people to support them while they play

- not being able to use the sporting equipment because it isn’t modified to suit their needs.

Many disability service providers want to support people with disability to play more sport. But sometimes they don’t have enough staff, transport or money to help.
They don’t always know what types of sports are available either.

“Finding out what is available is the big barrier. Even in our local area you often don’t know what is available.”

What can sports groups learn?

75% We found out that more than 75% of people with disability who already play sport, want to play more.

This gives sports groups a good reason to make their clubs and venues more inclusive.

The image below shows the different ways people with disability can be included.
It would help if disability service providers, sports groups and centres could work together more.

Sports groups and centres can help by:

- providing more up to date information to disability service providers
- learning more about including people with disabilities.

Disability service providers can help by finding out more about:

- what sporting opportunities are available
- running their own activities that include people with disabilities.

Together, we all need to look at ways to make sport cost less for people with disability.
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