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Improving Awareness and Access to Adaptive Sports

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Improving Awareness and Access to Adaptive Sports

Alison Takagaki, Becki Cohill, OTD, OTR/L, and Susan MacDermott, OTD, OTR/L

BACKGROUND

Adaptive sports can be defined as a recreational activity that allows individuals to improve their overall quality of life through an occupation they enjoy (Aytur et al., 2018). Adaptive sports have been seen as a holistic rehabilitative care plan that helps to improve self-esteem, build self-identity, increase confidence, and provide higher life satisfaction (Aytur et al., 2018). Barriers and facilitators have been identified, but difficulty to sustain participation in adaptive sports has been shown (Blauwet et al., 2016). There is little research on occupational therapy and adaptive sports, but the role occupational therapy can have with their skill set in activity analysis, role promotion, and achieving independence can be important in increasing participation and improving awareness to help improve self-efficacy, confidence, and social relationships (Aytur et al., 2018).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this capstone project is to evaluate the needs of the participants, gain a better understanding of adaptive sports programs, and educate on potential modifications to programs to enhance participation. These results can be beneficial to better understand the importance in participation to adaptive sports and the ways occupational therapy can be useful to increasing and promoting participation.

METHODS



RESULTS

Theme- Barriers	Examples
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time management Relying on others Difficulty obtaining rides from ride share (i.e. Uber, Lyft) “It is difficult to know how long it will take me to arrive to my destination.”
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program participation Equipment Travel “I have to choose which trips I go on because it is too expensive for me to attend them all.”
Lack of Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unaware of programs Lack of information online or in brochures Minimal resources available “As an adult and newly diagnosed, it was difficult for me to find programs. I was unable to find any programs near my home, and ended up just asking a friend to help train me. There was a lack of information on brochures and online resources, and it would be nice to have a site online to provide information.”

Theme- Facilitators	Examples
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wanting to improve Previously participated Motivation to continue participation I used to be a runner and now I enjoy an array of different sports to get my heart rate up. I enjoy competitive sports and it is nice to be able to go out and explore and see others being helpful and doing the same things I like to do.”
Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning new skills grows confidence Confidence to perform in other activities Confidence in themselves “I was nervous at first, but it was really fun... I improved on the technique and on my last run I made it down the hill without falling.”
Social Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate with friends Learn about other programs through friends “I love meeting up with my friends on different outings and playing different sports with my friends. We talk to each other about future events to go to so we can all go together.”

DISCUSSION

- The findings found a lack of awareness of programs available and difficulties with transportation.
- Occupational therapists can provide a role in assisting those interested in sports find programs, and utilize the skill of activity analysis to determine the skills and requirements for the activity.
- From these findings, it will be important to advocate, educate, and increase awareness to adaptive sports and available programs.

CONCLUSION

- Adaptive sports are becoming more popular and can assist in finding roles, increasing self-efficacy, and developing friendships (Aytur et al., 2018).
- Findings supported the literature that there is a lack of awareness to adaptive sports programs, but participation is beneficial and desired (Blauwet et al., 2016).
- Occupational therapists can advocate to programs, suggest adaptive equipment, assist in role identification, and further explore the impact of adaptive sports to obtaining other occupation.



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