

Modifications to games and activities



Why do we need to modify?

In order to create an inclusive environment that fosters success, learning and development for all individuals, modifications and adaptations to activities are necessary. Outside of a physical activity context, this is a commonly applied practice. For example, if we gave someone the task of reading a book but they struggled to read because the font was small and the language too complex, we would modify the task by providing an easier book to read with larger font and simpler words. The same is true if the book was too simple, where we would find a book that contained more nuanced language and a greater challenge for the reader.

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There are a number of ways to modify and adapt games and activities so that each individual learner can achieve the success they need to stay engaged and continue to develop. Depending on the situation or the context of the learning environment, one way may be more applicable than another for each learner or each activity.

Equipment

By allowing for a variety of different equipment options, modifying activities can become the responsibility of the learner. By providing this

choice, we include all ability levels, create an opportunity to explore different options and the associated movements with that option and develop the knowledge and understanding of the participants as to what their ability level may be at that time. For example, the task may be to strike a ball with your hand such as in volleyball. By providing options such as a balloon, a beach ball, a larger, softer volleyball and a 'real' volleyball, each learner can choose what is appropriate for them. This choice has allowed you to modify the activity for many different ability levels, without explicitly picking or selecting individuals for each level while maintain the purpose of the activity.

Targets and goals

When adapting the size or shape of the ball may not be applicable, you can modify the size and distance of the target. A larger, closer target is much easier to achieve success with compared to a small, far away target. Basketball is a classic example of this, where the ball can be too large and the target is too high and small for many learners.

Expectations

Another way to modify an activity is through the expectations embedded within the activity. This can be done by providing challenges for

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individuals that are finding it easy and ways to simplify for those that find it difficult. For example, in a balance activity you can challenge learners through not putting their hands or feet on the ground, and make it easier by allowing more contact points for others. Again, this allows a modification to the task and keeps the original purpose the same.

Knowing the equipment and purpose

Knowing the equipment that is available and the purpose of an activity makes it much easier to find creative ways to modify and adapt. Don't be afraid to try a modification and if it goes awry, lead a discussion with the learners as to what may be more effective next time.