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The Development and Implementation of an Inclusive Community Sports League for Children with Disabilities

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The Development and Implementation of an Inclusive Community Sports League for Children with Disabilities.

Delani Filip and Angela Labrie Blackwell, PhD, OTR

BACKGROUND

Many developed sports leagues are tailored toward typically functioning children and adults, even though, in the United States, about 26 percent of the population live with a disability and one out of every three people within this population want to participate in sports (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020; Activity Alliance, 2018). This ultimately leads to decreased sporting opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

VISION 2025

AOTA vision for 2025 is the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (AOTA, 2020). Developing and implementing an inclusive sports league in a community with few options for children with disabilities aligns with the vision of our profession.

PROBLEM

Children (5-18 years old) with disabilities, who wish to participate in sports, experience occupational injustice and decreased leisure participation within their community, due to the lack of inclusive sports leagues, decreasing quality of life and health and wellness.

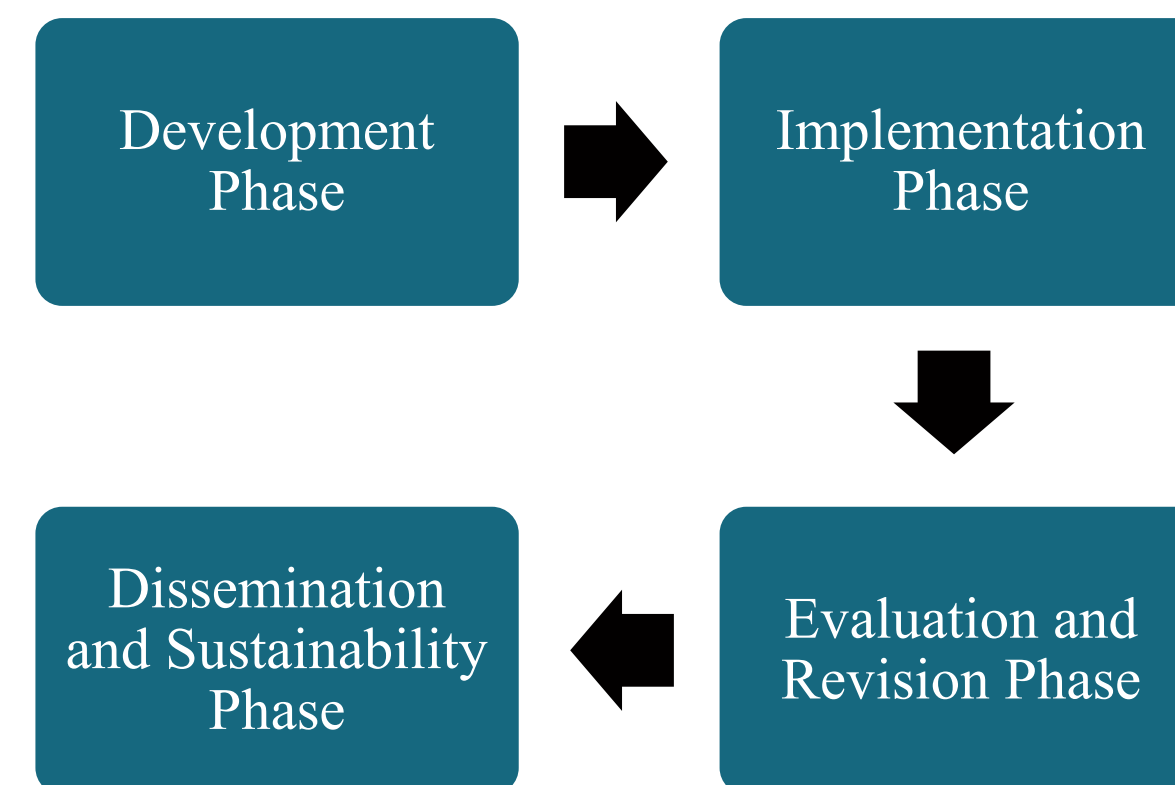
PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to create an inclusive sports league for all children (5-18 years old) living in Matagorda County, to improve health and wellness, increase leisure participation, promote occupational justice, and enhance quality of life.

Acknowledgement: Special thanks to Donna Schulman, OTR

METHODS

Project consisted of 4 steps:



Development Phase:

- Interviewed Teachers, OT Practitioners, Parents, and Athletes
- Observed School Based Occupational Therapy
- Completed Activity Analysis of 3 Fundamental Basketball Skills (dribbling, shooting, and passing)
- Created Volunteer Training
- Developed Forms and Tools
- Conducted Needs Assessment Survey

Implementation Phase

- Recruited and Train Volunteers
- Recruited and Assess Athletes
- Practiced and Games
- Conducted Closing Ceremony

Evaluation and Revision Phase

- Collected Stakeholder Surveys
- Analyzed and Revised
- Compared Standardized Assessments (CASP & KINDL)

Dissemination and Sustainability Phase

- Presented to School Board on Unified Champion Schools
- Finalized Handbook

Theoretical Framework:

The Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance Model (PEOP)

Products

Basketball For All Sports League

General Program Goal:

Promote inclusion within sports for athletes with disabilities due to the positive benefits inclusion has on

1. Social Health
2. Mental Health.
3. Physical Health



Required Training:

1. Special Olympics Coaching Course
2. Basketball For All Training Course:
 - Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
 - Importance of Inclusion
 - Common Disability Educational Material
- Knowledge Check Questions

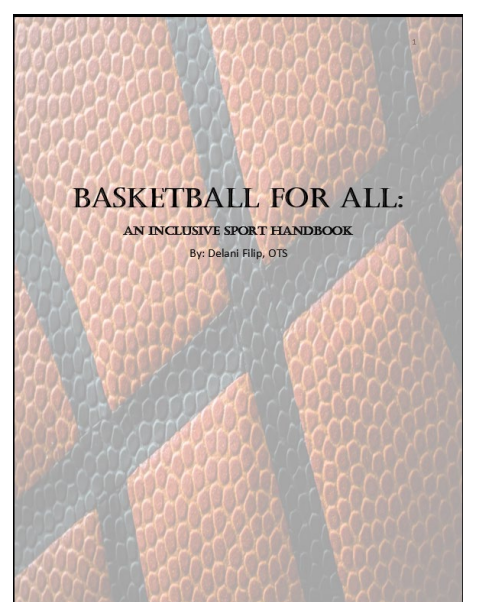
Basketball For All Handbook

Three Chapters:

1. Inclusive Sports Background
2. Basketball For All Implementation
3. Adaptive Basketball

Key Components:

- Coaching Guides
- Modifications
- Training Material
- Forms
- Adapted Equipment
- Basketball Sign Language
- Handouts/Resources



Discussion

Strengths:

- Increased Leisure Participation
- Decreased Barriers (cost, training, resources)

Limitations:

- Volunteers (athletes and coaches): Dropout, Inconsistent, and Limited Coaches
- Time: Limited to 5 Week League
- Standardized Assessments: Time Consuming and Limited Data on Leisure Participation

Future Implications:

- Develop Other Inclusive Community Sports
- Promote Knowledge of OT's Role within Community Sports
- Partner with Community Stakeholders to Ensure Sustainability
- Collect Data on Meaningful Outcomes Such as Leisure participation, and Well-being (inclusion/belonging)

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