Lead your generation
An inclusive future

Youth Sport Trust
SPIRIT of 2012
Research to Investigate The Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities to Undertake National Governing Body Coaching Awards and Qualifications

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Inclusive Futures (IF)

- Based in **nine host cities** across the UK.
- Young people aged **14-19** years old.
- Young people **with and without disabilities**.
- Provides young people with the **opportunity to volunteer** in schools and communities.
- The programme aims to **promote inclusion**, increase participation in physical activity, **empower young people** and **develop** their **life skills**.
National Governing Bodies


- Study NGBs included: Archery Great Britain, Badminton England, England Basketball, Boccia England, British Gymnastics, Amateur Swimming Association and Table Tennis England

- The seven NGBs have been selected due to variation within the sports construction and size of organisation; this enables the results to be generalised to the wider population of NGBs
National Disability Sport Organisations

- Thanks goes to Special Olympics Great Britain and Mencap, who have assisted in the recruitment of young people from both organisations to partake in focus groups; which allowed us to gain insight into the attitudes of young people whom access these courses.

- Special Olympics Great Britain
  - “Special Olympics offers a lifetime of learning through sport and benefits individuals of all ages and ability levels – from those with low motor abilities to highly skilled athletes.” (Special Olympics, 2016)

- Mencap
  - Mencap is a UK charity for people with a learning disability. They offer the opportunity to transform society’s attitudes to learning disability and improve the quality of life of people with a learning disability and their families. (Mencap 2016)
**Purpose**

- The IF Annual Report, highlighted that IF volunteers felt many NGBs lacked inclusivity in their coaching courses “they are not necessarily inclusive in their work...didn’t provide integrated service” (Parameshwaran et al Gill, 2015).

- To ensure that NGBs are meeting the needs of all individuals; a review has been conducted to identify methods of best practice within NGB courses,

- Main themes from the transcripts have been indentified and recommendations to support NGB inclusivity, have been suggested to emphasise that “Disability, equality and inclusion means surpassing simple disability awareness and striving to remove the barriers facing disabled service users, by implementing practical steps.” Skill Boosters (2015)
## Main Themes

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Lack of Tutor Training

• Results suggest many tutors, expected to reply on previous experiences and to seek their own training
  - “They may do, it isn’t something we enforce”
  - “we’ve never really given any specific guidance ...they’ve just cracked on with it, they know what they’re doing through their experience with disability sport”

• Lack of training can result in a varying level of confidence around inclusion for tutors, with some having little or no previous disability experiences

- Supported by Smith (1996): “Although staff receive some training, this is largely a mixture of short in-service courses and there is a lack of consistency across the various agencies.”
Recommendations- Make it compulsory

• Through enforcing disability training, it will ensure all tutors have a generalised level of “knowledge levels, skills, experiences and attitudes”

• This will enable ALL tutors to make suitable adaptations for individuals attending a course

-“some people are frightened of disability... for us (senior Boccia tutors) it’s just second nature, so really to take that fear away, it’s good to actually go on these courses”
Out of Date Training

• **Results** suggest that **disability training sessions** for tutors are **one off, in-house, courses**
  - “Go to Disability awareness training.... It’s three hours long

• The **world of disability** is constantly **changing (terminology, equipment and best practice)** therefore it is **imperative** that staff **training** is **up to date**
  - “The last cohort were probably trained up in 2012 and then they’ve not really had any training face to face training since then”

• **Smith (1996) states** “changes taking place within services for people with learning disabilities... require new knowledge and skill, we are still far removed from having an explicit, relevant and agreed strategy for training.”
Recommendations- Refresher Courses

- **CPD opportunities** across the year –**educate** about a **variety** of learners **specific needs**
  
  “The 1st session a year is geared towards inclusion or types of learners which tutors may support”

- As **tutors** have a **range of experiences** it may be useful to offer “training bespoke for them, instead of offering generic workshop”
Support Staff Training

• Results from interviews suggest; tutors are concerned about the level of support provided by Support Staff during coaching sessions.

- “It's the sports leader ...we need to make sure that they are empowered to actually do the talking because I know some TAs can kind of take over a bit”

• The education of support staff is imperative, to ensure that the level of assistance received is appropriate; preventing coaches feeling excluded from the session, due to a lack of independence and ownership over their own information (Batters et al, in development)
Recommendations – Specific Training

• Support Staff associated with your sport; to be included in staff disability training

• Training for Support Staff chosen by the young person; “let them do the course as well, because then they learn about the course and then they can support the young person in the club, school and community environment”

• Schepis (2001) findings, on training for Support Staff suggest; once Support Staff members received classroom and on-the-job training, each member improved teaching performance which subsequently resulted in improvements in child responses and learning.
Course Length

- NGB staff stated that session length was unrealistic for some individuals

- “Crash courses- 8 days in a row, 7 or 8 hours a day... I don’t think people understand the pressure of doing that”

- “Three day course...its very academic and there are 8 modules”  (Boccia England)

- This has resulted in some coaches struggling to complete the course or leaving

- “Gets to the middle of the course and people are struggling”
- “I think it was more to do with pressure, I’m normally better when I’m working calmly on a task”
Recommendations – Staggered Course

• **Extend content** over **longer period**
  - “when you are doing.. three, four hour course, you try to cram in a lot of information... I think when we are working with people with Learning Disabilities...perhaps we need to do it over a longer period”
  - “staggered course, which is over a longer period of time”

• **Ensures** individuals have **time** to **process new information** therefore **reducing pressure** and **anxiety** when **learning** a new skill
  - *Needed to be a lot longer, we did it for a month, once a week, I think for me, I needed more time to understand what I was doing*

• **Supported** by Darke (1988) who states that individuals with high anxiety have less residual working memory capacity than individuals with low anxiety
Know Their Limits

- Coaches must be aware of own limitations, as it may impact the level of award they can obtain. Especially in sports where risk of injury to both athletes and coaches is high.

- “because of the nature of gymnastics, it is very hands on.. one of the quality indicators in awarding the qualification is that the coach is capable of supporting, teaching and keeping the gymnast safe.”

- Evident in level two qualifications and above, where after completing the course, individuals have full independence to run their own club.

- “safeguarding issues...for the level two ,you have the assurance that you can run a safe session..what’s the implication of a person with reduced intellect having that ability to deliver a safe session”
Recommendations - Conversations with Coach

- Ensure **interview prior to course** is **conducted**, to ensure that both **NGB** and **Coach** are aware of **realistic goals**

  “For me it’s about people realising their potential and what they can do. I mean, I know my limitations, I know how far I can go and there are things I can’t do which I would like to do and I accept that; but it’s just getting peoples mindsets on that wave”

- If it becomes **apparent** that the level of **qualification is unsuitable**, make **suggestions** of other **roles or routes**

  “a young lady wanted to be a swimming coach...she had the wrong type of power chair...I said was that there is no reason why couldn’t go on poolside and teach, if you were in a manual chair”
Website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young Peoples Review of NGB Coaching Website Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief Description with Pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright Colours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Text</td>
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<td>Bold text on main words</td>
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</table>

**Brief Description with Pictures**
- Participants found **the menu pictures** useful, however felt an **accompanying description** would **aid understanding**

- “yeah the pictures are good, but it should have a little description with it and about what there is in it”

**Small text**
- Participants found the **text too small**, resulting in **difficulty** when **reading**.

- “The tiny little text needs to be bigger...some people might have eye problems”*(Mencap Focus Group)*
- “Yeah, might need support”
Recommendations - Bigger Text

• **Research** suggests that **small text** can increase **reading difficulty for young people** with an ID, decreasing the **chances** of individuals **attempting to read**

• **O'Brien et al (2005)** identified that **reading print with small letters** caused **problems** for individuals with an **ID** due to **difficulty identifying** letters and in **determining** what **position** they appeared within the **word**.

• By following recommended **guidelines**, you may be able to **increase** the number of **individuals** with an **ID** accessing your **website**

• **The Department of Health (2010)**, states that the **minimum size** of print to be utilised within documents, **should be** “16...with bigger font sizes for headings” (Department of Health, 2010, p. 27).

• **Please see Useful Websites: 5. For an example of an accessible website**
Application Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young Peoples Review of NGB Course Application Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complicated Format</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bigger Text</td>
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<tr>
<td>More simplistic Text</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Too much Information On One Page</strong></td>
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<td>More Colour</td>
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</table>

Complicated Format

- Participants highlighted the difficulty it presented by the different sections
  - “I don’t get all of the sections”
  - “I would need help to fill it out”

- Research states; columns presented in some documents are difficult for individuals with an ID to understand, as it is more accessible to read horizontally across the page (Batters et al, in development. Mencap, nd)
Participants stated that the application form had too much information on one page, creating unfathomable barriers.

- “too much information.... I like my information simple and this isn’t simple”
- “If other people like me want to fill this out, they would find it very very difficult and obviously we are 16 and upwards, so we would feel ashamed to ask for help”

This furthermore reduces individuals access to information and opportunities to participate within the course.
Recommendations

Spread out format

• Participants suggested a **simpler format** - were **unable** to give **specific guidance** for **improvement**

• **Research suggests** that individuals demonstrated **preference** towards the **spread out format** (Batters et al in development)

• **Utilisation of short sentences**, which includes only **one subject** (Mencap, nd) and starting **new topics** on **separate pages** (Department of Health, 2010)

Less information on a page

• Participants stated the **preference** to the **utilisation of only key information** on the **form**
  - “**First paragraph...name, number, disability ...second ....the prices, but different, because I don’t understand these prices**”

• **Research** found that a **reduced amount of text** utilised, was viewed as **beneficial** for **Special Olympics Athletes** as **demonstrated below**
  - “**Less words, so it’s easier**” (Batters et al, in development)
Easy-Read – School Resource

<table>
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<td>Makaton Pictures</td>
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<td>Font</td>
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<td>Simple Language</td>
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<td>Diagram of Task</td>
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Makaton Pictures

• Pictures are used regularly within Specialist Schools, to aid learning. The participants emphasised the positive impact which the images had on their reading and understanding of the text

- “the pictures make it easier to read and understand”

Simple Language

• The participants highlighted the need to eradicate complex wording

- “if you use really complicated words then people don’t understand”

• Department of Health (2010), suggests breaking up extended sentences, has been found to make reading easier for people with an ID
Recommendations

Variety of Learners

- **Whilst** the **findings** suggests that the **easy-read document** is generally the **preferred format** for **displaying information**; it was also **found** that **not all individuals** needed the suggested adaptations

- “**I don’t think the pictures are really needed...distracts you from reading the text**”

- Therefore it is **advised to make coaches aware** that **easy read formats are available if it is needed or requested by a coach**

- **For Further Guidance- See Useful Website 6**
## Best Practice Recommendations

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<td>Extra Time</td>
<td>Asking and Answering Questions Verbally</td>
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Contact Before The Course

- **Imperative** to contact the coaches, who declare that they have an ID, prior to the course.
  - “contact number for them, so that you can ring them and be able to say, listen up, I want to do this course. So that you know for definite (if it’s the right course)”

- **Ensure applicant** has applied to a course which is adaptable for their specific needs.
  - “workforce team contact the individual to ask for more detail about their additional need...make arrangements on an individual basis, to see how we could support them

- **Code of Practice suggests** “effective communication is essential for...finding an appropriate way...for meeting an individual’s needs” (Department for Constitutional Affairs, 2007).
Many individuals with an ID are categorised as visual learners, therefore through seeing the concept; they learn (Fischer et al, 1979)

- “maybe visual things, as that’s we learn”

Tutors have adapted teaching to accommodate this particular learning style
- “I ditched the IT stuff and just did practical all day, and a little bit of theory and that was the way we got through it”

Supported by both focus groups, who suggest that to improve courses; more demonstrations should used
- “if you don’t show me, I won’t know what you would like”
- “showing them how to do skills”

Through understanding the learning styles of individuals, NGBs and tutors can adapt sessions to incorporate their individual needs (Dunn et al, 2002)
Easy-Read Format

- **Easy-Read documents** are widely utilised within **health and school environments** with individuals with an ID. However, this **practice** is **yet** to be widely **adopted** within the **sports sector**.

- When asked, both **focus groups** stated that **easy-read formatted** information was the **preferred style** for accessing **information**.
  - “It’s just better for people to use

- Results suggest **NGB’s** have **begun** to adopt this **method**
  - “Different coloured paper and different font size”

- However when **creating** easy-read **documentation**, it is important to **remember** that it is more than adding **images** and increasing the **font size** (Department of Health, 2010)

- **For Further Guidance- See Useful Website 6**
Asking and Answering questions verbally

- **Results** suggest that **utilising verbal communication** is effective when **adjusting courses** for individuals with an **ID**
  - “I did a question and answer session, two or three times a day, just to check...they were learning ...did it practically rather than theory”

- **Tutors** removed **written content** and **examinations** within **folders**
  - Ask questions around what they have in their folders, instead of complete a full folder away from it and then come back.

- This **removes issues** associated with **reduced literacy capacity** with some **coaches**
  - “it was very much verbally, it wasn’t really given with much written down”

- **Shurr &Taber-Doughty (2012)** found that **utilisation of verbal discussion** enabled individuals to convey **understanding**, and increased **comprehension**
Respect

All Coaches are Individuals

- Coaches all learn differently, therefore it is important to get to know your coaches
  - “it’s knowing your student and teaching them properly. Obviously she didn’t know me”

- This is important for individuals both with and without an ID
  - “So the additional support was me...knowing each individual.... knowing when to step in and how to help forward”

Just Ask

- Opinions of individuals using your courses should be heard; they may be able to present a adaptation which is accessible for the wider group.

- Abbott and McConkey (2006), suggests that individuals were able to articulate ways to remove barriers created by their lack of literacy and numeracy skills
Future Recommendations

• **Accessibility Checklist**
  - checklist to ensure that processes have been followed prior, during and post coaching course, to ensure that all coaches and tutors are supported appropriately

• **Specific guidance for reasonable adjustments**
  - what are your sports reasonable adjustments and how to implement them

• **Tutor Training**
  - Review and adjust disability training with tutors to ensure confidence and full engagement across the board

• **Partnership with NDSOs**
  - Review and adjust coaching courses with NDSO and young people with an Intellectual Disability

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Youth Sport Trust

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Useful Websites

1. Youth Sport Trust - https://www.youthsporttrust.org/yst-ability
2. Special Olympics - http://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/
4. EDFS - http://www.efds.co.uk/
References

- Batters, R., and Reilly, N. (still in development)
- Mencap. (nd). Mencap’s Making it clear. London. UK