

CASE STUDY

Community Sport and Recreation Disability Project

Project cost: \$270,000

Project date: October 2009 to December 2011

Project strategies

The project targets the south-east and south-west Perth metropolitan corridors. It provides a 'concierge' style service, where individuals can contact the project coordinator from either a sport or disability organisation. The coordinator then assists by introducing contacts in the community for that service's request. This form of delivery aims to encourage people in the community to make their own links without the need for a third party. A range of strategies are used to achieve this.

- Clubs are assisted to raise their awareness and capacity to support people with disabilities by creating networks and relationships in their local neighbourhood. This is achieved by:
 - » Liaising with Club Development Officers (CDOs) on which clubs are suitable for the program.
 - » Advertising the program to clubs through CDOs.
 - » Approaching clubs directly.
 - » Liaising with clubs on how they can integrate people with disabilities.
- Introductions and links are facilitated between disability service providers and sport and recreation clubs in their local communities by:
 - » Connecting persons with a disability to a club and providing support to the club on how to integrate these individuals.
 - » Connecting clubs to a person from the disability service as a contact for advice.
- Open communication is promoted between people with disabilities, their families/carers and members of a club. This is achieved through:
 - » Working face-to-face with individuals.
 - » Problem solving to accommodate each individual's needs e.g. funding and transport requirements.
- Networks with local councils are promoted to help support clubs through:
 - » Local councils providing funding and programs.
 - » Raising clubs' and individuals' awareness of local council funding options.



Background

The issue of inclusion was identified as a key finding in Strategic Directions for the WA Sport and Recreation Industry 2006-2010 and beyond. A statewide strategic framework Fair Play was devised in 2006. A major area identified in the Department of Sport and Recreation's response to Fair Play was the need for increased knowledge and skills to enable community level sport and recreation clubs to be more inclusive of people with disabilities. The WA Sports Federation's Community Sport and Recreation Disability Project was formed as a way to help address this at community level.

Objectives

- Assist community sport and recreation clubs to increase their capacity to embrace the participation of people with disabilities.
- Increase the number of people with disabilities accessing mainstream sport and recreation clubs in their local community.
- Integrate people with disabilities, their families and disability service providers into the club environment.
- Increase local council support of clubs and develop more sport and recreation programs in the community.
- Facilitate strong working relationships between local councils, clubs, Disability Services Commission Local Area Coordinators (LACs) and Club Development Officers (CDOs).

Project (interim) results

- Close to 100 individuals and their families have been introduced to sport and recreation clubs in at least eight local government areas.
- More than 30 clubs across 20 sports have participated in the project.
- More than 23 CDOs have participated in training workshops.
- The capacity of the CDO and LAC networks to support people with disabilities has been enhanced.

Critical success factors

- The project has identified that the best way to encourage sport to be more inclusive is by getting people together to talk about their needs and to encourage open communication.
- Open communication and support between families/ carers and clubs from the outset is crucial to clubs accommodating the needs of individuals.

Lessons learnt

- The pathway of introducing individuals/disability advocates/council representatives to local clubs has been more successful in promoting inclusiveness than just offering training or resources.
- Clubs often don't have the time or money to undertake training and such training can cause clubs to worry about the 'worst case scenario'.
- Making direct connections between individuals and clubs allows each situation to be tailored to the individual.
- Regular networking meetings between local councils, CDOs, clubs and other community groups are beneficial.

Where to from here

- Project has identified a need to further investigate how information about disability sport opportunities is distributed to the community. This is currently being discussed in the disability sector.
- Local councils have been encouraged to assist in the facilitation of inclusive activities for their local clubs and disability organisations.
- Clubs and disability service providers have been made more aware of the funding opportunities available through local councils. These factors have led to an increase in clubs approaching local council for information and support in the project areas.
- The project has identified a need for similar connections to be made more broadly across Perth and regional Western Australia.

More information: www.wasportsfed.asn.au/projects.php

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