

INCLUSIVE ACTIVE PLAY

Key Terms and Concepts

Throughout the early years, children develop rapidly across all domains, and a crucial part of their development is active play.

Active play experiences benefit children's physical, mental, social, spiritual health and well-being, helping them build and strengthen lifelong skills.²



Intrapersonal Barriers

e.g. Negative feelings about oneself, one's inability to participate meaningfully, etc.



What is Active Play?

Voluntary engagement in activity that involves physical activity of any intensity, is fun and/or rewarding and usually driven by intrinsic motivation.¹

Children's access to active play is influenced by physical and social barriers and facilitators, where children with disabilities often face unique barriers to participation, including...³

Interpersonal Barriers

e.g. Negative attitudes (or a lack of positive attitudes) from others, lack of support, etc.

Structural Barriers

e.g. Inaccessible spaces, equipment, programming, transportation, etc.

Sociocultural Barriers

e.g. Inappropriate language, lack of opportunity, norms and stereotypes, etc.

Modification or Accommodation?



These are two common types of adaptations. Modifications change the activity or expectation, while accommodations change support or access without changing the activity or expectation.⁵

When families and educators work to mitigate these barriers, active play experiences have the potential to become more accessible and inclusive for all children.

Adaptations are changes that promote participation and inclusion. They can be made to elements of active play experiences, such as teaching style, rules, equipment, and the environment itself.⁴

Accessible or Inclusive?



Accessibility ensures all children are able to participate, while inclusivity ensures all children feel welcomed and encouraged to participate meaningfully.



Through the SPROUT-able project, Outdoor Play Canada has created a series of resources to support families and educators in supporting children with disabilities in outdoor play and learning.

To learn more, visit us at outdoorplaycanada.ca/sprout-able-project/



¹ Outdoor Play Canada. (2022). *Outdoor play glossary of terms*. <https://www.outdoorplaycanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Outdoor-Play-Glossary-of-Terms-2022-1.pdf>

² Active Play. (n.d.). *Why children need active play*. <https://activeplay.ca/articles/why-children-need-active-play/>

³ PHE Canada. (n.d.). *Inclusion of students of all abilities in school-based physical activity experiences*. <https://phecanada.ca/sites/default/files/content/docs/Program/inclusion-of-students-of-all-abilities-poster.pdf>

⁴ Active Disability Ireland. (2020). *TREE model*. <https://activedisability.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TREE-Model-FactSheet.pdf>

⁵ Exceptional Children's Assistance Center. (n.d.). *Adaptations and modifications*. <https://www.ecacparentcenter.org/wpcontent/uploads/ECACResourceAdaptationsAccommodationsModifications.pdf>