**Modifications in Physical Education for Students with Disabilities**

Modifications can be made in many areas. Equipment modifications, changes n the physical environment, modification of the rules and changes in the movement requirements can all be utilized to provide a more active and successful experience in physical education.

Modifications should address the following questions:

* Will the modifications increase the student’s level of participation?
* Will the modifications create a safe environment for both the students and the remainder of the class?
* Will the modification change the essence or nature of the game?
* Will the modifications help the student with disabilities blend in more or stand out even more than before?
* Will the modifications create a successful experience for **all** students?

Modifications can be made for certain deficiencies, for specific motor and fitness skills. The following are examples of each of these areas:

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| **For a student with limited strength:** | **For a student with limited speed:** |
| * Shorten distance to move or propel object * Use lighter equipment * Use shorter and lighter striking implements * Allow students to sit or lie down while playing * Allow students to monitor their own fatigue * Use deflated balls or suspended balls * Change movement requirements | * Shorten distance or change distances for different students * Change locomotor pattern * Equalize competition among teams * Make safe areas in tag games |
| **For a student with limited endurance:** | **For a student with limited balance:** |
| * Shorten distance and playing area * Allow more rest periods * Change movement requirements to reduce activity time * Allow student to sit while playing * Decrease activity time for students | * Provide chair, bar or buddy for support * Teach balance techniques (widen base, use arms) * Increase width of surfaces to be walked * Use carpeted areas rather than slick surfaces * Teach student how to fall * Place student near wall for support * Lower center of gravity |
| **For a student with limited coordination and accuracy:** | |
| * Use stationary objects for kicking/striking * Decrease distance for throwing, kicking, and striking * Make targets and goals larger * Use scarves, balloons, bubbles to enhance visual tracking skills * Increase surface of striking implements * Use larger balls for kicking and striking * Use softer, slower balls for striking and catching * Use lighter, less stable pins in bowling-type games. | |

**Specific Game and Sport Adaptations**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Badminton** | **Basketball** | **Bowling** | **Floor Hockey** |
| * use oversized racquets * use larger birdies * use a lower net * allow students to sit * eliminate the net * use a balloon instead of a birdie | * use smaller, lighter ball * use a different type of ball (e.g., playground ball) * use a lower goal * use a goal with a larger circumference * modify rules * use smaller playing area | * use lighter ball * use fewer number of pins * allow students to push ball while sitting * use ramp * allow three tries instead of two * use empty milk jugs as pins * create lanes with cones | * use oversized sticks * use lighter sticks * use larger ball or puck * increase size of the goal * use smaller playing area * modify rules * do not use goalies |
| **Kickball** | **Soccer** | **Softball** | **Volleyball** |
| * use a lighter, larger ball * allow students to use a hockey stick to contact ball (wheelchairs) * decrease distance to base * use one base * allow student to kick ball when stationary | * use lighter, larger ball * allow students to use a hockey stick instead of kicking the ball * use smaller playing area * allow students to play with a buddy * allow student to walk to ball or roll wheelchair to ball * use larger goal | * use a lighter, larger ball * use a lighter bat * use shorter distance around bases * use one base * allow more than three strikes * use batting tee * allow more time to get to bases | * use a beach ball or balloon * allow students to sit on the floor * use lower net * use no net at all * use smaller playing court * allow ball to bounce once before hitting * allow unlimited number of hits * allow more than one try when serving |

**Modifications For Group Games and Sports**

**Vary Purpose or Goal of Game**

* Some students play to learn complex strategies while others play to work on simple motor skills

**Vary Number of Players**

* Use smaller size teams to increase participation and isolate students in certain groups, if needed

**Vary Movement Requirements**

* Some students can walk while others run
* Some students can hit off a tee while others hit balls that are tossed

**Vary Field of Play**

* Use shorter distances
* Set up safety zones for those with mobility difficulties
* Make field narrower and wider

**Vary Objects Used**

* Use lighter balls, bats
* Use larger or smaller balls
* Lower net or basket

**Vary the Rules/Expectations**

* Vary number of turns each student receives
* Evaluate what positions students with disabilities will find success
* Use “luck” as means of de-emphasizing skill

Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (2008). *Adapted Physical Education of Best Practices* (2nd ed.). Denton, TX: Texas Women’s University.