

Perceived Benefits of Participation in Adapted Physical Activity Classes for Children with Developmental Disabilities Between Class Instructors and the Child's Caregiver

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INTRODUCTION: Current research demonstrates a gap in literature exists between perception of benefits that caregivers and instructors of children participating in adaptive physical activity courses experience.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of benefits of participating children between adapted physical activity instructors and the caregiver. By doing so, this study aligns the evidence of the benefits of adaptive sport and recreation classes/events for children with developmental disabilities. The findings may be used to assist class instructors to structure and promote classes to more closely match caregiver and instructor perceived benefits.

METHODS: This research required a survey as the source of gathering data. The participants of this study were conveniently drawn from adaptive physical activity classes and an adapted basketball program in south central Kansas.

RESULTS: Survey results demonstrated that 100% of instructors rated building social connections, enjoyment, and gaining a sense of accomplishment as most important factors for why children participate in adapted classes. Also, 66.7% of caregivers rated the previous characteristics as most important factors. Instructors rated levels of enjoyment the children experience higher than caregivers. Instructors rated higher importance on all categories pertaining to the levels of positive influence the adapted activities had on the participating child.

CONCLUSION: Caregivers of participating children placed greater importance on physical fitness and healthier lifestyles. Instructors of adapted physical activities placed greater importance on social connections, enjoyment, and accomplishment.