

AAALF's Inclusion Insights: Personal Performance Activities High School Ages: 15-21 years

Developmental Background

Aerobics, running activities, swimming, and martial arts-type activities are all options that many adults choose later in life to maintain an active lifestyle. For high-school-age learners in physical education, these options build on already existing skills. These activities can be done in competitive, social, and individual formats into adulthood. Many activities that fall in the category of personal performance make great inclusive activities such as wrestling, running, and aerobics. However, many students with disabilities fail to develop critical prerequisite skills and fitness levels to enjoy personal performance activities due to limited-play and organized-sport opportunities. For this reason, teachers may have to modify activities and use adapted equipment to ensure successful learning experiences. Below are some indicators of success for ALL high-school-age learners.

Indicators of Success

1. Student is able to set personal goals.
2. Student is able to complete self-check of basic movement competencies by the end of the first semester.
3. Student is able to self-monitor workouts and training.
4. Student is able to self-select level of modification in activity either in intensity or nature of activity.²
5. Student is able to take personal responsibility for self by working safely with others in activities that require cooperation.²

Do not modify your expectations for success by students; however, broaden your criteria for success. This means that you recognize many options exist for learners to demonstrate competency within an activity type. For example, a child who has lower limb impairment may need to modify a swim stroke so that most of the propulsion comes from the arms.³ This can be done by using a pull buoy (G8452) to float the hips and help the swimmer maintain proper position in the water.

Here's How!

How Do You Teach?

- Use peer helpers. In personal activities, working alongside a partner may increase the enjoyment as well as offer opportunities for more skilled participants to gain a deeper understanding from instructing others.
- Use teaching props. A large balance ball (such as a giant Earth Beach Ball or Body Ball) makes an excellent tool for teaching a break fall used in wrestling and martial arts to safely fall from a standing position without injury.
- Allow students to progress at their own rate. Develop a system where participants can select from a continuum of activities and move on to more challenging tasks. In activities such as hurdling

in track, safety equipment such as a foam training hurdle allows all students to safely select 4 height positions.

- Arrange for guest speakers to do demonstrations.
- Always teach activities with the appropriate mat surface. Some mats are appropriate for rolls and wrestling, others are made for falls (see FlagHouse Gym Mats).
- Avoid the "no pain, no gain" philosophy. In personal fitness activities, start slow and work up to greater loads of exercise.
- Vary the intensity of activities. By definition, personal performance activities should allow learners to pick appropriate levels of intensity.
- For cross country, this could mean how far a student runs or even the course or terrain chosen.
- For swimming activities, intensity can be varied by using kickboards or fins. A swimmer can use these aids to maintain a pace, work on form, and keep up with peers.
- For karate-type activities, a punching bag can be both fun and provide an excellent way to develop skills that may be useful in more advanced community martial arts settings or even competitions.

Where Do You Teach?

- Although, many personal performance activities are teachable in most high school physical education settings, teachers are encouraged to explore community-based options to authenticate the learning experiences.
- Have fun nights or family nights at local recreation and community sport facilities.
- Bring community recreation options to the school, have community recreation leaders give demonstrations, lectures, or slide shows.
- Teach activities outdoors when possible using large, open grassy areas. For example, Tai Chi can be done in any open area, grass or blacktop.
- Running or walking courses exist anywhere students can safely travel, thus eliminating the need for a track.

What—Change The Activity Itself!

- Assess students' fundamental movement skills prior to personal performance activities. Look specifically for efficiency in running or swimming prior to planning units. This will help determine what modifications or supports are needed.

- Since many personal performance activities are individual in nature, learners should be given choices as to what and when modifications are appropriate. Self-determination is an important skill related to making decisions. Ask students if they are comfortable being assessed along with the other students and want to use aids if needed.

- Care needs to be taken to ensure that learners, who are low in fitness, have inefficient movement patterns, or a disability that hampers movement are not exhausted during activity.

- A student in a wheelchair who uses his/her arms throughout the day may need to have rest intervals built into activities or build up to longer distances gradually. Using the arms to propel a chair up a ramp, around obstacles, and complete transfers may be equivalent to an anaerobic workout. With this in mind, check with the learner with respect to appropriate workloads and consider that a sore shoulder to a person in a wheelchair may be of greater consequence than to a person without a disability.

- Adapt skills/activities and maintain the principles. In running, this means that if the group is working on long distances, the individual in a wheelchair may need a paved area to move. If the goal is to tax the aerobic system, many movement options exist for all learners. In the pool, aerobic workouts need not be limited to swimming distances, but could include jogging using a buoyancy belt.

- Allow learners to choose activities. Some learners may find swimming on the back more comfortable than swimming with the face in the water. Walking at a moderate pace is as effective as running for some individuals.

- Let students choose from levels of competition. Some people compete with themselves, others against an opponent, and in some cases, against a clock. Keep in mind that personal performance activities mean that personal competition styles exist. Some runners run fastest when they have a person to run against, others run faster if they are left to run on their own using a stopwatch after setting a goal. The same is true in certain activities associated with wrestling and martial arts. Some learners may work harder if you let them wrestle with an opponent, others may work harder if you turn the activity into a group game such as having learners work in a pair to see how many punches they can do on a bag in 60 seconds.

- Use music to stimulate movement in personal performance activities.

The Solutions You Need

The following matrix can be used to identify where, on a two-dimensional continuum, students in your class fit so you can provide the most suitable equipment and supports for their success. The matrix is arranged so that the easier, novice-level activities/skills are identified in the lower left-hand quadrant of the matrix. There, you can see to some extent, a developmental sequence of how to teach learners to fall properly in preparation for the personal performance activities of wrestling, judo, and other martial arts. In the upper, right-hand quadrant, implications for the most difficult and advanced skills featuring the standard equipment used in physical education class are listed. If given an option, many students will choose to use equipment that gives them a greater chance for success. If the environment in the class is such that these choices are "okay," ALL students will learn, find success, and perhaps learn to enjoy an activity they can incorporate into an active lifestyle throughout their lives.

Developing Skills for Break Falls Used in Martial Arts/Wrestling

Advanced - More Skilled

- As learners become more proficient, falls and other rolls can be done using a less padded Multipurpose Set. (G4140)
- Learners can then be encouraged to roll and break falls from a standing position and finish in a standing position using their slapping hand to help them get to their feet.
- As learners progress to firm rolling surfaces, hand and foot placement becomes critical. Help learners understand where to put hands by using Spot Markers. (G7235)

- Doing falls over objects such as shapes is an important prerequisite to falling after someone has thrown or attempted a wrestling move. (G6123)
- Falling from heights or when another person has attempted a throw should begin with cushioned Safety Mats. (G9209)
- As learners progress, they can be involved in more free-type exercises in wrestling and judo and be able to fall safely on a Multipurpose Mat. (G4140)

Easier

- Begin with simple rolls on mats that offer the most cushion such as 12" thick Safety Mats (G9207). Simple rolls refer to basic log and forward rolls.
- Begin by having students roll using 38" inflatable Balance Balls. (G36009)
- Have students start from lying belly down on the Ball and tucking. (G36009)

More Difficult

- As students become more proficient with the Balance Ball (G36009) as a rolling support, have them roll without the ball on the safety mat.
- Students can begin rolling on their knees and gradually progress to a squatting and standing position.
- Inclined Mats also help students get their hips above their shoulders. (G5217)

Novice - Less Skilled

Note: number referenced indicates FlagHouse item number for appropriate product.

Resources

American Association for Active Lifestyles and Fitness (AAALF/AAHPERD)

Adapted Physical Activity Council
1900 Association Drive,
Reston, VA 20191
<http://www.aahperd.org/aaalf/>
800-213-7193 X430

Making Connections: From theory to practice in adapted physical education. (2003) Scottsdale, AZ: Holcomb-Hathaway. 480-991-7881

American Association of Adapted Sports Programs

4585 Park Drive,
Pine Lake, GA 30071
<http://www.aaasp.org>
404-294-0070

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE/AAHPERD)

1900 Association Drive,
Reston, VA 20191
<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>
800-213-7193 x410

Moving Into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education. (1995). Dubuque, IA: WCB McGraw-Hill. 800-321-0789

Paraplegia news. (1997).

The battle of the bulge. 51(4), 12-15.

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PE Central-Adapted Physical Education

<http://www.pecentral.org/adapted/adaptedmenu.html>

USA Judo

2126 East 17TH Street,
Brooklyn, NY 11229
<http://www.usjudo.org/>
719-866-4730

USA Karate

1300 Kenmore Blvd,
Akron, Ohio 44314
<http://www.usakarate.org/>
330 753-3314

1 Classification systems for sport and physical activities such as the one endorsed by the State of New York, cluster activities in ways that increase the chances of positive transfer of skills from one activity to the next.

2 Aligns with NASPE (1995) standard #5 - Demonstrates responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.

3 Aligns with NASPE (1995) standard #6 - Demonstrates understanding and respect for difference among people in physical activity setting.

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