



## Person-Centered Tips for Active Living Strategies and Activities

**This resource and tip sheet is designed to support person-centered approaches for Active Living strategies and activities.**

Use **person-first language** when discussing individuals with varying levels of accessibility needs (ODR, 2006). This lets others know that you are acknowledging the whole person without labeling or making assumptions. Examples include:

- Person with disabilities *instead of* disabled/handicapped person
- Person utilizing a wheelchair *instead of* wheelchair bound
- Individuals with larger bodies *instead of* obese or overweight individuals
- Person with diabetes *instead of* a diabetic
- Person with arthritis *instead of* a person suffering from arthritis

Consider what **community adverse experiences** or traumas may exist in the communities you are serving (Markworth, 2020; Falkinburger, et al., 2018). Acknowledging these experiences in a sensitive way can help build safety and trust, and provide a foundation for community-led changes (Falkinburger, 2018). Examples of community adverse experiences or traumas include:

- Lack of access to nutritious foods or active environments with limited safety and accessibility
- Lack of jobs or presence of substandard wages
- Historical trauma
- Structural racism
- Poor water and air control
- Poor housing quality and affordability

Utilize an **asset-based approach** to community development and planning. Creating a needs assessment using an approach that honors the positive attributes of a community is an effective way to increase community engagement and sustainability (Nurture Development, 2018; Urban Institute, 2020). How you can do this:

- Engage with people living in the community to learn more about the community's strengths, capacities, and culture.
- Build relationships and connect individuals with shared interests and values.
- Coordinate efforts with stakeholders to bridge gaps between existing services, and develop plans to offer requested or desired services.
- Use terms such as "restore," "enhance," and "support" when proposing community changes or actions.
- Utilize materials and items that reflect the diversity of the community being served to support cultural relevance and safety, including translation or interpretation services when relevant.
- Inspire community change through resident involvement and volunteerism.
- Increase sustainability by asking yourself (and your agency), "How can we channel and build on this community participation?"

**Practice inclusivity** when hosting events, developing materials, or creating outreach messages that encourage physical activity. Examples for more inclusive health and activity promotion include (Kraus & Jans, 2014; Tubbs, 2018):

- Allow opportunities for all community members to fully participate and feel valued.
- Identify ideas to overcome barriers that are architectural, programmatic, and attitudinal.
- Provide positive messaging that is considerate of all body types, ability levels, and ages.
  - Example: Use images of individuals with disabilities on outreach materials and replace messages like, "Don't sit, get up and move!", with messages like, "Move your way".
- Encourage participants to "move their way" and demonstrate examples of exercise modifications when necessary.

## Sources and Suggested Readings:

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9. Tubbs, A. (2018). Inclusive Physical Activity Strategies for Youth. National Center on Health Promotion for
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