



# PETERBOROUGH CITY SOCCER ASSOCIATION

## INCLUSION OF ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES

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July 2015

There are a number of issues that may explain why so few people with a disability have participated in soccer as players, administrators or coaches. This is an international concern and not simply a focus of Provincial or Canadian sport organization. Issues of perception, cost, timetabling, accessibility and transport are typical challenges for a soccer club but there are some related specifically to participants with a disability.

The issues:

- General public's lack of understanding of people with a physical or learning disability and the stigma often associated with disabilities
- Lack of awareness of the activities, opportunities and options available to people with a disability
- Isolation sometimes experienced by people with a disability
- Lack of confidence in a personal or skill area
- Access to community activities including sport is sometimes difficult, resulting from lack of physical access and more commonly, attitudinal problems such as those listed above.

Strategies to overcome barriers:

- Focus on what the person with a disability can do. Never assume that people with disabilities cannot do things. Always see what they can do and start from there. Asking the person with a disability what they can do is a great starting point.
- Don't assume that people with a disability want (or need) to play in a segregated competition or training session – find out how they want to participate with the Club.
- Where it is necessary to adapt skills or activities to include a person with a disability it is important to maintain the integrity of the game.
- Whilst some participants will only want to play the game, encourage them to get involved in non-playing roles as well. Like anyone else, a person with a disability may not want to play but bring their specific skill or skills to another role within the Club.
- Advertise widely to reach isolated people with a disability.

The Peterborough City Soccer Association adheres to the Ontario Soccer Association and Canadian Soccer Association policies and guidelines for including athletes with a disability in soccer programs. While the Club does not offer an exclusive participant program for these athletes, we support the Special Olympics by providing facilities and equipment for their soccer events at our Eastgate fields and provide Special Olympics volunteers and staff with free use of our clubhouse for their events and event planning. We also have a PCSA technical team coach who plays for the Canadian Paralympic Soccer Team.

PCSA provides its coaching staff and Board members with access to the following materials which are posted on the Club website:

*Coaching Athletes with a Disability*  
Coaching Association of Ontario

*Long Term Player Development – Players with Disabilities*  
Canadian Soccer Association

*Soccer for Players with a Disability*  
Ontario Soccer Association

*Club Based Programs for Players with a Disability*  
Ontario Soccer Association

PCSA will assist athletes and their families with finding the appropriate program to suit their needs if the Club does not have a participant program available for them. Coaching opportunities and Board positions are available as well.