

CREATING INCLUSIVE PARKS & RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES



WHAT CAN PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENTS DO TO ENSURE INCLUSIVITY?

Parks and recreation departments can begin their journey to inclusivity by working with their local public health agency and inclusive health coalition. Working to improve the environment at your local parks and recreation facilities can seem overwhelming, but with the help of your coalition, you can remove barriers and provide opportunities for people with disabilities to play along side those without disabilities. Get started by completing an On-Site CHII Assessment. This tool will help determine what is done well and what can be improved so any resident can easily navigate parks and participate in recreation programs. The next step would be to review the assessment and your parks and recreation facilities and programs to determine additional measures that could remove barriers to participation.

This tip sheet is one of a series of six that has been created to help local public health agencies and community coalitions remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from achieving the same health and wellness opportunities as people without disabilities.

Did you know?

According to a recent [parks and recreation survey](#), 74% of parks and recreation agencies offered programming and activities for community members with physical disabilities and 62% offered programs for individuals with cognitive disabilities.



WHAT POLICY, SYSTEM, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES CAN PARKS & RECREATION CONSIDER?

POLICY & SYSTEM LEVEL CHANGES

- Create and implement a formal [inclusion policy](#).
- Provide [disability etiquette training](#) for employees.
- Review new park plans and recreation programs for inclusivity.
- Offer [inclusive recreation programs](#) that are specifically designed for people with disabilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

- Include a paved path to all park shelters.
- Ensure there is adequate [accessible parking](#).
- Provide adaptive equipment.
- Build only barrier free [inclusive playgrounds](#).
- Ensure there are accessible entrances at facilities.
- Provide [wheelchair charging stations](#).
- Provide benches at parks and on trails and ensure adequate [space for companion seating](#).
- Lower height of soap and paper towels so they are [within reach from a seated position](#).



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