

English Federation of Disability Sport

Advocacy & Activity Buddy Scheme (AABS)

The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) has received funding from the Department of Health's Section 64 Grant to support the development of an Advocacy & Activity Buddy Scheme (AABS) over a 3 year period to 2010.

The purpose of the AAB Scheme will work two fold to increase the participation of disabled people within sport and physical activity through:-

Advocacy; to recruit, train and support Advocates to encourage their peers and groups they represent to use sport as a vehicle in overcoming social isolation.

Activity Buddies; to promote and deliver a buddy system within sport and leisure providing disabled people with volunteer support to enable them to better access sport and physical activity.

Resources, toolkits, new and existing local/regional and national partnerships will be developed to support the process and delivery of the scheme. AABS will be a continuation and progression from the Gym Buddy Scheme delivery and resource already available within Inclusive Fitness Initiative gyms.

Aims and Objectives of the Advocacy & Activity Buddy Scheme

The 3 main aims and objectives of AABS are to:-

1.	Provide buddy/ volunteer support to disabled people who wish to participate in sport and physical activity.
2.	Support advocates and advocacy groups to encourage their service users to engage in sport and physical activity to overcome social exclusion
3.	Support sport and leisure providers to engage with a buddy scheme to provide more inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities to disabled people.



**Advocacy & Activity
Buddy Scheme**



The Advocates Role

Advocates and advocacy groups who represent disabled people will be provided with resources, tools and training to enable them to effectively provide information to their service users about local service provision of sport and leisure activities. Advocates through the information they have received and ongoing support from the project will be empowered to encourage the services users they represent to engage in sport and physical activity to overcome social and psychological barriers to participation and potential social exclusion.

The Buddy's Role is to:-

- make a commitment to accompany and support a disabled person(s) needs to enable them to participate in sport and physical activity
- motivate, encourage, mentor and befriend a disabled person when participating in sport and physical activity
- help breakdown barriers to participation faced by disabled people in sport and physical activity i.e. access, communication, social and psychological.

Buddy's will not be expected to:

- lift and carry or transfer disabled users
- provide transport or assist disabled user to change or personal care
- prescribe exercise or coach (unless qualified)
- assist with or administer medication

It is intended that Buddies will be an integral part of the service provision for disabled people within sport and physical activity and that they will receive support and recognition throughout the process.

Recruitment of Advocates and Buddies

Leisure and sport clubs/ organisations will be supported to liaise with and recruit Buddies and Advocates but ultimately will be responsible for the recruitment and development of their own Buddies. Advocates will be approached, recruited and trained by the project. Advocacy groups that represent disabled people can access the resources and training available within the scheme.



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Activity Buddies will be brokered both nationally and locally, linking with existing 'volunteer involving' organisations including:

- Schools, Colleges and Universities
- Employee Supported Volunteering
- Sports Coaching Leadership Award Schemes
- National Governing Bodies of Sport and National Disability Sport Organisations
- Disability Organisations and Charities
- Existing sports club volunteers
- Volunteer Centres/ Bureaus and websites; www.do-it.org.uk

Training Advocates and Buddies

Advocates will be given an induction and information about how to signpost disabled people into sport and physical activity. Sport and leisure partners and service providers recruiting Buddies will have access to an online resource which will support them to recruit, induct, train and provide ongoing support for their Buddies.

Contact

If you would like any further information about the Advocacy & Activity Buddy Scheme (AABS) please contact:-

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