

Cerebral Palsy of Westchester's Adaptive Sports Program

Cerebral Palsy of Westchester (CPW) has launched a formal Recreation Program, an adaptive sports program, so children and youth, ages 10-21, can experience the joy of participating in recreational, competitive sports on a regular basis. The plan for the program is that it will run every other Saturday and during school breaks. This week, during Spring Break, is the first week for the program. The overall goal is to give children and youth with mobility issues, the opportunity to play sports they may not otherwise be able to play. Sports including soccer, bocce, basketball, and tennis will be taught and played along with various other recreation activities. Each day will follow a traditional sports coaching session and include stretching, discussion of game strategy or sports lesson, play time, and then wrap-up. All participants in the program will receive a t-shirt and a recreational portfolio including pictures and assessments.

CPW parents often express their desire to have their child attend a Saturday's sports program, like their siblings do for exercise and socialization, and the frustrations they encounter (e.g. lack of programs willing to accommodate, meanness of other children, impatience of other parents, frustration of their child to keep up with their peers). CPW's Adaptive Sports Program will provide a supportive environment that provides opportunities for physical fitness, camaraderie, and normalcy for participants.

Our goal is to have each person reach their maximum functioning potential (intellectually, physically and emotionally), and to live a life fully integrated into society. Having opportunities to increase physical fitness is essential to achieving optimal physical functioning and psychosocial well-being. Competitive sports, in particular, have been correlated to a reduction in anger, confusion, fatigue and tension, and have been known to have positive physical effects (decreased risks of high blood pressure, obesity, heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer), mental effects (e.g. boosts mood, prevents/relieves depression, improves self-esteem/self-confidence), and social effects (e.g. friendship formation, leadership opportunities, learning to lose/win gracefully, taking turns, follow rules, manage conflict). Research studies have proven that there is a consistently positive association between physical activity level and Quality of Life. Individuals who feel better, typically report being happier with their lives. The primary goal of the Adaptive Sports Program is to provide children with disabilities a recreational opportunity designed to improve participants' social, emotional and physical health through participation in regular sports.

To launch the program, CPW needed to purchase a variety of adaptive sporting equipment, including: adaptive basketball and tennis nets, adaptive tennis rackets, beeping balls, adaptive wheelchair soccer guards, bocce balls and ramp, and sports wheelchairs. This was made possible by various grants by the Reeve's Foundation, Finish Line, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Build a Bear Foundation, Carvel Foundation, Heisman Trophy Trust, and Autism Directory Services.





For over 65 years, Cerebral Palsy of Westchester has been the leading non-profit organization in Westchester County, providing essential services to children and adults with all developmental disabilities including autism, neurological impairments, intellectual disabilities, epilepsy and cerebral palsy. It has always been our purpose to help people realize their goals, build brighter futures, and lead more independent lives as members of their community.

For more information about Cerebral Palsy of Westchester's Adaptive Sports Program please contact:

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