

# Program Options for Accessible Playgrounds in Education and Pediatric Health Care Settings

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## Background

- Play offers important benefits to children, such as opportunities to interact with peers, advance social competencies, and develop physical skills<sup>1,2</sup>
- Children with disabilities (CWD) face significant challenges when it comes to accessing play, such as:
  - poor social supports,
  - Inaccessible playground infrastructure
  - attitudinal barriers<sup>3</sup>
- A recent shift toward building accessible playgrounds has occurred, but little scholarly attention has been given to developing programming to enhance the use of these playgrounds<sup>4</sup>
- Programs can be used to augment educational activities and clinical practices (e.g., physiotherapy)



## Purpose

1. To understand the accessible playground programming needs and desires of CWD, their parents/caregivers, and both education and healthcare professionals
2. To produce and share well-informed recommendations for developing playground programming options that will enhance play, educational, and clinical experiences on playgrounds, and ultimately improve quality of life for CWD and their families



# We are building more accessible playgrounds, but how can we utilize these playgrounds through programming?

## What is playground programming?

*Playground programming can be related to 3 areas:*  
*recreational or free play (e.g., play clubs)*  
*therapeutic play (e.g., wheelchair skills)*  
*educational play (e.g., IPE)*



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## Methods

We aim to recruit 24 participants:

- 6 CWD
- 6 of their parents/caregivers
- 6 healthcare professionals
- 6 educational professionals



- Participants will complete qualitative interviews focused on their playground programming experiences, needs, and desires.
- Participating CWD will complete a draw-and-write activity to produce visual and written narratives of their experiences to support interviews.

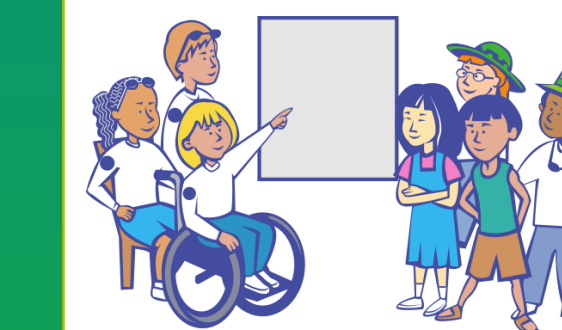


## Anticipated Results

- Knowledge of different parties' playground programming needs and desires
- Well-informed recommendations for playground programming options that can be applied to accessible playgrounds in education and pediatric health care contexts.

## Implications for Future Rehabilitation

- Identify potential novel play, educational, and rehabilitation programming options that leverage accessible playground infrastructure and enhance clinical practice.
- Potential development of novel playground programming options for play (e.g., play clubs), structural changes (e.g., new signage), and best practices for scheduling programs within clinical settings.



## References

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