FITNESS FOR EVERYONE
An advocacy guide for people with disabilities
KEY FACTS ABOUT FITNESS

1 in 2 individuals with disabilities get no aerobic physical activity.

Individuals with disabilities who get no aerobic physical activity are...

- **50%** more likely to report at least one chronic disease
- **3x** more likely to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes or cancer
- **82%** more likely to be physically active if their doctor recommends it

Trust us, your doctor recommends it!

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**WHY IS EXERCISE IMPORTANT?**

- Controls weight
- Combats diseases
- Improves mood and brain function
- Boosts energy
- Promotes better sleep
- Can be a fun way to socialize and make friends!
WHAT CAN I DO TO GET MORE FIT?

1. Find and list a few things you like to do.
2. Connect those things with physical activities.
3. Set small realistic goals.
4. Decide where you would like to do the activity.
5. Ask a friend or family member to be your workout buddy or to help you stay committed.

EXAMPLES OF THE STEPS IN ACTION

EXAMPLE 1
Ben likes birds. Ben connects his love of birds and the activity of taking a walk. Ben sets a goal to go out for a walk 3 times a week. Ben asks his girlfriend Sarah if she would like to set the same goal and start walking with him.

EXAMPLE 2
Sarah enjoys talking with her friends. Sarah connects talking with her friends to the activity of joining a group fitness class together. Sarah sets a goal to attend the group fitness class 3 times a week with a friend. Sarah asks 2 of her friends if they will set similar goals and go to a group fitness class with her. Sarah asks her mom to help her find an adaptive group fitness class in town that is wheelchair accessible.
**TIPS FOR FINDING & USING A FITNESS FACILITY**

**Ask your friends and support network for recommendations.** They are often the people who have the inside scoop on which fitness facilities do a great job offering adapted exercise options.

**ASK for HELP**

- Ask a staff member for a tour and orientation to the fitness equipment.

**Call a few gyms and community centers and interview them about service and cost.**

"Hello, do you have any fitness classes or support for a person with intellectual and developmental disabilities? Or do you have a trainer who is trained in adaptive fitness? Or do you offer scholarships or sliding scale fee membership plans?"

**THINGS TO REMEMBER**

- **✅ Starting something new is sometimes hard – stick with it!**
- **✅ People want to help, so ASK and ASK AGAIN.**
- **✅ As you continue to exercise, you will get stronger and it will get easier.**
- **✅ You can always find an exercise video on the internet that you can do at home.**
Complete the Consumer Satisfaction Survey at
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BCLMLHQ

For Technical Assistance information please contact:
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