

"Talk to me" study findings will help to deliver more appealing activities for disabled people

Contributed by EFDS
Friday, 31 October 2014

Disabled people are set to benefit from the English Federation of Disability Sport's latest report released today. The Talk to Me report provides guidelines for sport and fitness providers drawn up with active and inactive disabled people. The national charity hopes the information shared will mean disabled people are offered more appealing opportunities that they want to take part in.

Less than half the number of disabled people take part in sport or physical activity for 30 minutes once a week compared to non-disabled people[1]. However, the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) research has shown that 7 in 10 disabled people want to take part in more sport and physical activity[2]. Talk to Me adds to EFDS's growing research portfolio and builds on the key findings from the Motivate Me report (May 2014).

Barry Horne, EFDS's Chief Executive explains:

"Whilst many sport and physical activity providers already offer opportunities for disabled people to take part, the low participation level suggests that either disabled people are unaware of opportunities available to them or what they are offered is not appealing enough. This report allows us all to understand how we can make opportunities attractive so that many more disabled people can be active for life."

Talk to Me used a collaborative approach, working with providers and participants. The aim was to understand the needs, wants and desires of disabled people in sport and physical activity. EFDS was also able to focus on how to create activities and communications more appealing and attractive.

Ten key principles were identified. These principles, if followed, should help providers improve their offer to disabled people and make it more appealing. The report goes through each principle in detail, providing evidence of what disabled people are looking for and recommendations of how to meet expectations. They can be grouped within top three headings, which are:

- Drive awareness
- Engage the audience
- Offer support and reassurance

Barry Horne, EFDS's Chief Executives, continues:

"Talk to Me confirms findings we have seen in our ongoing research. We know that a great majority of disabled people are more likely to respond to opportunities to get active which tap into the things that matter to them most. These include: building connections, family and support systems and health. Simply having fun is what most of us seek out, and more often than not disabled people are looking for opportunities which are as likely to appeal to their non-disabled friends and family."

Lisa O'Keefe, Sport England's Director of Insight, said:

"Sport England's priority at the grassroots is to make sport a practical choice for many more disabled people. We support EFDS's insight work in order to further understand what disabled people want in terms of playing sport and taking part in physical activity, and how to make these offers more appealing."

EFDS plans to test how effectively organisations apply the evidence and follow these guidelines, and assess how successful they are in increasing disabled people's participation.

You can download the Talk to Me report through http://www.efds.co.uk/resources/research/3253_talk_to_me_-_word_version

For more information on EFDS, visit www.efds.co.uk