

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

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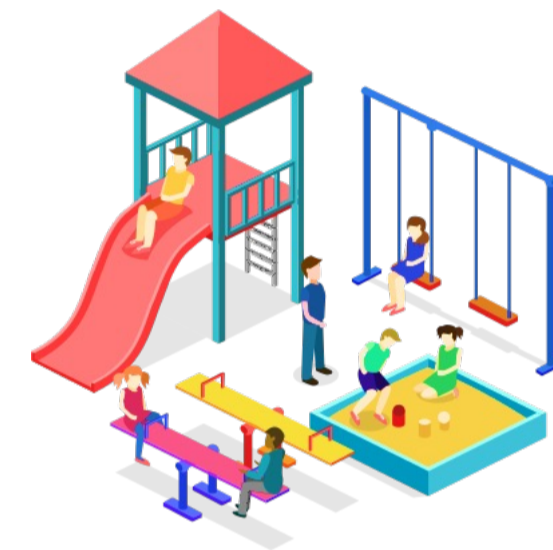
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Background

- Play offers important benefits to children, such as opportunities to interact with peers, advance social competencies, and develop physical skills^{1,2}

- Children with disabilities (CWD) face significant challenges when it comes to accessing play, such as:
 - poor social supports,
 - Inaccessible playground infrastructure
 - attitudinal barriers³



- 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 playgrounds⁴

- 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 rehabilitation 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.

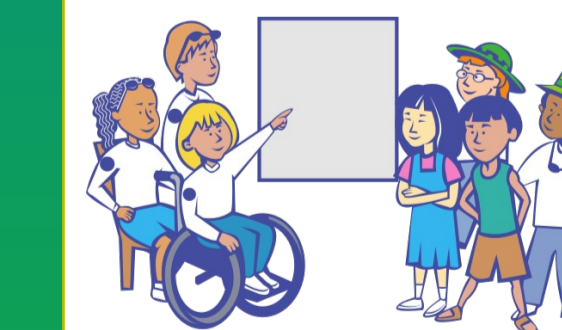


Anticipated Results

- 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.



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