A Guide For... 
Delivering and Where Necessary Adapting Activities for Older People

WHY physical activity?
- In more social interaction
- Support with the management of some age associated conditions
- Prevention of some age associated conditions
- Help to maintain independence
- Engage in a sense of achievement
- Uncover unexpected abilities
- Encourage movement
- A person’s health and mobility can differ greatly across the older person demographic, and within social groups. Therefore, adaptations may be needed to make activities more accessible, and the activities delivered should reflect this, but also provide enough of a challenge for people with good levels of mobility.
- It is also important to portray a message of every bit of activity you do counts, and it’s not necessarily about having to work really hard, but doing what is right for you.

Using physical aids: This can include a ramp for bowling, or using a chair for support when standing.

Adapting techniques: For example, bowling overarm if a wheelchair prevents underarm bowling, or doing the activity sitting rather than standing.

Or, adapting verbal and non-verbal communication techniques for hearing and visual impairments. Work hard to make sure that, wherever safe to, everyone can hear and watch without anyone, they might surprise you!

For more information look at this link to some delivery guides: www.activenorfolk.org/active-ageing

Recommendations

WHO is the guide for?
- Anyone delivering physical activities for older people in group settings, such as community groups or sheltered housing schemes.

Adaptations
- P&R - Social: Above all, make the sessions fun and supportive, with plenty of opportunity for socialising. This can help to reduce health implications that can almost become a secondary outcome for people participating.
- Atmosphere: For some people there may be some apprehension about participating, make an effort to greet and welcome everyone into the room. Ensure you are available to talk through the activities in a sensitive manner.
- Encourage/ensure throughout the session, and look to take away stereotypes attached to exercise, like having to get hot & sweaty.

Challenge and competition: 
- Promote friendly competition, for example, by using a scoreboard or competing against another site or group, but make sure you can make everyone feel a winner, regardless of ability.

Encouraging/reassuring throughout the session, and look to take away stereotypes attached to exercise, like having to get hot & sweaty.

Verbal communication:
- When words alone don’t work: You can also gesture and show. Demonstrate throwing the ball to the mat, or gesture while saying ‘throw the ball to me’.

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Environment
- Vent: To try familiar and trusted community hubs, such as community centres or Libraries.
- Use the same venue for a continuous group.
- Ensure venues have good access, to support people who may have mobility issues. For example, wheelchair accessible, high suitability facilities. For example, Toilets and a Kitchen.
- A suitable space: Try to avoid a 1st floor or area with minimal distractions and enough clear space for the activity, and for everyone attending to comfortably fit in the room.

Organisation:
- Provide refreshments (like a healthy snack).
- Provide suitable opportunities for people of all ages to see chairs and tables being used.
- Keep people involved whilst they are taking a break. Positional and chairs so people can spectate and still socialise.
- Risk assess the venue before every session. To identify trip hazards and avoid falls, for example.

Let’s break for a cuppa!

Verbal communication: Begin every session with a group welcome, and an introduction to the activity, movements, and use. player’s names. Delivery: instruction at a time and allow time for the player to understand. Clearly and respectfully repeat what you have said if needed.

When words alone don’t work: You can also gesture and show. Demonstrate throwing the ball to the mat, or gesture while saying ‘throw the ball to me’.

Encourage interaction: Promote fun and laughter within the group. By having fun and encouraging social interaction. For example, get players to keep up each other’s score.

Atmosphere: Feel free to have a break and a chat whenever you need!

How do you feel about today’s session?

Well done Sylvia! That’s your highest score ever!!

Good morning, how are you feeling today?

Wow, you did a great job today Chris, it’s your turn to bowl, aim for my cuppa!

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