

Student Assessment Guidelines

Purpose: To help you as the instructor gain a complete picture of the student's goals and abilities to help create a realistic lesson plan. The assessment must consider:

- The Cognitive, affective, and physical aspects of disability (See CAP sheet)
- The student's stance, gait, balance, strength, and mobility
- Medications the student is taking and any side effects

The first step is a **Visual Assessment**. This begins as the student walks in the door with general observations, and then more specific questions to the skier. Things to consider in visual assessment are:

- What assistive devices is the student using? The student's mobility and need for assistive devices will help you understand which adaptive ski equipment they may need
- Did the student need help opening the door? This will give you a clue to their grip strength and coordination, as well as their degree of independence
- If the student is using a wheelchair, what type is it? This can give you insight to the student's coordination and balance, as well as to their functional muscle groups
- Is the student outgoing or withdrawn? Are they excited or fearful about their lesson? This will help you to determine an appropriate teaching style for the student.
- Is the student dressed appropriately? Lack of appropriate attire probably indicates a student who has never skied before.

Next, you should perform a **Physical Assessment**. This allows you to gather specific information about the student's disability and physical condition. Some questions to get you started are:

- Does the student have any related or unrelated secondary disabilities such as vision or hearing loss?
- How long has the disability been present? People with a recent injury may be weak or unaccustomed to their current situation.
- Has the student undergone major surgery in the last year? This could require a different setup or teaching method.
- Is the student taking any medication and, if so, what are the side effects?

Skiing and Snowboarding Volunteer Guidelines and Responsibilities

As you gather more information, you may need to do some simple exercises to help you evaluate:

- **Functional Musculature:** Determine which muscle groups the student can or cannot use
- **Strength:** Evaluate the primary muscle groups needed for a specific discipline of adaptive skiing
- **Balance:** Have the student lean to one side and return to upright. Try again with their eyes closed
- **Coordination:** Have the student perform physical tasks, looking for fluidity and efficiency of motion
- **Flexibility and Range of Motion:** Students with disabilities often have restricted range of movement due to joint fusion, muscle rigidity, or muscle atrophy
- **Motor and Sensory Deficits:** Use questions and simple tests to determine what parts of the body the student can feel and control
- **Vision and Hearing:** Some students may forget to mention secondary visual or auditory impairments that are less obvious than the primary impairment. Vision should be tested inside and outside to assess the effects of bright light and shadow. If the student has a hearing impairment, find out how severe it is. Does the student wear a hearing aid or rely on sign language? Do they hear better out of one ear than the other?

In addition to these questions, also ask about the student's prior experience with skiing and other sports. By the time the assessment is complete, you should have lots of important insights into the student's needs, abilities, and goals for the lesson, helping you to tailor the equipment, teaching style, and lesson area to help the student be as successful as they can be!