Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project

Exploring the interests, aspirations and needs of people with a disability as well as the experiences of disability support providers and sporting clubs and businesses in the Whitehorse Community
The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project was undertaken in 2010, by Maureen D’Arcy MetroAccess Development Officer.

Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the contributions and commitment made by Kate Harding, a health promotion student, who volunteered her time to undertake elements of this project.

In addition Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the support of people with a disability, their families and carers, disability service organisations and sport and recreation associations and businesses that participated in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project.
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Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project

Executive Summary

Victoria celebrates a vibrant cultural history that is underpinned by strong grassroots community sporting activities. Participating in sport and physical activity is known to have many benefits to people’s health and wellbeing. Whilst a physically active lifestyle is beneficial to people with a disability, mental illness or chronic health condition (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006) research shows that that they are less likely to have a physically active lifestyles.

Research undertaken by Vic Health (2010) identified that generally people experience a range of barriers to participation including: competing priorities, time, and programming of competitive sport. For people with a disability the additional pressures of attitude, transport, support and finances have all been reported as barriers to community barriers (Australian Government, 2009).

Although current Federal State and Local Government policies speak of an inclusive society where all members feel valued and have the opportunity to participate in the life of the community. As highlighted in the National Disability Consultation Report Shut Out: the Experience of People with a Disability and their Families in Australia (2009) people with a disability continue to be excluded:

“Many people have low expectation of people with a disability, believing that they cannot learn or are not able to do anything useful. They are often denied opportunities to experience life, to explore their potential and achieve success, because it is assumed that their potential is limited. It is often stated that people with a disability are tolerated in the community but tolerance is not acceptance and genuine inclusion: (Shut Out, p11)

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project is a Whitehorse Council MetroAccess initiative that aims to explore the local experience and aspirations of people with a disability in relation to participation in sport and physical activity. In addition, the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project explore the perspectives of sporting organisations and disability service organisations in relation to their experiences as service providers.

Surveys and small group meetings were the research tools used to document peoples experiences. Three separate surveys were developed to elicit information directly from people with a disability, sporting organisations and disability service providers. In total 77 completed surveys were returned, 47 from people with a disability, 3 from disability service providers and 27 from locally based sporting organisations. An additional 122 people with a disability participated in eight small group meeting held within 5 disability service organisations. Small group meetings were held in recognition that not all people with a disability have the literacy skills and confidence necessary to complete an on line or hard copy survey.
The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project found that people with a disability participating in the research undertake a variety of sport and physical activities during the week, both competitive and passive. People travel to and out of the City of Whitehorse to participate in sport and have a preference for activities that occur in the afternoon, evening and across the weekend.

People with a disability are aware of more sports than they currently participate in. The defining feature of sport for people with a disability was its competitive nature whereas physical activity was passive, relaxation based and fun. In general people with a disability participating in the project would like to do more and or try different sport and physical activities. Basketball, swimming, walking, gym and bike riding were the most frequent activities people currently undertake. Basketball, tennis, football gym, netball, ten pin bowling and horse riding were the most frequently reported activities that people would like to do more of and or try.

People participating in this project were members of gyms, leisure centres, sporting clubs and organisations. However, according to the information provided by sporting organisations people with disabilities remain underrepresented in these organisations with approximately 2% of members and people attending being known to have a disability. Consistent with previous research the most reported barriers reported by participants related to transport, access to information and cost. People also reported using local facilities for walks and running in their local park and riding their bikes along established bike tracks.

The research also sought information from 3 disability services and 27 sporting organisations about their experiences in providing services to people with a disability. Disability service providers and sporting organisations expressed a willingness to discuss partnership opportunities to better promote current activities and develop future sport and physical activities. Staff knowledge, skills and availability were also acknowledged by sporting organisations and disability services as barriers to participation.

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project has identified a range of opportunities that could increase the participation rates of people with a disability in local sport and physical activity. Clustering the presenting opportunities into common themes we find that opportunities that relate to access to information, raising awareness of interests, needs and opportunities, service provision and development as well as the development of strategic planning and partnership opportunities.

Council will continue to be responsive to the needs of people with a disability and will continue to work with disability services and sporting organisations to ensure that people with a disability have opportunities to participate in community based sporting and physical activities.
Background

Australia and Victoria celebrate a vibrant sporting cultural history that is underpinned by strong grassroots community sporting activities. An active lifestyle has played a significant role in establishing our nation’s identity, culture and international sporting reputation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). Physical activity is known to have many benefits to people’s health and wellbeing. Research indicates that participation in physical activity improves individual health outcomes and economic outcomes as regular physical activity improves mental health, cognition, community participation and physical health, lessening the cost of health related services (Victorian Health Promotion Foundation 2010; Commonwealth of Australia, 2006; VicHealth2009). It is also understood that people who have particularly poor health include people from lower socio economic groups, Indigenous people; people from refugee backgrounds and people with disabilities (Vic Health 2008).

A physically active lifestyle is equally beneficial to people with a disability, mental illness or chronic health condition (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). People with a disability or long term health condition (54.6%) are less likely to participate in sport and physical activity than people who report no disability (70.2%), (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). Whilst there has been significant investment in promoting physical activity across the lifecycle, VicHealth (2010) research identified that barriers to participating in sport include competing priorities, time, and programming of competitive sports. For people with a disability the additional pressures of attitude, transport, support, and finances have all been reported as barriers to community participation (Australian Government, 2009).

The ABS report on Sport and Physical Recreation Participation among Persons with a Disability (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006) found that:

- Less than half the people aged 18 years and over who reported having a disability participated in sport or physical activity in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- People aged 18-24 years have the highest rate of participation in sport and physical activity.
- Participation rates declined progressively with increasing age.
- 57.3% of males who reported a disability or long term health condition participated in sport and physical activity in the previous 12 months compared to 52% of women.

The Federal Government’s social inclusion agenda sets a vision of a socially inclusive society as one in which all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our society. Underpinned by social justice principles this policy recognises that “unfortunately, too many Australians remain locked out of the benefits of work, education, community engagement and access to basic services” and goes on to state that “tackling disadvantage involves generating effective practical solutions at the level of governments, local communities, of service providers, employers and of families and individuals themselves.” (Rudd and Gillard, 2008)
The *National Disability Consultation Report Shut Out: the experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia* (2009) (Shut Out Report) determined that people with a disability continue to be excluded and ignored, one submission highlighted that:

“Many people have low expectations of people with a disability, believing that they cannot learn or are not able to do anything useful. They are often denied opportunities to experience life, to explore their potential and achieve success, because it is assumed that their potential is limited. It is often stated that people with a disability are tolerated in the community but tolerance is not acceptance and genuine inclusion.” (Shut Out Report, page 11)

In a 2004 report prepared for the World Health Organisation, Dr Claudine Sherrill President of the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity, acknowledged the work of the Australian Sports Commission and its philosophy that physical activity for people with disabilities should be 100% inclusive and that they are working towards this goal. Sherrill however went onto question whether 100% inclusion is achievable for all children and young people particularly where there is a significant activity limitation. This concern is reflected in submissions to the “Shut Out” Report that spoke of services, including sporting organisations continuing to offer activities in segregated settings or as a class for only people with a disability.

“"The gym offered a separate class for kids with disabilities. I asked one of the teachers whether it would be possible for my daughter to attend one of the other mainstream classes. She frowned and looked concerned, and said that was why they had created the separate class. I said she was perfectly capable of joining in with the other girls. She said ‘Well that’s OK for your daughter but if we let her in we will have to let everyone else in’. These are not elite gymnasts. They are little girls jumping around in leotards having fun on a Saturday morning” (Shut Out page 13)

The Victorian Government through the *Victorian State Disability Plan 2002 -2012 and A Fairer Victoria - Real Support Real Gains (2010)* have sought to implement the government’s vision for the future:

“Victoria will be a state where there are caring, safe, and accessible communities in which opportunities are shared fairly, and where all Victorians have access to a range of services that support their quality of life” (Department of Human Services, 2008).

The Community Building Program and the Access for All Abilities Program developed as initiatives of the Victorian State Disability Plan. Both these initiatives are unique to Victoria and operate across the state.

The Community Building Program incorporates RuralAccess, MetroAccess and deafAccess initiatives and has five major objectives:

1. Mobilise and support people with a disability to optimise participation in the life of their local community
2. To build and strengthen the community’s capacity to provide support to people with a disability and their families
3. To facilitate integrated local community planning and coordination which engages and involves people with a disability and their families, disability service providers and community organisations.
4. To work with existing disability service providers to enhance their capacity to provide relevant and appropriate supports in the community.
5. To improve access to information about relevant services and community activities available to people with a disability in their communities.

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project is a Whitehorse City Council MetroAccess initiative that aims to explore the local experience and aspirations of people with a disability in relation to participation in sport and physical activity. In addition the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project explores the perspectives of sporting organisations and disability service organisations in relation to their experiences as service providers.

The Access for All Abilities Program (AAA) is coordinated by Sport and Recreation Victoria and has operated in Victoria for over 10 years with the expressed aim of supporting and developing inclusive sport and recreation opportunities for people with a disability throughout Victoria (http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/sport/Access-For-All-Abilities). AAA providers work at a community level to develop inclusive sport and recreation opportunities for people of all abilities, promoting and encouraging a range of sport and recreation opportunities.

For people with a disability AAA offers:
- Ideas and contacts to get people active and involved,
- Links to organised activities in the local area,
- Advice on latest sport and recreation activities in the local area,
- Pathways to sport and recreation opportunities right up to elite levels,
- Opportunities to be trained and undertake roles to coach umpire and volunteer.

For local clubs AAA offers:
- Assistance in attracting and retaining people with a disability
- Insight into the sport and recreation interests of people with a disability in the local area
- Grant information and support with applications
- Disability awareness training for coaches, officials and volunteers
- Advice on how to make clubs more accessible and inclusive
- Promotion of inclusive programs and opportunities.

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project will provide place based research that can inform the initiatives of the local AAA provider.
Legislative and Policy Context
A complex series of legislation, policy and strategic planning relates to the participation of people with a disability in sport and physical activity supporting the building of inclusive and welcoming communities.

As a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Australia and the Optional Protocol, Australia is committed to upholding the principles of the Convention, including autonomy of choice, full participation and inclusion, and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.


**Disability Discrimination Act (1992)**

The objectives of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) are:

- a) To eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in the areas of:
  - i. Work, accommodation, education, access to premises, clubs and sport and;
  - ii. The provision of goods, facilities, services and land and
  - iii. Existing laws; and
  - iv. The administration of Commonwealth laws and programs and

- b) To ensure, as far as practicable, that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community; and

- c) To promote the recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) defines indirect and direct discrimination and includes particular reference to reasonable adjustment. Direct discrimination occurs where a person discriminates on the basis of disability, through actions that would see the person treated or proposed to be treated less favourably than a person without a disability would be treated in the same circumstances. Within this Act direct discrimination also occurs where no reasonable adjustment is made for the person and that because of the lack of reasonable adjustment the person is treated less favourably than a person without a disability.

The *Victorian State Disability Plan 2002 -2012* affirms the rights people with a disability have to live and participate in the life of the community on an equal footing with other Victorian citizens.
“By 2012, Victoria will be a stronger and more inclusive community – a place where diversity is embraced and celebrated and where everyone has the same opportunities to participate in the life of the community, and the same responsibilities towards society as all other citizens of Victoria” (State Government of Victoria, 2002).

To realise this vision the Victorian Government identified the following three goals:

1. Pursuing individual lifestyles – ensuring people with a disability have maximum control over their own lives. The reorientation of disability services continues to be a major strategy of this goal. Through the reorientation of disability services it is envisaged that services will be more responsive and focused on individual needs and choices and, the needs of families and carers.
2. Building inclusive communities – Strengthening communities so that people with a disability have the same opportunities as all other citizens of Victoria to participate in the life of the community- socially, economically, culturally, politically and spiritually.
3. Leading the way – The government will lead by example, improving the accessibility and responsiveness of public services and making them more inclusive of people with a disability

Increasing opportunities to participate in the life of the community was a key aim of the Building Inclusive Communities strategy. Within this strategy the importance of recreation and leisure opportunities and the benefits and promotion of physical activities were recognised.

A Fairer Victoria Real Support – Real Gains (2010) is the Victorian State Governments social policy document to reduce disadvantage and ensure that more Victorians have the opportunity, capability and support to lead active, fulfilling lives. A Fairer Victoria articulates that “it is unacceptable for any Victorian to be excluded from the opportunities this state offers – opportunities in economic, social and civic life that the majority of us take for granted.” A Fairer Victoria continues to focus on the following 5 key objectives:

- Improving access to universal services
- Reducing barriers to opportunity
- Supporting disadvantaged groups
- Supporting high need places
- Making it easier to work with government

VicHealth Strategy and Business Plan 2009 – 2013 seeks to lead the development and implementation of ways to promote health through partnering advocacy and capacity building across a range of priority areas that include increasing physical activity and increasing social and economic participation. A total of six key result areas have been identified however those with the most direct relationship to this project are:

- Health inequalities
Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project

- Improve the physical and mental health of those experiencing social, economic, or geographic disadvantage

**Participation**
- Increase participation in physical activities
- Increase opportunities for social connection
- Build knowledge to increase access to economic resources

**Whitehorse City Council**
The following section provides an overview of how the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project relates to current Whitehorse City Council strategic plans.

**Whitehorse City Council - Council Plan 2009-2013**
The City of Whitehorse aspires to be an inclusive, vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community and through the *Council Plan 2009 -2013* sets out the following strategic objectives that Council will pursue over a period of four years:

- Serve and strengthen our diverse community to be inclusive, vibrant and engaged.
- Promote, protect, enhance and respect the quality of our natural and built environments
- Deliver organisational excellence, visionary leadership and strong governance through dedicated people, to ensure the best possible contribution to our community; and
- Support a prosperous, diverse and healthy local economy that contributes to the wellbeing of the community.

**Whitehorse Community Wellbeing Plan 2009 -2013**
All Councils are required through state government legislation to develop a Municipal Public Health Plan every four years. Whitehorse City Council refers to this plan as the *Whitehorse Community Wellbeing Plan*. This plan sets out how Council and the community will work together to support and enhance community wellbeing in relation to the built, social, economic and social environments. The consultations conducted in the development of the Community Wellbeing Plan identified the following 6 Pillars or themes:

- Family and friends
- Parks, Open Space and Tracks
- Physical Health
- Water and Energy
- Community Safety and
- Food and Nutrition

The most relevant Pillars to the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project are:

- Family and friends
  - Relationships: Support, strengthen and acknowledge diverse family and friendship relationships
Living locally: create neighbourhoods that people feel a part of; instil a sense of community

Citizen engagement: Encourage participation and deepen our communities’ sense of shared responsibility

- Parks open space and tracks
  - Parks and community: Parks for everybody – encourage community use and community responsibility

- Physical health
  - Healthy, connected communities: Serve and strengthen our diverse community to be inclusive, vibrant and engaged.
  - Equity and accessibility: Ensure everybody is able to access services and facilities and participate in community life.
  - Balanced lives: make sure our community lives, works and plays.

Thirty two percent of respondents to the Community Wellbeing Survey nominated physical health in their top five health and wellbeing factors. It was rated highest for both young people and people aged 50+. Many people made the connection between being physically active and being physically healthy.

_Whitehorse Disability Policy and Action Plan 2008-2011_

Council’s Disability Policy and Action Plan 2008-2011 was developed with the purpose of providing a clear direction to Council for increasing the participation of people with a disability in all aspects of community life. The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project relates to the following objectives and strategies of Council’s Disability Policy and Action Plan 2008-2011:

- **Strengthening the Community**
  - Promote and facilitate active participation by people with disabilities in community planning and activities
    - Undertake regular consultation with people with disabilities, their carers, families and service providers
  - Advocate for the rights, needs and concerns of people with disabilities, their families and carers
    - Support disability and community agencies to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities

- **Enhancing Information and Communication**
  - Encourage mainstream services and programs to promote their initiatives to people with disabilities, their families and carers
    - Foster partnerships between disability services and mainstream services
    - Explore and develop initiatives to increase participation of people with disabilities in mainstream services and programs

- **Providing responsive and accessible services**
  - Ensure that Council services are coordinated and delivered in an equitable and accessible way.
    - Increase engagement of young people with disabilities in community activities
Ensure opportunities for participation of people with a disability in arts, sport and recreation

- Advocate and support initiatives at a local and regional level for the inclusion of people with disabilities in arts, sport and recreation programs
- Increased networking with disability groups to seek feedback and assist with engagement, particularly around inclusion in arts, sporting and recreational opportunities.

**Whitehorse Sport and Recreation Strategy 2004-2009**

Council facilitates the provision of and directly provides a broad range of recreational programs, services and fitness activities for all sectors of the community.

Councils Sport and Recreation Strategy is currently under review, however the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project relates to recommendations in response to Issue 4 of the *Whitehorse Sport and Recreation Strategy 2004-2009*.

**Issue 4:** Insufficient sport and recreation opportunities for specific population sectors in Whitehorse:

- Supporting initiatives by Regional Agencies (such as ERLS) for the development and implementation of programs for people with a disability, particularly where access might be required to Council owned/managed buildings or outdoor areas to conduct such programs
- Preparing a new policy to encourage and support sports and recreation clubs to provide inclusive recreation participation opportunities
- Facilitating improved linkages between disabilities service providers and leisure facilities managers and sports club representatives
- Facilitating training and development sessions for facility managers and club administrators in the areas of dealing with people with a disability.
- Considering access and inclusion of people of all abilities across all areas of the Recreation Strategy Plan.

Despite the aims and intentions of legislation, policy and strategic planning people with a disability continue to experience multiple barriers to participating in the life of the community as equal members with the same rights and responsibilities as other Victorian citizens.

“If I lived in a society where being in a wheelchair was no more remarkable than wearing glasses, and if the community was completely accepting and accessible, my disability would be an inconvenience and not much more than that. It is society which handicaps me, far more seriously and completely than the fact that I have Spina Bifida” (Shut Out Report, 2000 p12)
**Aims**

Legislative and policy directions clearly articulate the rights of people with a disability to participate in all aspects of community life including sport and physical activity. Research undertaken has focused on national or statewide participation rates, particular disability or age cohort groups, and the benefits of sport in relation to health and wellbeing outcomes. Whilst legislation, policy and research provide parameters, ideals and a wealth of information they do not provide a local picture of the experiences of people with a disability, sport and physical activity organisations or disability service providers.

The aim of the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability project was to explore the experiences of local people with a disability regarding sport and recreation opportunities. Within this project we also sought to gain an understanding of the experiences of organisations providing sport and recreation to people with a disability and disability service providers who connect people with a disability to local opportunities.

**What we did?**

*Understanding the context:*

A literature review was undertaken at the outset of the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability to develop an understanding of current legislative and policy directions and research findings. This section aims to provide the reader with an insight into the range of legislation and policy document that influence how people with a disability connect and participate in sport and physical activity.

What we found was a plethora of policy and research documents that articulate the benefits of physical activity or the impact of sedentary lifestyles on health. Statistical reports of participation levels in sport and physical activity by people with a disability could be analysed by sex and age but not local government areas.

Documents presented in this section of the report are listed in the reference section of this report to enable further investigation by the reader.

*Legislation, Policy and Strategic Directions*

An overview of the key federal and state legislative policy and strategic planning documents that were reviewed in relation to the aims of the current project are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Current Federal and State Legislation and Policy Directions**

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Relevant sections/Summary</th>
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<td>Legislation</td>
<td>United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Australia is a signatory to the Convention and the Optional Protocol. This commits Australia to upholding the principles of the Convention including autonomy of choice, full participation and inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabilities</td>
<td>and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.</td>
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<td><strong>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)</strong></td>
<td>The aim of the DDA is to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of disability in a range of life areas including access to premises, clubs, sports and the provision of goods, facilities and services. This legislation also requires that reasonable adjustments be made so that the person is not treated less favourably than a person without a disability would be treated in the same circumstances.</td>
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<td><strong>Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</strong></td>
<td>This Act asserts the equality of all persons as a statement of values for the Victorian community, as well as providing legal and political protection for these rights.</td>
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<td><strong>Victorian Disability Act 2006</strong></td>
<td>Underpinned by Human Rights principles this Act provides a legislative framework for organisations that provide services and support to people with a disability. The Act articulates that people with a disability to the extent they are able, should take lead roles in choice and decision making that impacts on their life. The Act also recognises the role of parents and carers in the lives of people with a disability.</td>
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<td><strong>Policy Strategies and Guidelines</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social Inclusion Agenda</strong></td>
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<td>The Australian Government’s vision of a socially inclusive society where all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our society. Achieving this vision means that all Australians will have the resources, opportunities and capability to:</td>
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<td>• Learn, by participating in education and training</td>
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<td>• Work, by participating in employment or voluntary work, including family and carer responsibilities</td>
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<td>• Engage, by connecting with people, using local services and participating in local civic, cultural and recreational activities and</td>
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<td>• Have a voice, in influencing decisions that affect them.</td>
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<td>When people are lacking in certain resources, opportunities and/or capabilities so that they are unable to participate in learning, working or engaging activities and are unable to influence the decisions affecting them, they can experience social exclusion.</td>
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<td>Australian Government Physical Activity Guidelines</td>
<td>Physical activity guidelines for all ages include a minimum of 30 minutes of activity each day, in addition to more vigorous activity when possible. For older adults some form of activity should be attempted regardless of ‘health problems or abilities’.</td>
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<td>Victorian State Disability Plan 2002-2012</td>
<td>This plan sets out the Victorian Government’s visions for a future where Victoria will be a stronger and more inclusive community – a place where diversity is embraced and celebrated and where everyone has the same opportunities to participate in the life of the community and the same responsibilities towards society as all other citizens of Victoria. This plan sets the following goals 1. Pursuing Individual Lifestyles – this enables people with a disability to pursue their own individual lifestyles. 2. Building Inclusive Communities People with a disability will have the same opportunities as all other citizens to participate in the life of the community, socially, economically, culturally, spiritually and politically. 3. Leading the Way- the government will lead by example by making public services more accessible, responsive and inclusive of people with a disability.</td>
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<td>A Fairer Victoria 2010: Real Support – Real Gains</td>
<td>This plan details the Victorian Governments long term commitment to reduce disadvantage and ensure more Victorians have the opportunity, capability and support to lead active, fulfilling lives. Objectives of the plan are: • Increasing access to universal service • Reducing barriers to opportunity • Support for disadvantaged groups • Supporting high needs places • Making it easier to work with government</td>
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<td>Support Your Way: a self-directed approach for Victorians with a disability (DHS, 2008b)</td>
<td>Support Your Way is a policy framework that provides a shared understanding of self directed approaches for people with a disability. Self-directed approaches enable principles such as choice, decision making, inclusion and accessibility to be implemented in a manner that enables people with a disability to achieve their full potential in all areas of their lives.</td>
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<td>Making Life Good in the Community: as good as it gets? (DHS, 2008)</td>
<td>The report considers the issues that presented in a two year social action research project that focused on a group of men transitioning as part of the Kew redevelopment to a shared supported residence. The aim of the research was to explore and expand the men’s social networks and in the process explore the difficulties experienced by the men in achieving this</td>
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<td><strong>goal.</strong> The research discussed the impact of attitudes expressed and displayed by staff, the impacts and beliefs about community participation when people have a severe disability. This report also considered the research finding in relation to achieving the goals of Victorian State Plan.</td>
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<td><strong>‘Go for your life’ Victoria – leading the way to a healthy and active community: Strategic Plan 2006-2010</strong></td>
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| This strategic plan sets out a framework to continue to build healthy and active communities through objectives such as:
  - Healthy Eating
  - Physical Activity
    - Increase physical activity levels
    - Reduce sedentary behaviour
    - Increase active transport
This strategy also recognises that structural changes to support healthy eating and physical activity are also required. The report identifies the following objectives
  - Improve healthy food access and supply for all groups in the community
  - Develop the built and natural environments to support physical activity
  - Address the underlying health inequality impacts on health eating and physical activity |
| **Sport and Recreation 2005-2010: a five year strategic plan for Sport and Recreation Victoria** |
| This Strategic Plan articulates the actions that will be undertaken by Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) in line with Growing Victoria Together and A Fairer Victoria. This document sets out SRV’s course for supporting all Victorians to enjoy the benefits of sport and recreation as an active participant, a spectator or supporter.

Strategic Direction 3.1: Discusses the need for mechanisms that make it easier for diverse community groups to work together. |
| **VicHealth Strategy and Business Plan 2009-2013- Promoting Health and Preventing Illness** |
| This strategy and business plan articulates the complexity of health when considered in relation to other life areas such as employment, education and physical activity. VicHealth identify the following priorities:
  - Reducing smoking
  - Improving nutrition
  - Reducing harm from alcohol
  - Increasing physical activity
  - Increasing social and economic participation
  - Reducing harm from UV exposure.

Objective 2.1: Details research needed to promote increased physical activity participation for groups including people with a disability, further stating that a collaborative approach with departments such as Vic Sport and Sport and Recreation Victoria is required. |
Research
The literature review explored both government funded and academic research regarding the experience, benefits and outcomes for people with a disability in relation to participation in sport and physical activity.

The articles presented in Table 2 highlight government funded research whilst research presented in Table 3 is a sample of the academic research capturing the benefits of physical activity for people with a disability that were considered in the development of this report.

Table 2: Government Research and Consultation Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Sport: emerging challenges, new directions</td>
<td>This report identifies the need to continue to build upon Australia’s sporting reputation at international, national and local levels of sport to ensure that maximum benefit to all members of the community. The report confirms that more work is needed to increase the sport and physical activity participation rates of people with a disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Sport: the pathway to success</td>
<td>The Pathway to Success Report highlights a new direction in Australian sport that aims to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increase the numbers of Australians participating in sport,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strengthen sporting pathways to link grassroots and high performance sport,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify actions that need to be taken to increase the sport and physical activity participation of community groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Section 2.2: Recognises the potential for sport to extend social inclusion to people vulnerable to social disconnection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Section 2.3: Commits to community partnerships to allow people with a disability to participate in grassroots sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shut Out: the experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia – National Disability Strategy Consultation Report</td>
<td>The Shut Out report was developed through a broad range of consultation processes. This report provides key insights into the barriers, experiences and aspirations of people with a disability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Research on the benefits of physical activity for people with a disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The Impact of regular physical activity on fatigue, depression and quality of life in persons with multiple</td>
<td>This Queensland based research compared scores for fatigue and quality of life amongst 52 people with MS who participated in physical activity against the scores for people with who reported no physical exercise. The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citation</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sclerosis.” (Stroud &amp; Minahan, 2009)</td>
<td>Research concluded that scores for depression, fatigue and quality of life improved for the exercising group compared to the control group, reinforcing the importance of exercise in managing debilitating conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Physical activity can reduce secondary conditions in youths with limb differences.” (Hiss, 2005)</td>
<td>This paper discusses the ‘vicious cycle’ faced by amputees in accessing physical activity, stating that regular physical activity helps control secondary conditions (including obesity) but can increase the tiredness people experience due to the energy needed to participate in physical activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Documenting disparities in obesity and disability.” (Rimmer, Wang, Yamaki &amp; Davis, 2010)</td>
<td>The paper presents a discussion of current research in relation to the impact of obesity and limited physical activity on the lives of children and adolescents with a disability. Children and adolescents with physical and cognitive disabilities have a higher incidence of obesity than their non-disabled peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Promoting the participation of children with disabilities in sports, recreation and physical activities.” (Murphy, Carbone and the Council on Children with Disabilities, 2008)</td>
<td>Discusses the need for children with disabilities to have access to physical activity to maintain and develop ability and prevent secondary complications such as obesity, stating the need for access to participation to be ensured through local, state and federal laws and initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Obesity and secondary conditions in adolescents with disabilities: addressing the needs of an underserved population.” (Rimmer, Rowland &amp; Yamaki, 2007)</td>
<td>States that young people with disabilities are at more risk of obesity and other complicating factors (including social isolation) which impose personal and economic hardship on the person and their family. Discusses issues such as the built environment and attitudinal factors that prevent full access to physical activity for people with a disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Changes in coronary heart disease risk profile of adults with intellectual disabilities following a physical activity intervention.” (Moss, 2009)</td>
<td>This research assessed the risk of coronary heart disease amongst 100 participants with an intellectual disability. The research found that inactivity poses a major risk factor for coronary heart disease related to obesity for people with an intellectual disability living in a community setting and that physical activity significantly reduced the risk faced by this group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Correlation between physical activity and self-rated health status of non-elderly adults with disabilities.” (Bodde, Seo &amp; Frey, 2009)</td>
<td>Utilising self-report this research found that people with a disability who participate in physical activity are more likely to report better health than people with a disability who do not participate in physical activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Young people with disability in physical education/physical activity/sport in and out of schools: technical report for the World Health Organisation.” (Sherrill, 2004)</td>
<td>Presents the view that adapted physical activity for people with disabilities delivers health while upholding human rights; stating that the benefits of physical activity for young people with disabilities are the same as for those without. A discussion of constraints and determinants for physical activity inclusion for people with disabilities follows.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consultation with key stakeholders

To explore a range of perspectives and experiences regarding the accessibility and availability of sport and physical activities the following organisations participated in consultation interviews throughout January and February 2010:

- MetroAccess Officers at Manningham City Council and City of Monash
- DeafSports Australia
- Access Unlimited
- Eastern Region Leisure Service (ERLS) Access All Abilities Program Worker for Whitehorse
- Yarra Ranges Access All Abilities Officer
- Special Olympics Victoria
- Reclink
- Interact Australia
- NADRA
- Wheelchair Sports Victoria
- Scope

These discussions highlighted that people with a disability have similar sporting interests as other community members however barriers such as access to transport, cost of activities, activity times correlating with support worker or carer availability limit opportunities. Other recurrent issues in these discussions included:

- Connection with sporting organisations appears to be in response to individual interests rather than strategic planning and or partnerships.
- A lack of information regarding what is available in the community in relation to sport and physical activity.
- Further it was thought that sporting clubs, organisations and businesses were willing to include people with a disability however they were likely to require support and advice to increase the accessibility of their services and activities.

The aims of the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project were discussed during interviews with knowledge of past research and potential contacts shared with the interviewer. Generally it was felt that place based research could inform the development and delivery of local opportunities and partnerships based on the expressed interests and aspirations of people with a disability.

Survey Development

This Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project collected information through surveys and small group discussions. Survey methodology was chosen for ease of distribution and its ability to collect both qualitative and quantitative information. To enable people with a disability accessing day services the opportunity to participate in this research each service operating within the City of Whitehorse was contacted via email or telephone and offered a small group meeting as part of the data collection process for the project.

The literature review conducted as part of the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project explored previous and or current sport and physical activity surveys and reports that collated the experiences of people with a disability. The Reports and Surveys listed in Table 4 were reviewed to both inform the broad
development and implementation of the project as well as inform the development of the surveys.

**Table 4: Reports and Surveys**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Relevant Section/Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health of Australians with disability: health status and risk factors (AIHW, 2010)</td>
<td>Reports severe disparity in reported health status of people with disabilities compared to people without disability, across a spectrum of conditions and risk factors. Levels of obesity and amount of physical activity are considered as risk factors complicating existing disabilities. 43% of people experiencing a severe activity limitation reported doing little to no physical activity, compared to 31% of the total population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the sporting needs of people with disability: Australian Sports Commission research project in collaboration with the University of Technology, Sydney (Australian Sports Commission, 2010b)</td>
<td>Found that physical activity is not a high priority with disability support organisations and that, for those that do prioritise sport; other projects often take priority according to a hierarchy of needs. Previous research updates also found that a majority of physical activity opportunities for people with a disability were organised by their disability service provider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports CONNECT Disability Sector Education Resource Project: consultation phase report (Australian Sports Commission, 2010)</td>
<td>Survey of organisations and agencies providing physical activity services to people with a disability, as well as disability service providers. Emerging themes considered the social and health benefits of physical activity for people with a disability, barriers in sports culture, the interpretation of the meaning of sport and the role of sport in the lives of non-elite athletes as well as attitudes of carers, family and staff at organisation. Practical barriers such as transport and cost of activities also emerged as common threads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding barriers to sport participation: final report – insights for key VicHealth target segments (VicHealth, 2010)</td>
<td>Provides a case-study approach to barriers experienced by people with a disability to participation in physical activity, concluding that there can be no umbrella solution. People with physical and intellectual disabilities experienced very different barriers to activity. Harnessing the social aspect of activities and presenting a less competitive or structured (rule-based) version of activities is promoted to provide an entry point into existing sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyms are for everyone (Scope, 2010)</td>
<td>Provides information about the benefits and barriers to physical activity for people with a disability before detailing cases in which programs at health clubs were tailored to the needs of people with disabilities to allow access at the individual’s level of ability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The surveys developed as part of the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project were designed to strike a mid-point between breadth and depth of information elicited and user-friendliness of format and length that was depicted in the reviewed works. Shorter surveys reviewed included those by Eastern Recreation and Leisure Services (ERLS) and the Yarra Ranges Access All Abilities which had approximately 14 questions including those concerning client satisfaction with the organisation. The longest and most comprehensive survey consulted was the combined University of Technology Sydney and Australian Sports Commission with more than 65 questions.

Three surveys were developed as part of the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project. Survey 1 sought to collect information directly from people with a disability, Survey 2 sought to collect information from sporting clubs or organisations whilst Survey 3 sought to collect information from disability service providers. A copy of each survey is presented in Appendix 1 of this report.

The survey designed for people with a disability had 28 topic-focused qualitative and quantitative questions that focused on demographic information, current experiences and future ambitions. The language used in the survey was intentionally concrete that is it sought to ask direct questions that were free from jargon to ensure readability by people with a disability. Burke & Beyond and Special Olympics Victoria, Whitehorse Disability Advisory Committee and Whitehorse City Council Officers provide feedback and advice on the survey draft.

The survey specifically developed for sporting organisations had 27 qualitative and quantitative questions focusing on the demographics of the organisation; service provision; experience working with people with a disability and willingness to partner with other organisations to build upon the accessibility of the organisation.

The Disability Service Provider survey was developed in recognition of the significant role service providers have in connecting people with a disability to the community. This survey contained 27 qualitative and quantitative questions that focused on the service demographics, perceptions of interests and experiences of people with a disability, experiences with sporting organisations clubs and services as well as willingness to partner with other organisations to build upon the opportunities available to people with a disability.

For ease of reporting a disability service provider was seen to be an organisation that received state or federal funding to provide support to people with a disability.

The term sporting organisations in this report encompasses sporting clubs, groups, leisure centres, businesses and organisations as well as incorporating physical activity providers.

The term sport and physical activity was used in all survey forms. These terms were adopted to elicit information about movement-based activities rather than sedentary pursuits implied by a term such as ‘recreation’. It was felt that using only the term ‘sport’, as used by the Australian Sports Federation and Australian Sports
Commission would limit the ability of the survey to elicit information about less formally organised and non-competitive movement activities such as walking or dancing. It was noted that Sport and Recreation Victoria uses ‘sport and physical recreation’ while VicHealth uses ‘sport and active recreation’; the UTS/ASC, ERLS and Yarra Ranges AAA surveys above use ‘sport and active recreation.’ In addition to denoting structured and unstructured movement and excluding crafts or other sedentary activities, the term ‘sport and physical activity’ was chosen because of its high likelihood of being understood by people surveyed.

**Distribution**

All surveys were available through the Whitehorse City Council webpage throughout August 2010 and forwarded through Council network contacts. Surveys were advertised in local print media and highlighted on community radio. Hardcopy surveys were available through Whitehorse City Council Customer Service and were mailed out on request. Surveys were available in larger print on request. Hardcopy surveys were also distributed through professional networks between August and November 2010.

It was recognised that many local sporting clubs are often hard to reach due to operation hours, volunteer committees and changing contact details. There was also a low survey response rate from disability service organisations. To provide a further opportunity to participate in the project follow up telephone and email contact was initiated during November/December 2010 with both sporting organisations and disability service providers.

**Small Group Meetings**

For some people with a disability completing a survey can be difficult due to a range of issues including literacy, computer skills and confidence. To ensure that people with a disability were able to participate in the project the concept of small group meetings were promoted on the Disability Service Provider Survey and via direct contact with disability service providers. Conversations provide a rich source of qualitative information about people’s experiences.

Eight small group meetings were held across 5 organisations. Small group meetings ranged from 8 – 20 participants with an average of 15 participants. Each meeting was facilitated by the Whitehorse City Council MetroAccess Development Officer.

Disability Day Service staff members were present to assist with communication and to aid recall of participants through questions such as: "Where do you go with your brother on a Wednesday afternoon? Or “What activity do you do on Monday mornings?” Whilst this relied on the staff member’s knowledge of participants and had the potential to introduce biases into the discussion it was felt that this assistance broadened the range of responses.

Whilst specific demographic information was not collected people participating in the small group meetings were observed to be aged between 18 and 70 years, with more women than men participating. People participating in the small group
meetings had a range of physical, neurological and intellectual disabilities although, some people had dual or multiple disabilities.

Discussion within the small group meetings focused on core elements of the survey asking people:

- What is sport? What is physical activity?
- What sport and or physical activity do you do now?
- Why do you or should you do sport and physical activity?
- What makes sport and physical activity hard or difficult?
- What sport and physical activity would you like to do or try?

Responses provided during small group meetings are presented with the qualitative information gained from surveys in the findings sections of this report.

**What we found**

**Response rate**

It is difficult to estimate an exact survey response rate as it not possible to estimate or know how many people may have seen the survey and decided not to participate in the project, which introduces volunteer bias into the results. Volunteer bias is when the people who choose to complete the survey may be more able or interested in the subject than those choosing not to complete the survey, leaving many people’s views unrepresented.

More than half (53%) of the people with a disability responding to the survey required assistance from family members, carers or paid support staff to complete the document. The survey form asked that a box be ticked a person was completing the form on behalf of a person with a disability. Some people completing the form indicated that they were a scribe only and the ideas and answers were those of the person with a disability. There may be an unintended bias in the results as the responses may be influenced by the knowledge, interests and opinions of the person assisting to complete the form.

The broad range of methods used to distribute the surveys such as community listing, industry and Council networks and internet mailing lists are all susceptible to inaccuracies such as outdated contact information or staff changes. This may have impacted on the response rate.

Whilst the previous comments provide some limitations or cautions in relation to survey responses it is felt that the survey construction and distribution method provided the strongest strategy to ensure broad community awareness of the survey and resulted in higher response rates than would have been returned using a single point of distribution or opportunity for involvement.

In total there were 77 responses to the surveys: 47 from people with a disability, 3 from Disability Service Providers and 27 from sporting organisations, businesses and
clubs. In addition 122 people with a disability participated in the small group discussions.

The results from each target group will be presented prior to discussing the impacts and opportunities that arise through comparison of findings. It should be noted that not all survey questions were answered by all respondents. Percentages presented in the findings section reflect the proportion of responses received to that specific question.

Findings: People with a Disability Survey and Small Group Discussions

Gender and Age
Of the 47 responses 46 people identified themselves as male or female. The survey was completed by more men (54%) than women (46%). The highest 25% survey return came from people who identified themselves as in the 50+ age group. People with a disability aged less than 18 years were returned the fewer (4%) surveys than other age groups. Diagram 1 demonstrates a more even response rate across the remaining age groups.

Diagram 1: Age Group of Respondents

Previous research found that people aged between 18-24 years had the highest rate of sport participation and that sport participation decreased with age and severity of disability (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). In grouping all people with a disability under the age of 18 in the one category may have given the unintended impression that the surveys related to adults.

Disability and Support
As displayed in Diagram 2, more people responding to the survey identified themselves as having an intellectual disability (67%) or physical disability (27%) as their primary disability than other disability types.
The survey asked people to indicate whether they need support to undertake sport and physical activities. As depicted in Diagram 3, 23% of respondents indicated they needed no support to do the things they wanted to do; 39% said they needed help sometimes; 13% of respondents said they required assistance when they were unfamiliar or not confident with that they were doing and; 26% said they needed support all the time. Cost of support may be an issue however this was not explored in the current survey.

**Diagram 3: Support Needs**

![Diagram 3: Support Needs](image)

**Opportunity**

Raise awareness amongst sporting organisations of the support needs of people with a disability.

**Location and Living Arrangements**

For the purpose of this report where a suburb has a north and or south location those suburbs will be represented together for example: the Vermont area will combine Vermont and Vermont South responses.

The highest survey response rate came from the Blackburn area (21%) followed by Box Hill area (11%), see Diagram 4. An unintended outcome was that the largest group of survey responses (47%) were from people living outside of the City of Whitehorse. As Diagram 5 depicts surveys were received from areas such as
Lilydale (4), Doncaster (4) Croydon (3), and North Balwyn (3), one survey was received from as far away as Mt Evelyn. It is believed that this is an effect of both the broad distribution of the surveys and the catchment areas associated with disability service providers.

Residential location was not seen to directly impact on the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project intent to capture the experiences of local people as people travel in and out of the City of Whitehorse to undertake a range of activities including sport and physical activities.

**Diagram 4: Responses within Whitehorse**

![Diagram showing responses within Whitehorse]

**Diagram 5: Responses received from outside Whitehorse**

![Diagram showing responses from outside Whitehorse]

Most people (53%) with a disability completing the survey lived with family. People living in shared supported accommodation or community residential units represented 28% of responses. People living by themselves (13%) and people living with friends (6%) also responded to the survey, see Diagram 6. Living arrangements impact on the support people have to identify and participate in sport and physical activities, for instance a parent or sibling may provide transport to an activity.
Finding Information
People with a disability were more likely to seek information regarding sport and physical activities from friends or family (35%), paid staff such as carers (21%) and disability services (12%). In relation to media outlets 12% of respondents identified that they source sport and physical activity information from local newspapers with a further 6% of people accessing websites.

People with a disability were asked to list services that they could ask for help to find out about sport and physical activity, 36 responses were provided. This question provided opportunities for people to list a range of services, yet only 4 responses contained two or more services.

Most respondents (36%) said they didn’t know which services they could ask, 21% of respondents would ask a disability service provider, 10% would ask the sporting club 8% indicated they would ask Eastern Regional Leisure Service (local AAA program provider) or the Department of Human Services for information. The broad range of services people said they would approach for information is depicted in Diagram 7.
Opportunity

Promote the range of sporting and physical opportunities available in the City of Whitehorse to people with a disability their family and friends, and disability service providers.

Promote services which can assist people with a disability to locate information regarding sport and physical activity opportunities.

Perceptions of Sport and Physical Activities:
People were asked to identify the activities they saw as sport and physical activity in both the survey and small group meetings. This resulted in 49 sporting activities and 44 physical activities being identified with only swimming present in the top 10 across both groups. Table 5 and Table 6 detail the sport and physical activities identified in survey and small group responses. The Commonwealth Games had been held just prior to the majority of small group meetings which may have raised the awareness of sports such as discus and hurdling.

Where a sport was identified within a small group setting it was given a score of 1, which may mask the number of people who believed that the represented activities were either sport or physical activities.

Table 5: Identified sport and number of instances reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Commonwealth / Olympic games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Hockey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Hurdling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Table Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Aerobics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bocce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Boxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn Bowls</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gymnastics/ callisthenics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Riding</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ice hockey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Pin Bowling</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Karate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wheelchair Rugby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Archery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Badminton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running/ jogging</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car/ motorbike racing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bushwalking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Identified physical activities and the number of instances reported

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Activity</th>
<th>Physical Activity</th>
<th>Physical Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Helping people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running/Jogging</td>
<td>Games</td>
<td>Hurdling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Riding</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>Jumping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Household chores</td>
<td>Karate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>Relaxing</td>
<td>Mail Run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>Massage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>Walking around the shops</td>
<td>Pilates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>Activity at work</td>
<td>Rounders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Balloon Tennis</td>
<td>Singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>Belly dancing</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Bird watching</td>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerobics</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Trampolining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushwalking</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Wheelchair soccer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth/Olympic Games</td>
<td>Hand tennis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst there were areas of overlap in general “sport” was clearly identified as more team and competition driven activities whilst “physical activity” indicated unstructured individual activities. The overlap of what is seen as sport and what is seen as physical activity may relate to activities such as swimming being both competitive and non-competitive, basketball may be a team game played for competition points when seen as a sport or may be throwing a ball through the hoop in the backyard when seen a physical activity. Where people sought to define the terms rather than listing activities the responses continued to reflect a clear division between competitive and non-competitive elements:

**Sport:**
- Any games that require team participation
- Competitive games
- Team or individual sport activities
- Anything that involves a certain amount of skill and is done where others can watch
- Team sports

**Physical Activity:**
- Where you use your limbs
- Non competitive activity
- Anything that gets you moving
Why sport and physical activity
People were asked why they should undertake sport and physical activities in the survey and small groups, 43 survey responses were provided. This question provided the opportunity for multiple responses which could be grouped under 5 main headings that are depicted in Diagram 8. Health (29%) included responses that referred to maintaining general health, particular conditions and weight management. Wellbeing (14%) reflected responses commenting on feeling good, liking it, being calm and feeling better. Social (23%) reflected comments such as making friends, watching friends participate, meeting people and having fun. Improved body function (15%) included reference to improving body image, sport being good for your body, building and toning muscles. Fitness (19%) reflected general comments such as getting or keeping fit.

Diagram 8: Themed responses to why do you exercise

What sport do people do now?
People participating in the small group meetings and responding to the surveys currently undertake a variety of sports however 5 respondents indicated that they currently do not participate in any sport or physical activity. Table 7 provides an overview of the sports people currently report undertaking. In small group meetings with additional discussion non participation was directly related to the impact of disability, for instance people with Multiple Sclerosis reported that participation in sport and physical activity is exhausting and increases presentation of symptoms related to the condition. Seasonal sport timetabling may have impacted on the responses provided with the winter season finishing and the spring/summer sports yet to commence.

Table 7: Sports people currently undertake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>15 Water Exercise</td>
<td>3 Bocce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>15 Cricket</td>
<td>2 Croquet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>14 Exercise- at home, family activities</td>
<td>2 Circus School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>10 Football</td>
<td>2 Jet Skiing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Riding</td>
<td>9 Lawn Bowls</td>
<td>2 Singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>6 Table Tennis</td>
<td>2 Skiing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No sport</td>
<td>5 Volley Ball</td>
<td>2 Soccer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>4 Zumba</td>
<td>2 Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Pin Bowling</td>
<td>3 Aerobics</td>
<td>2 Wii Sport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In total 26 sport or physical activities were reported as being currently undertaken. Participation rates were highest for basketball, swimming, walking, gym and bike riding all of which were highly represented in the earlier findings that sought to gain peoples understanding of what is sport and what is physical activity.

Differences are noted between the top 10 sport and physical activities reported in this project compared with those reported in both the ABS report on Sport and Physical Recreation Participation among person with a disability (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006) and the Whitehorse Recreation Strategy Plan 2004-2009. To enable comparison Table 8 presents the top ten sport and physical activities listed in these previous reports as well as the top 10 activities identified in the current survey.

Walking swimming and aerobics formed the top three in both previous studies; in this study however the primary sport undertaken was basketball with swimming and walking completing the top three. Aerobics did not appear in the top 10 activities reported in this survey.

This may be reflective of changes in people’s interest and access to sport and physical activity opportunities. Whilst presented as a top 10 listing caution is advised in generalising the expressed interests of people participating in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project to all people with a disability. It is important that people with a disability access sport and physical activity based on their individual interests and aspirations.

Table 8: Top 10 sport and physical recreational activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Walking for exercise</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Aerobics/fitness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Aerobics/Fitness</td>
<td>Walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Riding</td>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>Golf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No sport</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>Cycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>Lawn Bowls</td>
<td>Netball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Pin Bowling</td>
<td>Bushwalking</td>
<td>Australian Rules Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Exercise</td>
<td>Running</td>
<td>Cricket (outdoor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opportunity
Promote a broad range of sport and physical activity opportunities as people’s interests and aspirations change over time.
**Where do people undertake their sporting activities?**
The survey asked respondents to identify where by suburb they undertook their sport and physical activities, 43 responses were provided. For the purpose of this report suburbs where a suburb also has a north and or south location those suburbs will be represented together for example: Vermont area will also reflect Vermont South responses.

Respondents indicated that the majority (58%) of sporting activities were undertaken outside of the City of Whitehorse. Where sport and physical activity were undertaken in Whitehorse, the Vermont area (39.5%), Box Hill area (21%) and Blackburn area (18.6%) were the most represented suburbs.

**Opportunity**

Promote the range of sport and physical activities available within the City of Whitehorse.

The survey also asked people to identify the venue for their sport and physical activities; 42 responses were gained and are depicted Diagram 9. Fitness, leisure or indoor sports centres with entry fees was the most common (59.5%) category chosen to sport and physical activities. Clubs or associations requiring membership fees were the location identified by 31% of respondents. Disability Services (26.2%) and parks or other free venues (23.8%) were also strongly reported.

**Diagram 9: Sport and Physical Activity Venues**

![Diagram 9: Sport and Physical Activity Venues](image)

**Participation Rates**
Respondents to the survey identified that they participate in sport and physical activities across a spectrum from active participation to watching sport on television. Multiple answers could be provided, a total of 43 responses were provided to the question of what sport and physical activity involve.

Playing as a member of a team was the most frequently (23%) reported way people engage in sport and physical activity. Whilst some people watch live sport (10%) it
is more likely that people will watch sport on television (18%). People also indicated that they were more likely to join a group of people with a disability (22%) than join a group of other people in the community (12%). These figures are presented in Diagram 10. Joining a group with other people with a disability may relate to friendships ie going with a friend or meeting new friends but may also relate to the inclusive practices associated with a group and acceptance. Comments received also indicated roles such as treasurer of a sporting club were undertaken by respondents and that for some people assistance from paid staff was required to participate.

Diagram 10: Ways to Participate

Part of a team
Watching live sport
Joining a group of other people in the community
Joining a group with other people with a disability
Other

Opportunity
Promote spectator sporting and physical activity opportunities such as VFL football and Professional - Amateur Golf tournaments.

The majority (93%) of people completing the survey reported undertaking sport or physical activity at least weekly; 20.9% indicated daily participation; 25.6% indicated they participated in sport 2-3 times per week and 46.5% of respondents indicated weekly participation.

Most people (60.5%) reported that each time they participated in a sport or physical activity the activity would last for 1-2 hours; 30% of people reported each instance of sport or physical activity would last less than 30 minutes. Fewer people reported undertaking sport and physical activities for 2-3 hours (2%) and more than 3 hours (7%) duration.

As depicted in Diagram 11 people prefer to take part in sport and physical activity of an evening, after 6pm during the week and in the afternoon 12-6pm on the weekend. People completing the survey were able to provide multiple responses and preferences across weekday and weekend timeframes.
People responding to the survey identified that they went to sport and physical activities with paid staff (37.2%), with a friend (25.6%) and 18.6% of respondents went to sport and physical activities by themselves. Some respondents (9.3%) met people at the venue whilst others attended in a group (9.3%).

**Satisfaction:**
Most respondents 32% felt that their level of health or fitness could be better however, as detailed in Diagram 12 the overall majority of people seemed reasonably happy or very happy with their health and fitness levels with only 2% of respondents stating they were unhappy.

Promote sport and physical activities that occur in the afternoon and evenings during the week and in the morning and afternoon on weekends.
People with disability completing the survey were asked how sport and physical activity made them feel, the majority of responses (77.3%) indicated people felt very happy. A further 15.9% of responses said they felt a bit better than before the activity with only 2.3% of respondents reported feeling unhappy.

People reported that friendship (26%) and enjoyment (23%) were what they liked most about sport and physical activity. Being part of a team (15%) and staying fit (15%) were the other key areas liked by respondents. Diagram 13 provides overview of the key things people like about sport and physical activity.

**Diagram 13: What people like about sport and physical activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staying fit</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing friends</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of a Team</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something to do</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Opportunity**

Promote the friendship and social aspects of sport and physical activity opportunities.

People reported that they would like to participate in sport much more often (32.6%) or a bit more often (48.8%) than they currently undertake. The remaining 18.6% of people indicated that they would not like to increase their participation in sport or physical activity.

People participating in the small group meetings and completing the surveys were asked if they could do any activity what would it be. Many of the activities identified corresponded with both the list of sport and physical activities provided when people with a disability identified what is sport and what is physical activity as well as what sports and physical activities people currently undertake. Basketball and tennis were the most reported activities people wanted to try however other opportunities raised in small group meetings such as dancing and cooking were also popular.

It is possible that in small group discussions that the discussion itself prompted people to identify sports they would like to do or try based on the experiences of other group members.
Table 9 provides a detailed list of the sport and physical activities people would like to do or try indicating the number of times the sport or physical activity appeared in responses. People were able to list multiple answers to this question. Where a sport or physical activity was identified within a small group setting it was attributed a score of 1, which may mask the number of people who would like to undertake the particular activity.

**Table 9: Sport and Physical Activities People would like to do**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten pin bowling</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse riding</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking classes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling/bike riding</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorbike racing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do enough</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerobics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning/housework</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hockey</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydro pool</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail run</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini golf</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parachuting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skiing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table tennis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodwork</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join a group sport with people without disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Barriers**

The surveys asked people to list the things they thought would make it easier for people with a disability to participate in sport and suggestions for how this could happen. Diagram 14 provides an overview of the things people reported that would make it easier for people to get involved in sport and physical activity.

Greater access to activities was most frequently reported (22%). Access to activities included comments such as more activities, access to hydrotherapy pools in the local area, availability of programs at local gyms. Having the opportunity to learn, practice and develop skills was also reported by 15% of respondents.

**Opportunity**

- Support sporting organisation to develop skill development opportunities
- Promote sport and physical activity opportunities available in the City of Whitehorse
Improved access to information about sport and physical activities was highlighted by 17% of respondents. Increasing access to information included knowing when and where activities were happening, knowing who to contact to find out information and increased advertising of what is available.

Having trained staff (15%) at sport and physical activity venues was also seen as a way to make it easier for people with a disability to participate in sport and physical activities. Trained staff at venues was seen to relate to general staff who had attained knowledge of how to meet the needs and abilities of people with a disability and included suggestions such as, having someone to teach skills of the activity rather than the provision of personal care.

**Opportunity**

Encourage partnership and networking opportunities between disability and sporting organisations to promote the sharing of skills and expertise to increase the participation of people with a disability in sport and physical activities.

Access to direct support workers (11%) employed to support people to attend and participate in community activities, including meeting personal care needs, would also assist people to participate in sport and physical activity. Comments such as someone to take me and a support person to assist were combined in this category.

**Diagram 14: What would make it easier for people to participate in sport and physical activities**

When asked if people responding to the survey had suggestions for how participating in sport and physical activity could be made easier for people with a disability, the responses included having greater access to health professionals for
advice (10%), access to support staff at venues (13%), more local activities (17%) and providing greater information about activities to people with a disability (13%). Responses are displayed in Diagram 15.

![Diagram 15: Suggestions for how to make it easier for people to participate in sport and physical activity](image)

The surveys and small group participants were also asked to identify what makes it hard for people with a disability to participate in sport and physical activity. This question enabled people to select multiple answers from a set list of perceived barriers, 41 survey responses were provided. Where a barrier was identified within a small group setting it was related to the survey questions and given a score of 1, which may mask the number of people who would have nominated the same barrier. Diagram 16 presents the barriers identified by people completing the surveys and participating in small group meetings.

**Opportunity**

Promotion of sport and physical activity opportunities to include public transport details for the venue.

Continue to advocate for increased accessibility of and to public transport.
The barriers to participating in sport and recreation activities are consistent with the barriers identified in previous research conducted at both a state and national level.

Transport to activities was reported as the largest barrier (30%) to participation, comments included relying on others to get there; cannot travel independently and not being able to use public transport. Money, “things are too expensive for me” was identified as a barrier by 19% of people completing the survey or small group discussions. Timing of activities (12%) was also a repeated theme in identifying barriers.

The City of Whitehorse is serviced by trains, trams and buses. Taxi services are also available however for the purpose of the report public transport refers to trains, trams and buses. Trams are available within the City of Whitehorse along segments of both Burwood Hwy and Whitehorse Rd. The City of Whitehorse is serviced by both the Lilydale and Belgrave train lines. Access via train and tram travel to sporting organisations is limited to those occurring along the specified routes or within close walking distance to stations and stops. There are numerous bus routes within the City of Whitehorse with a limited Smartbus services along main thoroughfares. The “Shut Out” Report (2010) highlights that accessible transport has a 30 year timeframe that stipulates that only 50% of buses have to be accessible by 2012. Accessible public transport is a key systemic barrier to participating in the life of the community.

What do these results tell us?
People with a disability participating in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project have a clear understanding of activities that are considered to be sport and physical activity. Further, people with a disability are able to self report the social and health benefits of participating in sport and physical activities.
Whilst people with a disability are aware of a broad range of sport and physical activities they tend to participate in a more limited range of opportunities. It is likely that the disparity between knowledge of sport and physical activities and participation is multifaceted including access to information and venues, habit or being aligned with the same opportunities for some time and the resources required by the individual to participate in sport or physical activity ie: staff. People with a disability reported several barriers that impact heavily in their ability to participate sport and physical activity; these include transport, cost, timing and accessibility.

Survey results indicate that people with a disability value the social aspects of sport and physical activity participation. Therefore supporters of people with a disability and those working to connect people with a disability to sport and physical activity opportunities need to consider how the person can be engaged in the social aspects of sporting organisations such as participating in club events, socialising after a game or activity and meeting up with the friends made as a result of participation in that activity.

People travel both into and out of the City of Whitehorse to participate in sport and physical activities. Survey results indicate that people remain unaware of sport and physical activities occurring in the community; therefore this provides an opportunity to promote sport and physical activities that occur in Whitehorse and to target the promotion of activities to people with a disability, their parents and supporters as well as disability service organisations.

People would like to undertake sport and physical activities more often and also identified they would like increased opportunities to participate in activities they were already undertaking. A range of weekday, evening and weekend opportunities should be considered by those providing sport and physical activities and those supporting people to attend.

The opportunity to learn, practice and train to develop knowledge and skills in relation to particular sport and physical activities was also raised in the survey and small group discussions. Confidence in skill and knowledge of the rules of sport are likely to impact on people with a disabilities participation in sport. A partnership approach between disability services and sporting organisations may provide opportunities for skill development within a familiar social setting such as a day service prior to joining a sporting organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote the provision of skill development, practice and training activities to increase the skills and confidence of people with a disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore partnership opportunities between disability services and sporting organisations that would provide skill development opportunities in social settings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings - Disability Service Organisations

Despite distribution through several professional and stakeholder networks only three completed surveys were returned by Disability Service Organisations. This limits the manner in which responses can be presented in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project Report and also impacts the ability of the responses to be representative and generalised to the broader disability service sector.

The three organisations completing the survey provide a range of respite, children’s, day, and accommodation disability services within the City of Whitehorse with approximately 100 people with a disability accessing these services on a weekly basis.

Surveys identify that people with a disability supported through these organisations experience a range of disabilities including physical, intellectual, acquired brain injury, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric or mental illness.

All services operated during the week, two provided a limited weekend service. Two were open six hours per day and one was open for an eight hour day. Two organisations reported being within a 5 minute walk to public transport options the other organisation reported being more than a 15 minute walk to public transport. All services reported having accessible features such as:

- Ramp or flat entry to the building
- Accessible parking
- Accessible toilets
- Adult change facilities – hoist and change tables
- Wide doorways
- Alternative communication equipment
- Lifting aids
- Mobility aids

All staff members within the disability service organisations have experience and or training in working with people with a disability in sport and physical activity settings. Staff members have formal qualifications such as Certificate IV in Disability Studies, Bachelor of Arts: Recreation, Diploma of Sport and Recreation and have access to regular professional development opportunities, although no specific sport and physical activity training was identified in the ongoing professional development provided through the disability service.

Disability Services spoke of the broader outcomes such as health and wellbeing outcomes, social connections, life experiences and increased community awareness that can also be achieved through participating sport and physical activities and in the community more generally. The achievement of the person’s goals is however dependent on the disability service being able to provide the required supports to the person.
The range of sport and physical activities people with a disability would be interested in from the disability service organisations perspective is broad and should not be limited to particular sports but meet the person’s individual interests. Table 10 lists the sport and physical activities disability service organisations believed to be of interest to people with a disability. People with a disability identifying current and future sport and physical activities identified 72% of these opportunities. Ball games and ball sports, fishing, tai chi, sailing and martial arts were not identified by people with a disability. It was noted that ball games could refer to a range of sporting activities such as football, soccer, netball, baseball but the general category was not raised by people with a disability.

**Table 10: Sport and Physical Activity Interests – Disability Service perspective**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ball games</th>
<th>Tennis</th>
<th>Tai Chi</th>
<th>Lawn Bowls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ball sports</td>
<td>Horse Riding</td>
<td>Sailing</td>
<td>Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martial Arts</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Water Aerobics</td>
<td>BMX/ Bike Riding</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Bocce</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organisations actively seek written and verbal feedback from people with a disability regarding their experiences of sport and physical activities primarily through discussions, planning meetings, and feedback forms.

People with a disability have requested access to sport and physical activities that are not currently offered by the Disability Service which included trying or having greater access to swimming, water aerobics, football, sailing, bike riding and gym.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encourage sporting organisations to promote sport and physical activities through disability service organisations.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All services reported being approached by sporting organisations to modify activities currently offered to make them more accessible to people with a disability. It was also reported that the disability service often approach the sporting organisation in relation to a particular person. Two services have been approached by a sport or physical activity organisation to introduce people with a disability to their service. Partnering to deliver activities not currently offered in either organisation or to share physical space was reported once for each scenario.

All disability service organisations reported a willingness to discuss future opportunities to:

- Introduce people with a disability to sport and physical activity organisations
- Modify activities currently offered by sport and physical activity organisation’s to make them more accessible to people with a disability
• Partnering to deliver activities not currently offered
• Partnering to share physical space with a sport and physical activity organisation.

Generally it was felt that most sporting organisations were approachable and willing to assist in the development and delivery of sport and physical activity opportunities that are inclusive of people with a disability. Disability services indicated that they would approach the sporting organisation directly whilst one indicated they would utilise the Access All Abilities program to assist in establishing the initial relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote partnership opportunities between disability service and sporting organisations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey asked what makes it hard for people with a disability to participate in sport and physical activity, the limited responses however has made it difficult to gain a true understanding of the barriers people with a disability experience when undertaking sport and physical activity. Diagram 17 depicts barriers experienced by people with a disability from a disability service perspective.

Diagram 17: Barriers experienced by people with a disability - Disability Service Organisation Perspective.

Disability Service Organisations also reported that staff ratios within services sometimes present barriers however with the right support and resources participation in sport and physical activity is possible and achieves great outcomes for the person.

What do these results tell us?
Although a more narrow range of sport and physical activities were identified by the disability service organisations (20) than reported by people with a disability in relation to current activities (25) and would like to try or do (35), generally disability
service organisations with a match rate of 72% have a good understanding of the sport and physical activity interests of people with a disability.

Operation hours of the disability services participating in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project would limit the ability of people with a disability to participate in sport and physical activities in the evenings and weekends. Services main operation hours are between 9am and 4pm with some weekend activities whereas people with a disability would like to participate in sport and physical activity during the evening and over the weekend. The current state government focus on the reorientation of disability services and the move to self directed funding approaches may address this issue into the future.

Disability service providers are open to discussions regarding partnerships to develop and deliver an increased range of sport and physical activities. Disability services indicated a need to be proactive in the development of partnerships.

Disability service organisations identified similar barriers to participation as those identified by people with a disability reported. There was however recognition that service staff ratios also impacted on the ability of people with a disability to participate in sport and physical activities offered through the service. Most people with a disability indicated that they attended sport and physical activities with paid staff. Disability services provide key support that enables participation in sport and physical activities, and undertake multiple roles such as transport, personal care and program support.
Findings - Sporting Groups, Clubs, Businesses and Organisations

The original dissemination of surveys yielded little response however when contacted directly by telephone to explain the project 27 sporting organisations completed the survey.

Organisations completing the survey identified themselves as fitness, leisure or indoor sports centres, sport or recreation club or association, community centre and rehabilitation centre. Diagram 18 provides an overview of responding sporting organisations.

Diagram 18: Sporting Organisations completing the survey

Table 11: Main Programs or Activities offered by Sporting Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>Crèche</td>
<td>Cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Exercise</td>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>Cheerleading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming/ Pool</td>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Personal Training</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>Sailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>Squash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Billiards</td>
<td>Rock climbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer/ Futsal</td>
<td>Bocce</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ten Pin Bowling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sporting organisations operate on a range of days and times some are open 7 days a week with shorter operating hours on the weekend, opening between 6 – 6.30am. Some organisations remained open until 11pm at night however most reported closing between 9- 9.30pm, others offer training during the week with a competition game on the weekend, others report seasonal activities such as football.
operational hours busy periods also fluctuated however most organisation identified evenings and weekends as a busy time.

Fee Structures
Sporting organisations fee structures varied and included payment by session and payment by time period, reported fee structures are depicted in Diagram 19.

Diagram 19: Sporting Organisation Fee Structures

Sporting organisations offer a range of concessions to their fee structures with most directly related to government pension and benefit cards. Of the 19 responses provided the concession for student card holders appears most prevalent. Diagram 20 provides an overview of the concessions and prevalence rates offered through sporting organisations.

Diagram 20: Concession Types Offered

Opportunity
Encourage sporting organisations to promote the range of concessions available to people with a disability.
Accessibility

No sporting organisation reported being more than a 15 minute walk from public transport. Most sporting organisations, as depicted in Diagram 21 reported to have very easy (more than one stop within a 1 minute walk) or easy (more than one stop within a 5 minute walk) access to public transport, bus train and or tram. Average access defined as only one form of public transport was available within a 5 minute walk was also a frequent response. Only one organisation indicated that there was poor access with only one stop within a 5 minute walk. As previously highlighted access to public transport was a primary barrier reported by people with a disability participating in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project.

![Diagram 21: Access to Public Transport](image)

Sporting organisations were asked to identify the access features of their service, multiple responses could be provided. Flat or ramp entry to the building (77%), accessible parking bays (74%) and accessible toilets (70%) ranked highest in responses, depicted in Diagram 22. The survey also asked about access to alternative communication methods, however this was not offered by any of sporting organisations.

![Diagram 22: Access Features](image)

Opportunity

In conjunction with the Eastern Region Communication Service promote the use of alternative communication tools such as communication boards and Easy English formatting to sporting organisations.
The range of people attending the sporting organisation on average per week varied from groups with 50 members to 12,578 visits to the venue during the week which may include repeated visits by the same person. Clubs with between 100 -200 people accessing their services were most (19%) represented in this sample. Diagram 23 depicts the average number people attending the service per week.

As presented in Diagram 24, a small number of sporting organisations (4) reported higher than 10 % of people attending their services were known to have a disability however, 19 of the 27 organisations indicated that less than 2% of people attending their services were known to have a disability.

Sporting organisations were able to identify that people attending their services had a range of disabilities. Sporting organisations were able provide multiple answers with the results presented in Diagram 25. Physical (24%) and intellectual disabilities (24%) dominated the 22 responses provided. Organisations also provided responses such as: “records aren’t kept” and that “whilst some people are known to have a disability this is not a focus on them as people or tennis players”.
Whilst some sporting organisations may be unaware of the disabilities experienced by some people attending their services the reported participation rates evidence an under representation of people with a disability participating in these organisations. The ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2009 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010) finding that approximately 18.5% of the population reports a disability that restricts everyday activities and last longer than 6 months. The 2009 survey has reported a 1.5% drop in disability rate from the same survey conducted in 2003 which identified that approximately 20% of Australia’s population reported a disability. Based on this finding there is a potential untapped membership market for sporting organisations.

**Opportunity**

Using a partnership approach with sporting organisations explore the opportunities to increase the participation rates of people with a disability in local sport and physical activity.

**Staff Experience and Training**

The majority of staff members in sporting organisations (59%) do not have experience and or training in working with people with a disability. There was no access to ongoing disability related training to increase confidence and knowledge of working with people with a disability for 81% of sporting organisations.

Six of the 18 sporting organisations that went on to describe the training staff members have undertaken identifying:

- Disability specific
  - Certificate IV in Fitness – with component focusing on disability or advanced modules
  - Pilates training for rehabilitation/treatment of injury/disability
  - Auslan
  - Austswim – teaching for people with a disability
• Generalist training
  o A 2 day course for people with a disability
  o Attendance at “Inclusion- Make it your sport” provided through the Access All Abilities program provider

Sporting organisations also provided comments such as:
• We treat everyone the same – don’t find a need for extra training
• Personal trainers have higher understanding of anatomy/injury/strokes
• Minimum first aid level 2
• Experience gained through exposure
• Don’t have many people with a disability attending so training is not offered

Just under half of the sporting organisations (48%) said that there was a staff member available at all times to assist people with a disability as needed, 52% indicated that this service was not available.

There is the potential through developing partnerships between sporting organisations and disability service organisations to share the skills and expertise of staff to build the capacity of sporting clubs to deliver inclusive sport and physical activities to people with a disability. Connection with the local AAA Program would also facilitate building inclusive sporting organisations.

People with a disability highlighted that having staff in sporting organisation venues that had experience and training in working with people with a disability would make it easier for them to participate in the organisations activities. Sporting organisations seeking to expand their membership may like to consider providing staff with access to disability related training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote disability awareness training opportunities to sporting organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore the potential for sporting and disability organisations to share resources, knowledge and skills to continue to build staff knowledge and skills in addition to building inclusive opportunities for people with a disability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions
Sporting organisations were asked to identify from their experiences the outcomes that can be achieved by people with a disability undertaking sport and physical activity, responses are depicted in Diagram 26. Sporting organisations were able to provide multiple responses that were then grouped into the following themes:

• Wellbeing – improved self esteem, confidence and achievement
• Mobility – motor skills, improved movement and flexibility
• Employment and Training
- Health – improved cardio health, management of health conditions such as diabetes
- Fitness
- Social – making friends, participating with other people, social support for families and supporting others.

**Diagram 26: Achievement Perceptions**

These finding were consistent with the responses provided by people with a disability in response to questions about why they exercise and what they liked about participating in sport and physical activity.

Sporting organisations were asked to identify the sport and physical activities they believed would be of interest to people with a disability. Multiple answers could be provided and ranged from the very general “same as everyone else” to specific sporting opportunities such as “basketball”. Diagram 27 captures the responses provided.

**Diagram 27: Perception of sporting interests**
Most sporting organisations (81%) reported that they did not offer programs specifically for people with a disability at the present time. This supports social inclusion policy directions where people are included in the life of the community in the same way as other community members. The remaining organisations offer a range of specific programs that could be best described as:

- Gym/fitness based programs that include transition programs that start with a small group and move into the mainstream activities
- Wheelchair soccer
- Cricket – where the rules and duration are modified to suit the skills of people participating

Other comments related to disability service providers or sporting groups booking the venue or having a group booking to undertake activities that may be modified to suit skill and ability levels.

Feedback from people with a disability was actively sought by 56% of sporting organisations completing the survey. Feedback methods utilised by sporting organisations included feedback forms, surveys, emails, comments to staff. The majority of sporting organisations (92%) had not been approached by people with a disability to undertake activities not currently offered by the sporting organisations. Where organisation had been approached access to hydrotherapy and wheelchair sports were the activities sought.

**Opportunity**

Continue to promote the benefits of inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities to sporting organisations.

**Partnering and Future Opportunities**

A large portion (40%) of the sporting organisations surveyed reported not being approached by disability service organisations to increase the opportunities for people with a disability to participate in the organisations activities. As depicted in Diagram 28 where sporting organisations had been approached by disability service providers the main focus was to introduce people with a disability to the organisation (24%) or to share the physical space of the organisation (18%). These responses are consistent with survey responses from disability services.
Partnerships with the local Access All Abilities Provider, Neighbourhood Houses and Disability Service Organisations were all mentioned in the comments provided. Sporting organisations also commented that they received referrals from chiropractors and podiatrists. Some sporting organisations had also participated in events that promoted the skills and abilities of people with a disability, these included sports days and fundraising activities for specific people or sporting teams.

Whilst some organisations cautioned that currently they have long waiting lists, lack of space or time for new programs and limited staff resources most organisations, as depicted in Diagram 29, would be open to discussing a range of future opportunities. Partnerships from the comments received related to specific individuals, groups of individuals or events, there was no report of developing strategic partnerships for the express purpose of increasing sport and physical activity opportunities.

**Diagram 28: Disability Organisations approach to sporting organisations**

- Introducing people: 40%
- Modifying activities: 24%
- Partnering to deliver new activities: 18%
- Share Space: 9%
- Not approached: 9%

**Diagram 29: Future Opportunities**

- Introduce People: 33%
- Modify Activities: 24%
- Partnering to deliver opportunities: 17%
- Share Space: 17%
- None of the above: 9%

**Opportunity**

Promote strategic partnership opportunities between sporting and disability service organisations.
More than half the sporting organisation surveyed (58%) reported not being aware of organisations or services that could assist them to develop and or deliver programs and activities that include people with a disability. The remaining sporting organisations (42%) were able to provide an extensive listing of local Disability and or Mental Health Service Providers, Neighbourhood Houses, Healthcare services and sports specific groups or peak bodies. Some comments indicated that the sporting organisation would go back to services where they had a continuing or previous relationship.

**Opportunities**

Promote the services and supports offered through disability service organisations to sporting organisations.

Promote government initiatives such as Access for All Abilities and MetroAccess to sporting organisations

Sporting organisations indicated the lack of physical space or ability to increase the range or number of activities as a barrier to providing further opportunities.

Sporting organisations were asked to describe any assistance that the organisations would like to help deliver a wider range of programs or services that include people with a disability. Whilst some organisations reported that at the present time they do not require assistance others would like assistance with the following:

- Capital funding for building modifications,
- Awareness raising with staff and community,
- Connection to networks,
- Promotion of activities and
- Financial assistance through subsidies or grants to ensure people with a disability wanting to trial participation in activities can do so with limited cost.

**Capital funding for building modifications:**

Where a sporting organisation operates from a Council owned facility it is possible for the sporting organisation to request modifications to the building through Councils capital works program via the sporting organisations Council contract manager.

Sporting organisations that operate as not for profit organisations may be eligible for funding opportunities offered primarily through the Department of Planning and Community Development (http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au).

Whilst there is no easy solution to the built environment issues sporting organisations need to consider the needs of current and future participants including those who experience disability, in the development of their business and its location within community. It is also imperative that the Building Codes of Australia (Access to Premises Standards) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) be considered in the operation and development of sporting organisations.
Disability Awareness Training
Most of the large disability organisations and a variety of consultants offer fee for service disability awareness staff training. In relation to sporting organisations specifically the Access for All Abilities Program offers a number of free opportunities to raise the profile of people with a disability within clubs.

MetroAccess and disability service organisations work to promote the achievements and abilities of people with a disability through a range of community based initiatives, which can include the provision of or linkage to disability awareness training.

Connection to Networks
Networks and networking opportunities provide a range of opportunities for sporting organisations in relation to business and strategic planning opportunities. Within the City of Whitehorse the following networks particularly relate to sport and physical activity:

- **Eastern Metropolitan Region Leisure and Disability Network**
  The Eastern Metropolitan Region Leisure and Disability Network (LADN) is a network of agency representatives and individuals committed to working in a co-ordinated and collaborative manner to support the development of community, leisure and recreation for people with disabilities. The Network aims to be representative and inclusive of all disability types, across all age groups. Membership of the Eastern Metropolitan Region Leisure and Disability Network is open to any agency or individual with an interest in the area of disability and leisure/recreation within the Eastern Metropolitan Region. Contact Council's MetroAccess Development Officer for more information regarding the Leisure and Disability Network.

- **Whitehorse Sport and Recreation Network**
  The Whitehorse Sport and Recreation Network provides Council with advice and guidance on the future of sport and recreation development within the City of Whitehorse. The network is made up of Council officers from the Parks Planning and Recreation Unit and a maximum of 10 community representatives who are appointed for a two-year term. Membership is open to individuals participating in sporting and recreation clubs or associations operating within the Whitehorse municipality. More information regarding the Whitehorse Sport and Recreation Network can be found on Councils website.

Promotion of Activities
Both the Access All Abilities Provider and Councils MetroAccess Development Officer are able to promote sport and physical activity opportunities available to people with a disability through professional networks that include people with a disability and their families and supporters as well as disability service organisations. Sporting organisations can also contact local disability service providers, libraries, and neighbourhood and community houses to promote the range of activities offered. Sporting organisations can also promote their activities through the LADN network.
Financial Assistance through subsidies or grants to reduce costs to people with a disability

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, best known as VicHealth, works in partnership with organisations, communities and individuals to make health a central part of our daily lives. The focus of our work is on promoting good health and preventing ill-health. Sporting organisations may be eligible for VicHealth grants and program initiatives which can be found on the following website: http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

Council Community Grants
Most Councils offer an annual cycle of community grants that sporting organisations should consider in the development of their programs and services. Whitehorse City Council Community Grants tend to open in March each year, for more information please refer to Council’s webpage http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au
Summary and Conclusions

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project identified an underrepresentation of people with a disability within sporting organisations. It is generally accepted that approximately one in five people (18.5%) report a disability in Australia however in most sporting organisations only 2% of people attending the organisation were known to have a disability. It is important to explore this discrepancy to effect change.

People with a disability continue to experience a range of barriers to participating in the community in the same way as other members of society. In relation to sport and physical activity it is imperative that the barriers facing people with a disability be addressed to enable wider health and wellbeing outcomes to be achieved.

Whilst each of the target groups participating Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project identified barriers to participation their focus differed. People with a disability were more likely report transport and access to information about sporting and physical activity options as a barrier. Sporting organisations were focused on built environment issues such as access and space. Disability service organisations reported similar barriers to those reported by people with a disability however identified that staffing ratios can also be problematic.

Transport was the most prevalent barrier reported by people with a disability which is not surprising given that the ability to get to and from a venue is a critical element of participating in the life of the community. Most sporting organisations reported being relatively close to public transport –with one or more types of public transport located within a short walk of 1 -5 minutes.

Access to a functioning accessible public is critical for all members of the community. Travelling on public transport may not be a realistic option for some people with a disability for a variety of reasons including cost, ability to discern timetables, transport vehicle numbers and the ability to respond in the event of misadventure such as missing a bus or stop. For others the issue may be linked to feeling safe whilst travelling. Whilst not commenting directly on the experiences of people with a disability the Victorian Public Transport Users Association webpage highlights that problems with Melbourne public transport include:

“Beyond the trains, trams and a few Smartbus routes, services are poor: infrequent, particularly at weekends, and no competition for the motor car, despite increasing traffic congestion, impact from petrol prices and concern about emissions.

The most frustrating part of public transport journeys is the wait between services. This is especially a problem during off-peak times. Many of the world’s big cities have train services with frequent services all day (every 10 minutes or better), making public transport attractive at all times of day, and helping to spread the peak load. Well-run systems also have buses which collect people from surrounding areas and then meet the train at the station.
By comparison, waits of 30 minutes to 1 hour for buses are common in Melbourne, and station car parks fill up by morning peak hour.

Melbourne has the most expensive fares for any Australian capital cities’ public transport system.

If public transport services were improved, more people would use the system and it would be safer as a result. It is also necessary to provide adequate staffing of stations and vehicles if passengers are to feel safe”

http://www.ptua.org.au

The Department of Transport continues to work towards the goals outlined the Accessible Public Transport Action Plan 2006-12 which provides a long term strategy for delivering accessible bus train tram and taxi services throughout Victoria. Whitehorse City Council will continue to use its influence with government departments to advocate for a more accessible public transport system.

Access to sporting organisation was also a determined barrier. Access to premises has focused primarily on entry to the organisation through the presence of ramps at the front of the building and self opening doors. The focus on entry to the building has masked the issues people experience navigating the inside of a building such as being able to move around equipment or between rooms and organisations storing equipment in accessible toilets.

Accessibility issues rarely end at the front door. Once inside, many people with disabilities encounter further barriers such as a lack of accessible bathrooms or lifts with Braille signage. Uneven surfaces, reflective surfaces, narrow doorways and a lack of clear signage all affect the ability of people with disabilities to successfully negotiate the interiors of many buildings. (Shut Out p43)

The accessibility of organisations also includes the experience of being welcomed, greeted and included in the life of the sporting organisation in the same manner as other members of the community. Resolution of this issue may include having staff explain their membership rules and payments, the identification of a contact person that a person with a disability could ask for assistance, having access to modified programs or equipment.

It is commended that most sporting organisations responding to the survey indicated that they did not provide disability specific programs but rather people with a disability were included in the same activities as everyone else.

People participating in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project identified access to information as a key barrier and also one of the things that would make it easier for them to participate in sport and physical activity. Most sporting organisations have internet based links either in their own right or as part of community or corporate promotion. People with a disability reported that they are more likely to seek information through parents, friends and paid support staff, this
may relate to low literacy or computer skills amongst people with a disability. Sporting organisations could promote their activities through disability services. Consideration should be given to the accessibility of sporting organisations web page, information regarding accessible web pages can be found on the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Webpage (http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/webaccess/index.htm)

Sporting organisations marketing strategies should consider targeting the people with a disability as an underrepresented user group. Promotion material should be directed through family/friend networks and disability service organisations. Organisations may like to reflect Easy English principles such as being jargon free, printed on non reflective paper, clear uncluttered images, and Sans Serif fonts of no less than 12. For further guidance and tips please see Scopes Communication Resource Centre’s webpage which also contains training opportunities and resources (http://www.scopevic.org.au/index.php/site/whatweoffer/communicationresourcecentre).

Sporting organisations and disability services participating in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project reported a willingness to partner to achieve greater outcomes and opportunities for people with a disability to participate in sport and physical activity. Partnerships may take many forms however establishing relationships between sporting organisations and disability service providers would provide a direct pathway for promotion of activities, resources and opportunities for skill development and knowledge exchange. Whitehorse City Council through the MetroAccess Development Officer will continue to explore and support potential partnerships between sporting organisations and disability service providers.

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project set out to explore the experiences of people with a disability, to gain an understanding of their aspirations, the barriers they experiences and utilise this information to support and advocate for change. It is recognised that individual experiences in relation to sport and physical activity are varied and unique however there are opportunities as outlined in this report to further support, advocate and partner to increase the potential of people with a disability to participate in the life of the community through sport and physical activity.
The Way Forward

The Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project has identified a range of opportunities that could increase the participation rates of people with a disability in local sport and physical activity. Exploration of the opportunities highlighted the following themes:

Access to information:
- People with a disability require access to information about the sport and physical activities that are available within the City of Whitehorse and broader community.
- Information needs to be available to parents, carers and disability service organisations as these are key information sources for people with a disability.

Raising awareness
- Promote the interests of people with a disability to sporting organisations
- Promote disability awareness training opportunities to sporting organisations
- Highlight the social opportunities associated with sporting organisations to people with a disability, families and carers.
- Advocating for accessible venues, transport and fee structures

Service promotion
- Promote the services and supports offered through disability service organisations to sporting organisations
- Encourage sporting organisations to promote activities through disability service organisations
- Promote government initiatives such as Access for All Abilities and MetroAccess programs to disability and sporting organisations

Service Development
- Encourage disability and sporting organisations to promote training and skill development opportunities to assist people to develop fundamental skills prior to joining clubs
- Promote spectator opportunities for sport and physical activities.
- Continue to promote the benefits of inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities to sporting organisations
- Promote the uses of alternative communication tools such as communication boards and Easy English formatting to sporting organisations.

Strategic Planning and Partnerships
- Promote partnership opportunities between disability and sporting organisations
- Promote networking opportunities between sporting and disability organisations.
The opportunities raised in the Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project Report seek to address the barriers to participation experienced by people with a disability in the Whitehorse community. Continuing to be responsive to the needs of people with a disability and working with both disability service providers and sporting organisations Whitehorse City Council will continue to:

- Work with the local Access for All Abilities provider to promote the range of sport and physical activity opportunities available within the City of Whitehorse.

- Promote the interests and aspirations of people with a disability to sport organisations highlighting missed business and membership opportunities.

- Promote sport and physical activity opportunities to people with a disability, their families and supporters as well as disability service providers.

- Continue to advocate for the reduction of barriers experienced by people with a disability that prevent participation in the life of the community

- Promote networking opportunities between sporting organisations and disability service providers

- Explore the potential for disability and sporting organisations to share resources and knowledge to increase the sport and physical activities available to people with a disability

- Work AAA provider to identify and support sporting organisations access to disability related training

- Promote the development of disability action plans to sporting organisations.
References


Appendix:

Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project Surveys

- Individuals with a disability  
  page 66
- Disability Service Organisations  
  page 71
- Sporting Organisations  
  page 80
Why we’re asking:
Sport and physical activities helps everyone feel well, have fun and make friends but sometimes taking part in sport and physical activities can be harder if you have a disability.

We would like to know what sport and physical activities you do now, what sport and physical activities you like to do and what makes it hard for you do the sport and physical activities you would like to do.

We will use this information to work with community services, sporting clubs, businesses, government departments and Council so that people with a disability can participate in the sport and physical activities they choose.

Are you a parent, family member or friend filling out this survey on behalf of a person with a disability?

☐ Yes
☐ No

About You

1. Are you male or female?
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

2. How old are you?
   ☐ Under 18
   ☐ 19-24
   ☐ 25-29
   ☐ 30-34
   ☐ 35-39
   ☐ 40-44
   ☐ 45-49
   ☐ 50+
3. **What suburb do you live in?**
   - Blackburn
   - Blackburn North
   - Blackburn South
   - Box Hill
   - Box Hill North
   - Box Hill South
   - Burwood
   - Burwood East
   - Forest Hill
   - Mitcham
   - Mont Albert
   - Mont Albert North
   - Nunawading
   - Surrey Hills
   - Vermont
   - Vermont South
   - Other _______________

4. **What is the major reason for your disability?**
   - Physical
   - Intellectual disability
   - ABI
   - Sensory
   - Cognitive
   - Psychiatric/mental health

5. **Do you need support to do things you want to do?**
   - I don’t need support
   - I sometimes need support
   - I need support if I’m not familiar or confident with what I’m doing
   - I need support all the time

6. **What are your living arrangements**
   - I live with my family
   - I live by myself
   - I live with friends
   - I live in shared supported accommodation or CRU
   - Other please describe:

7. **How happy are you with your level of health and fitness?**
   - Very happy
   - Happy
   - Okay
   - Could be better
   - Unhappy
8. How do you find out about sport and physical activities:
   □ Friends or family
   □ From paid staff who work with me
   □ Noticeboards at places I go to
   □ Local newspaper
   □ Websites
   □ Disability Services
   □ Other – such as

9. Which services can you ask for help to find out about sport and physical activities?

Your ideas about sport and physical activity

10. What activities do you think are sport?

11. What activities do you think are physical activity

12. Why should you undertake sport and physical activities?
What you do now

13. What sport and recreation do you do at the moment?

14. Where do you do your sport or physical activities?
   - Blackburn
   - Blackburn North
   - Blackburn South
   - Box Hill
   - Box Hill North
   - Box Hill South
   - Burwood
   - Burwood East
   - Forest Hill
   - Mitcham
   - Mont Albert
   - Mont Albert North
   - Nunawading
   - Surrey Hills
   - Vermont
   - Vermont South
   - Other

15. Do your sport and physical activities occur in any of the following?
   - *Fitness, leisure or indoor sports centre with entry fees*
   - *Club or association requiring membership*
   - *Community or neighbourhood house*
   - *Workplace*
   - *School*
   - *Disability Service*
   - *Public parks or other free venues*
   - Other
16. What does sport and physical activity involve for you?
   □ Playing as a member of a team
   □ Doing your activity on your own
   □ Watching live sport
   □ Watching sport on TV
   □ Joining a group with other people in the community
   □ Joining a group with people with a disability
   □ Not playing or doing the activity but helping in other ways
   □ Other Please describe:

17. How often do you take part?
   □ Daily
   □ 2-3 times a week
   □ Weekly
   □ Fortnightly
   □ Monthly

18. How long does your sport or physical activity go for each time?
   □ Less than an hour
   □ Between 1-2 hours
   □ Between 2-3 hours
   □ More than 3 hours

19. When do you like to take part?
   □ Weekdays
      □ Morning (Before 12pm)
      □ Afternoon (12pm to 6pm)
      □ Evening (After 6pm)
   □ Weekends
      □ Morning (Before 12pm)
      □ Afternoon (12pm to 6pm)
      □ Evening (After 6pm)
20. Who do you go with?
- By myself
- With a friend
- With a group
- With paid staff
- I meet people there

21. Why do you do your sport or physical activity?
- Fitness
- Maintaining strength
- Social reasons, including making friends
- Enjoyment
- Learning something new
- Other: Please describe:

22. How does your sport or physical activity make you feel?
- Very happy
- A bit better than before the activity
- The same as before the activity
- A bit worse than before
- Unhappy

23. What do you like most about sport and recreation?

What you would like to do?

24. Would you like to do your sport or physical activity more often?
- Yes, much more often
- Yes, a bit more often
- No

25. If you could do any sport or recreation activity, what would it be?
26. What would make it easier for people with disabilities to get involved in sport and physical activity?

27. Do you have suggestions for how this could happen?

What makes it hard?
28. What makes it hard for you to participate in sport or physical activity?

- Transport – I can’t get to the venue
- Accessibility – I can’t get into or around venues
- Timing – things are on at the wrong time of day/night
- Attitudes – staff or other users make me feel uncomfortable
- Money – things are too expensive for me
- Facilities/equipment – I need things to be able to participate that venues don’t have
- Activity level – what’s available is too easy or too hard for me
- Fear of injury
- Other: Please describe:

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey

Please send completed surveys to:

Maureen D’Arcy
MetroAccess Development Officer
Whitehorse City Council
Locked Bag 2
Nunawading Delivery Centre
Nunawading 3131
**Purpose of this survey:**

Sport and physical activities help everyone feel well, have fun and make friends but sometimes taking part in sport and physical activities can be harder if you have a disability.

The City of Whitehorse Sport and Physical Activity Survey 2010 aims to explore the experiences of local people with a disability regarding accessing sport and recreation opportunities. We would also like to explore the experiences of organisations that provide sport and recreation opportunities to people with a disability. To that end we ask that you complete the following survey.

We will use this information to work with disability services, community services, sporting clubs, businesses, government departments and Council to influence the range of sport and physical activity opportunities that are available to people with a disability in their local area.

**Organisation Details:**

1. **Organisation Name:**

2. **Address**

3. **Contact Person**

4. **Contact Number**
5. The main programs or activities offered by our organisation are:
   - [ ] Accommodation
   - [ ] Children’s Services
   - [ ] Case Management
   - [ ] Day Service
   - [ ] Education/learning
   - [ ] Employment
   - [ ] Holiday Program
   - [ ] Individual Planning
   - [ ] Respite
   - [ ] Specialist Therapy Services

6. Our organisation’s operates on the following days and times?
   - [ ] Monday to Friday
   - [ ] 7 Days per week
   Opening Hours: ________________________

7. How many people attend your organisation on average per week? ________

8. The following public transport options, (bus train and or tram) are available to people coming to our organisation:
   - [ ] Very easy – more than one type of stop within 1 minute walk
   - [ ] Easy – more than one type of stop within 5 minute walk
   - [ ] Average – only one type of stop within 5 minute walk
   - [ ] Poor – only one type or not within 10 minute walk
   - [ ] Difficult – more than 15 minute walk to any public transport

**About Staff within your organisation**

9. Do staff members at your organisation have experience and or training in working with people with a disability in sport and physical activities?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   Can you describe the training they have undertaken?

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Encouraging Active Lifestyles for People with a Disability Project
10. Are staff members in your organisation able to assist people with disability to participate in sport and physical activities in community settings:
   □ Yes
   □ No

11. Do you actively seek feedback from people with a disability regarding their experiences of sport and physical activities they have undertaken?
   □ Yes
   □ No

Can you provide an example of the feedback your organisation has received?

About People with a Disability

12. People attending our organisation have the following types of disabilities?
   □ Physical
   □ Intellectual disability
   □ Acquired Brain Injury
   □ Sensory (vision or hearing impairment)
   □ Cognitive
   □ Psychiatric/mental health

13. Our organisation offers the following access features?
   □ Flat or ramp entry to the building
   □ Accessible parking spots
   □ Accessible toilets
   □ Adult change facilities (hoists and change table)
   □ Wide doorways
   □ Alternative communication equipment
   □ Lifting aids
   □ Mobility aids
   □ Other: Please describe
14. Based on your organisation’s experience what outcomes can be achieved by people with a disability undertaking sport and physical activities?

15. Based on your organisation’s experience, what kinds of sport and recreation activities do you think people with a disability are interested in?

16. Have people with a disability expressed interest in activities that your organisation isn’t able to offer?
   - □ Yes
   - □ No

   Can you provide a brief description of these activities?

17. Have Sport and Physical Activity organisations approached our organisation regarding:
   - □ Introducing people with a disability to their organisation
   - □ Modifying activities they currently offer to make them more accessible to people with a disability
   - □ Partnering to deliver activities either organisation currently doesn’t offer
   - □ Partnering to share the physical space of either organisation
   - □ None of the above
   - □ Other please describe:
18. Would your organisation be open to discussing the following future opportunities:
   - Introducing people with a disability to sport and physical activity organisations
   - Modifying activities currently offered by sport and physical activity organisations to make them more accessible to people with a disability
   - Partnering to deliver activities our organisation currently doesn’t offer
   - Partnering to share the physical space of ours or other organisation
   - None of the above
   - Other topics, such as:

19. Are you aware of any organisations or services that your organisation can contact to develop and or deliver sport and physical activity programs and activities that include people with a disability?
   - Yes
   - No
   Can you list the services or organisations you are aware of?

20. What makes it hard for you to participate in sport or physical activity?
   - Transport – can’t get to the venue
   - Accessibility – I can’t get into or around venues
   - Timing – things are on at the wrong time of day/night
   - Attitudes – staff or other users make me feel uncomfortable
   - Money – things are too expensive for me
   - Facilities/equipment – I need things to be able to participate that venues don’t have
   - Activity level – what’s available is too easy or too hard for me
   - Fear of injury
   - Other: Please describe
Based on your organisation's experiences please describe any other barriers people with a disability face when planning and or accessing sport and physical activity organisations:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please Send Completed Surveys to:

Maureen D’Arcy  
MetroAccess Development Officer  
Whitehorse City Council  
Locked Bag 2  
Nunawading Delivery Centre  
Nunawading 3131
Purpose of this survey:
Sport and physical activities helps everyone feel well, have fun and make friends but sometimes taking part in sport and physical activities can be harder if you have a disability.

The City of Whitehorse Sport and Physical Activity Survey 2010 aims to explore the experiences of local people with a disability regarding accessing sport and recreation opportunities. We would also like to explore the experiences of organisations that provide sport and recreation opportunities to people with a disability. To that end we ask that you complete the following survey.

We will use this information to work with community services, sporting clubs, businesses, government departments and Council to influence the range of sport and physical activity opportunities that are available to people with a disability in their local area.

Organisation Details

21. Organisation Name: 

22. Address

23. Contact Person

24. Contact Number
About your organisation

25. Our organisation is best described as?
   - □ Fitness, leisure or indoor sports centre charging fees
   - □ Sport or recreation club or association requiring membership/registration
   - □ Community Centre
   - □ Workplace
   - □ School
   - □ Other, such as:

26. The main programs or activities offered by our organisation are?

27. Our organisation’s operates on the following days and times?
   - □ Monday to Friday
   - □ 7 Days per week
   - Opening Hours: ______________________

28. Our organisation’s busy times are:

29. Our organisation’s fees are best described as:
   - □ Payment by session, $10 or less
   - □ Payment by session, more than $10
   - □ Payment by time period, $50 or less per month average
   - □ Payment by time period, $50-$100 per month average
   - □ Payment by time period, more than $100 per month average
30. Our Organisation offers the following concession rates:
   □ For individuals with a:
     ○ Health care card
     ○ Pension card
     ○ Senior card
     ○ Student card
   □ For groups
   □ For Families
   □ We accept Companion Card

31. The following public transport options, (bus train and or tram) are available to people coming to our organisation:
   □ Very easy – more than one type of stop within 1 minute walk
   □ Easy – more than one type of stop within 5 minute walk
   □ Average – only one type of stop within 5 minute walk
   □ Poor – only one type or not within 10 minute walk
   □ Difficult – more than 15 minute walk to any public transport

32. How many people attend your organisation on average per week?

33. How many of these people are known to have a disability?

About Staff within your organisation
34. Do staff members at your organisation have experience and or training in working with people with a disability?
   □ Yes
   □ No

Can you describe the training they have undertaken?

35. Is ongoing disability related training available for staff to increase their confidence and knowledge of working with people with a disability?
   □ Yes
   □ No
36. Is there a staff member available at all times to assist people with disabilities if needed?
   - Yes
   - No

37. Do you actively seek feedback from people with a disability regarding their experiences of the organisation?
   - Yes
   - No

Can you provide an example of the feedback your organisation has received?

About People with a Disability

38. People attending our organisation have the following types of disabilities?
   - Physical
   - Intellectual disability
   - Acquired Brain Injury
   - Sensory (vision or hearing impairment)
   - Cognitive
   - Psychiatric/mental health

39. Our organisation offers the following access features?
   - Flat or ramp entry to the building
   - Accessible parking spots
   - Accessible toilets
   - Adult change facilities (hoists and change table)
   - Wide doorways
   - Alternative communication equipment
   - Lifting aids
   - Mobility aids
   - Other: Please describe
Programs and Services

40. Based on your organisation’s experience what outcomes can be achieved by people with a disability undertaking sport and physical activities?


41. Based on your organisation’s experience, what kinds of sport and recreation activities do you think people with a disability are interested in?


42. Do you run programs specifically for people with a disability at the moment?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   Can you provide a brief description of these programs?

43. Have people with a disability expressed interest in activities that your organisation isn’t able to offer?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   Can you provide a brief description of these activities?
44. Have disability organisations approached our organisation regarding:
   - Introducing people with a disability to your organisation
   - Modifying activities you currently offer to make them more accessible to people with a disability
   - Partnering to deliver activities your organisation currently doesn’t offer
   - Partnering to share the physical space of your organisation
   - None of the above
   - Other please describe:

45. Would your organisation be open to discussing the following future opportunities:
   - Introducing people with a disability to our service
   - Modifying activities currently offered to make them more accessible to people with a disability
   - Partnering to deliver activities our organisation currently doesn’t offer
   - Partnering to share the physical space of our organisation
   - None of the above
   - Other topics, such as:
46. Are you aware of any organisations or services that can assist your organisation to develop and deliver programs and activities that include people with a disability?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Can you list the services or organisations you are aware of?


47. Can you describe any assistance that your organisation would like to help deliver a wider range of programs or services that include people with a disability?


Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return Completed Surveys to:

Maureen D’Arcy
MetroAccess Development Officer
Whitehorse City Council
Locked Bag 2
Nunawading Delivery Centre
Nunawading 3131