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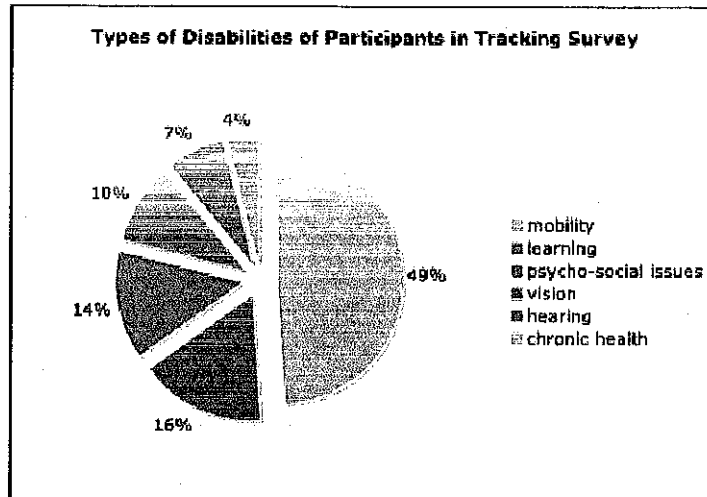
Mr. Peake

English III-(block 3)

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Do special needs kids benefit from the involvement in regular high school sports and activities?

Some children have difficulties in school, including problems with concentration, learning, language, ability to understand problems with behavior, or making and keeping friends. These difficulties may be due to the disability that the child suffers from. There are a variety of disorders or problems that a child could be suffering from, including physical disorders, psychiatric disorders, emotional problems, behavioral problems, and learning disorders. These children with special needs are usually entitled to receive special services or accommodations through the public schools. Federal law even gets involved and says that every child will receive a free and appropriate education. Different states have different criteria for eligibility, services available, and procedures for applying the laws. But what the federal government does not seem to get is that if you just simply involved these children in regular activities everyone would see the positive impact it has on the child. To support their ability to learn in school, three Federal laws apply to children with special needs: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1975), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990). Special needs kids do benefit from the involvement in regular high school activities because it gives them a chance to feel like a normal student and discover things about themselves they wouldn't have found without the involvement.



This graph shows how diverse the types of disabilities are, you can't just do things for one specific disability because there are many other children out there with disabilities of their own.

The three federal laws that apply to children with disabilities have had a big impact on children with disabilities. Each one has its own way of contributing to a more normal life for these children with special needs. The IDEA was originally brought up by Congress in 1975 to make sure that children with disabilities have the opportunity to receive a free reasonable public education, just like other children. The law has been revised many times over the years. The most recent amendments were passed by Congress in December 2004, with final changes published in August 2006 (Part B for school-aged children) and in September 2011 (Part C, for babies and toddlers). So, in one sense, the law is relatively new, even though it has a powerful history ("IDEA"). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that, "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 7(20) shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service ("Section"). The ADA notices and protects the civil rights of people with

disabilities and is designed after earlier laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race and gender. The ADA covers a large range of disabilities, from physical conditions to conditions such as emotional illness, or learning disorders. The ADA covers things like access to the workplace, State and local government services, and places of public accommodation and commercial facilities. It also requires phone companies to provide relay services for people who have hearing or speech problems and other instructions to Federal offices that enforce the law ("ADA"). These three laws have opened the way for special needs children to feel more like any other child and by doing that these laws have served their purpose.

Being involved in regular high school activities such as a physical education class or just sports in general has cognitive benefits for the special needs children. Physical education can increase a child with disabilities motivation because it gives them a goal to reach. Having something to strive for gives these children a reason to become active and enjoy the class. Things like winning a game or being first in a race can have a huge impact on the children with disabilities. It can even bring out leadership in some of them ("Disabilities"). The special needs children do benefit from the regular classroom but since PE is more hands on it allows them to discover and access strengths that cannot be challenged in a regular classroom ("Disabilities"). Physical education classes give them a chance outside the regular school to get to know their peers. Since physical education is sports and hands on, special needs children get a chance to interact with the regular students. Special needs children will learn verbal communication with the other students because of the way they have to communicate through the activities. Physical education can even improve a special needs child's self image. It allows the other students to see the child instead of the disability ("Right" 172). Since regular students get a chance to see the kids with disabilities outside of the classroom it gives them a different view of disabled children.

Through a class like this the opinion and the way regular students feel about children with disabilities could change for the better ("Disabilities"). Physical activity also improves special needs children's self regulation. Regular high school sports can actually provide structure to these children's days. Being at a certain place at a certain time makes any child go by a schedule. By following a schedule the concentration of a child with disabilities can improve. Sports can even be used sports as a learning tool by discovering what each child can and cannot do ("Right" 173).

Developing self- esteem is very important for special education children and they can develop self-esteem through being involved in sports. Even if the child cannot fully participate in the sport they can find ways to be involved. They can become team managers or even take part in practices (Mauro). Children with disabilities are searching for inclusion and by taking part in sports they get to feel what they are searching for. They have the need to be involved and what to feel like they are contributing to the group ("Disabilities"). Being a team manager gives them a chance to be involved and contribute to the team. Interacting with their peers leads to increased motivation and the more they feel included the more the motivation level will increase. Most of the time if special needs children feel like they failed at something they will not try it again but receiving the group inclusion makes them feel like they are doing good which makes them want to return. The group inclusion they receive from taking part in the sports will improve a disabled child's confidence and with more confidence all of their abilities will improve ("Disabilities").

Rodney Brett Bowden is 19 and is affected by Down Syndrome. He is a junior at Hobbton High School in Newton Grove, North Carolina where he is part of the football team. He has the personality and attitude that everyone desires (Bowden). He has been a member of the

Hobpton varsity football team since his freshman year. This year Brett is a junior and is super excited about the upcoming football season. He even started practicing and started bonding with the boys. Brett calls his teammates "his brothers," and is very passionate about the game of football. Brett does not even play on the field during the actual games but he does enjoy warming up with the team, practicing, and putting on his full uniform (Bowden). Football season came at the same time it always does but this year the North Carolina High School Association told the coaches and our family that Brett is not allowed to play years because of his age. The rule about age of ineligibility at 19 has been in the books since 1974. The rules apply to everyone even the regular students. There has never been any exception when it comes to a student's age because the older players are without a doubt bigger and stronger (Shan). There are rules put in place to allow children with disabilities to stay in school until their 22nd birthday, they just cannot actively participate in the sports because of the age law. They are still offered the chance to be a manager and are even allowed to stay on the sidelines in uniform so they still have to opportunity to feel the group inclusion they strive for (Shan). Just because a child has special needs does not mean they do not have the same rights as any other child. Every child has the right to enjoy the fun of playing sports. Every child should have the chance to experience the joy of teamwork. Every child should know what it feels like to have the achievement of hitting a ball. Every child should be able to say I made a goal. Every child should have the right to run track and cross the finish line (Mauro). All of these experiences can benefit a special needs child in some way. Just because they are affected by disabilities does not mean they should not experience success and being part of a team.

Sports allow special needs children to become empowered to lead and make change happen. Sports develop independence within these children. They learn to take risk and they

learn how to manage failure (Stinson). Sports give the chance to see the “impossible” and accomplish things these children never thought they could. Being involved with teams open up social interactions and teach them to communicate with regular students. Most of the time they do not just interact with the students, they actually develop friendships (“Disabilities”). Being on the teams require responsibility which is something most special needs children do not ever experience. Since it requires responsibility it makes the students do things for themselves instead of it just being handed to them (Stinson). Special needs are not the only ones who benefit from their involvement in sports, the regular students also have a chance to grow. They get to see the person’s abilities not just the disabilities. The interaction reduces the isolation that the special needs children typically feel. Regular students get the chance to see the person for who they are and not what their disabilities make them to be (“Right” 170). It gives them a chance to see the children with disabilities in a positive way and that could make all the difference to the child with the disability.

Other activities benefit the special needs children. Not just sports but being active really helps them out. Doing things that have a cause and effect. Activities like hanging noise, knock it off, blowing games, scooter boards, mat, stretch bands, playground swings, parachute play all have some form of cause and effect. Using balls is not a bad idea either because it keeps them active while also interesting them. Ball activities are ball bins, big ball, hanging balls, ball trays, and soccer throw ins. Group activities probably have the greatest effects on children with disabilities because it allows them to interact with the other students. Some suggested group activities are parachute activities, relays, pass the rubber ring, tag, duck duck goose, and crash the cans. Music gives them a different kind of benefit. Activities that involve music are using

songs with themes, dancing, ROMaerobics, and Workout Videotapes (Stopka). There are plenty of activities that benefit children with disabilities everyone just needs to put them to use.

Special needs children do benefit from the involvement in regular high school activities. They get all kinds of benefits. The benefits range from physical to mental to socially. No matter the way it is seen it just involving the special needs kids makes an impact on their lives. They do not have to actually play during the games just being part of a team or taking part in a group activity makes all the difference in the world. Special needs kids today get more and more involvement with regular students and the special kids keep growing as people. The benefits that disabled children receive from just being part of the regular student life are numerous. As long as everyone works together then the benefits will just continue to increase.

2. Being a team manager

3. Take part in practices

B. Searching for group inclusion

1. They need to feel involved and like they are contributing

2. Inclusion in groups leads to more motivation

3. Returning if they feel like they are good at something

4. They do not need to feel like they are hindering group performance

C. Positive Self Image

1. Sports are useful in developing self image

2. Abilities will improve with confidence

IV. Brett

A. Explain his story

1. The history

2. The background of the rules

3. Reason why he wasn't able to play

V. Sports benefits in general

A. What special needs children have the right to do.

B. Sports allow Special needs children to do...

1. Become empowered to lead and make change happen

2. Develop independence

3. To take risk and learn how to manage failure

4. See the "impossible"

5. Social interaction

6. Gives friendships

7. Exercise responsibility

C. The way others view them

1. Brings out their abilities not their disabilities

2. Reduce the isolation of them

3. See the person not what their disability

4. See them in a positive way

VI. Other activities

VII. Conclusion

Keep going!

Nicole Bond

Mr. Peake

English III-(block 3)

20 May 2011

Do special needs kids benefit from the involvement in regular high school sports and activities?

Thesis: Special needs kids do benefit from the involvement in regular high school activities because it gives them a chance to feel like a normal student and discover things about themselves they wouldn't have found without the involvement.

I. Introduction

II. Cognitive Benefits

A. Physical Education class

1. Increases their motivation
2. Increases their social skills
3. Increases their self image
4. Improves their self-regulation

B. Structure of Sports

1. Sports commit you to a certain place at a certain time which requires a schedule
2. Schedules improve concentration (provides structure to their day)
3. Sports are a learning tool

III. Self-Esteem

A. Developing a sense of self-esteem is important

1. They find ways to participate