



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Disability Inclusion Project: Evaluation Report

Prepared by SPRINTER for Sport NSW

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Prevention Research Collaboration,
Sydney School of Public Health,
Faculty of Medicine and Health
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Acknowledgments

Sport NSW partnered with the Sport and Recreation Intervention and Epidemiology Research (SPRINTER) Group to undertake this evaluation of the Disability Inclusion Project.

SPRINTER is part of the Prevention Research Collaboration, Sydney School of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine and Health, Charles Perkins Centre, The University of Sydney.

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Executive Summary

Participation in sport and active recreation confers many health and social benefits that are becoming increasingly recognised and important for people with disability. The Sport NSW Disability Inclusion Project supports this vision by aiming to support increasing opportunities for children with disability to participate in sport and active recreation; and build capacity in State Sporting Organisations, Local Councils and other providers to provide inclusive sport and active recreation for PWD. The Disability Inclusion Project involved three key project streams: **1) Multi-sport activity days; 2) Adaptive Sport Community Seminars; and 3) Networking.**

Sport NSW partnered with the Sport and Recreation Intervention and Epidemiology Research Group at the University of Sydney to conduct an evaluation of the Disability Inclusion Project, covering the period from March-December 2023. The evaluation was conducted using a mixed-methods approach that collected data through surveys and semi-structured interviews.

There were 8 Multi-sport activity days held, and 1,839 children with disability attended these days. Children with disability who attended these days generally reported positive experiences participating in sports. These days successfully reached a high proportion of children from multicultural backgrounds and children who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

This evaluation found that children with disability have moderate levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport and active recreation, and this was similar across all priority sub-populations. This is a positive finding and suggests that lower levels of participation may be due to external barriers, which can be addressed. Key barriers to sport participation identified in this evaluation include cost (32%), followed by not knowing where to play (28%), and a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (28%). Children from multicultural backgrounds reported higher levels of barriers related to not knowing where to play (36%). Children who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander experienced proportionally higher levels of cost-related barriers (47%).

Following each Multi-sport activity day, an Adaptive Sport Community Seminar was held in the same region. The project had a positive impact on the capacity of sports organisations to deliver inclusive sporting opportunities to people with disability, with two thirds (65%) of sporting organisation representatives reporting that attending the Adaptive Sport Community Seminar had increased their knowledge and ability to support people with disability to participate in sport.

Sport NSW successfully developed resources to build sport organisations' capacity to provide inclusive sport and active recreation for people with disability. The Sports Trainer Module was successfully developed with Sports Medicine Australia and 86 representatives from sports organisations completed the Module.

The Disability Inclusion Project successfully provided quality opportunities for a large number of children with disability to participate in sport and active recreation. The project also provides a comprehensive understanding about children with disability's levels of motivation, capability, barriers and preferences around participation in sport and active recreation. Insights captured through this evaluation offer a strong foundation for sport and active recreation providers to build capacity in promoting and fostering a more inclusive and targeted sport and active recreation landscape for people with disability.

The Multi-sport Activity Days **provided opportunities** for 1,839 children with disability to participate in sport and active recreation.

Two thirds (65%) of the Adaptive Sport Community Seminar attendees reported that the Seminar **increased their knowledge and ability** to support people with disability to participate in sport.

Key learnings and recommendations

Recommendations for the Multi-Sport Activity Days

- The Variety Activate Inclusion Sports Days (multi-sport activity days) reached a large number of children with disability. Children attending these days generally reported positive experiences participating in sports. Continue to run the multi-sport activity days and provide opportunities for children with disability to participate in sport.
- Provide more recreational non-competitive activities (e.g., non-competitive swimming). Consider pre-registration screening for activities and game/play format options that may be interesting or appealing to the target population. This may be beneficial in addressing the 'lack of interest' that presented as a common barrier to sport participation.
- Involve sports role models to demonstrate diversity, inclusion, and to encourage participation (e.g., Paralympians and elite adaptive sport athletes).
- Split activities by levels of skills (e.g. 'first timer', 'play for fun', 'competition') or age cohorts (e.g., under 12 years, 12-15 years, 16 years and over, all/open age activities).
- Implement a flexible program structure/schedule (e.g., participants able to opt in/out of activities as desired).
- Consider quiet 'chill' zones that can be used as time-out or rest-and-recover areas.
- Consider opportunities for parents/carers to attend, be meaningfully involved in, and support their child at the multi-sport activity days. The level they are involved should be child-directed and pressure-free.
- Consider adopting inclusive sport design that is culturally safe, inclusive, and welcoming (e.g., single-gender games, resources in simple plain English or multiple languages, hiring non-English-speaking staff or interpreters, providing culturally appropriate uniforms and foods) as this project reached participants from diverse multicultural backgrounds.
- Engage people with disability in co-design of the program structure.
- Ongoing (as opposed to one-off) events could strengthen friendships and connections among participants and staff, as well as with sports, increasing the likelihood of the child participating in sport long-term.

Recommendations for Sports Organisations

- Encourage all staff and volunteers at the organisation to complete the Sports Trainers Module.
- Provide low-cost or subsidised options for families who can't afford to join the sport or active recreation club or team. For example, being a registered Active Kids provider and promoting the means tested vouchers to eligible families to reduce the cost barrier (highest reported barrier).
- Promote and increase awareness of inclusive sport opportunities for children with disability, especially for children who speak a language other than English at home. The highest reported barrier for children who speak a language other than English at home was not knowing where to go to participate. The multi-sport activity day could be an ideal opportunity to reach children with disability and provide links and information on how/where they can continue to participate in the activities that they tried and enjoyed.
- Continue communicating and sharing inclusive sport resources and experiences with other sports organisations in the local area.

Recommendations for Sport NSW

- Increase awareness of the Sports Trainers Module.
- Continue to provide resources and support for organisations to deliver high quality inclusive sports opportunities for people with disability.
- Continue to facilitate opportunities for sport organisations to network and share resources and experiences providing sport opportunities for people with disability.

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Report Aim

This report presents an independent, critical evaluation of Sport NSW's Disability Inclusion Project. This report is aimed at policy makers, sport and recreation organisations and stakeholders, researchers, and evaluators looking to increase the opportunities for sport for people with disability

This report presents:

- Background of the Disability Inclusion Project and an overview of the evaluation approach.
- Evaluation findings aligned with the evaluation questions with case-studies providing an in-depth understanding of experiences of children with disability at the multi-sport activity days and in sport and active recreation more generally.
- Summary of what worked and what didn't work, with recommendations for policymakers, the sport and active recreation sector, and researchers regarding the barriers and facilitators of sport participation for people with disability.

Background

Approximately 1 in 6 (18%, or 4.4 million) people in Australia live with disability¹. People with disability (PWD) receive the same physical, mental, and social benefits from participating in sport and physical activity as those not having disability. People of all abilities living in Australia have a right to equal access to sport and active recreation opportunities. However, PWD in Australia face additional barriers and have less opportunities to participate in sport and active recreation. To address these inequalities, the NSW Office of Sport has funded the Disability Inclusion Project, which is led by Sport NSW.

The Disability Inclusion Project aims to:

- support increasing opportunities for children with disability (CWD) to participate in sport and active recreation.
- build capacity in State Sporting Organisations (SSOs), Local Councils and other providers to provide inclusive sport and active recreation for PWD.

Sport NSW partnered with the Sport and Recreation Intervention and Epidemiology Research (SPRINTER) Group at the University of Sydney to undertake an evaluation of the Disability Inclusion Project.

The Disability Inclusion Project (DIP) has **3 key streams**:

Multi-Sport Activity Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 Multi-Sport Activity Days were delivered by Disability Sports Australia as additional days to the current Variety Activate Inclusion Days• Engage local sport providers, volunteers and council staff
Training and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and delivery of Sports Medicine Australia Sports Trainers Course• Delivery of Adaptive Sport Community Seminars to support inclusive sport• Include local participants/athletes and providers on panels at these sessions• Provide information on inclusive sport resources• Additional meetings with SSOs on barriers and needs for regular adaptive programs
Networking Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online networking opportunities• Key-note speakers• Industry professionals• Case studies

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). (2022). *People with disability in Australia*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia>

Timeline

Figure 1 below represents the key milestones included in the Disability Inclusion Project delivery timeline.

Stakeholders

The key stakeholders considered within this project were:

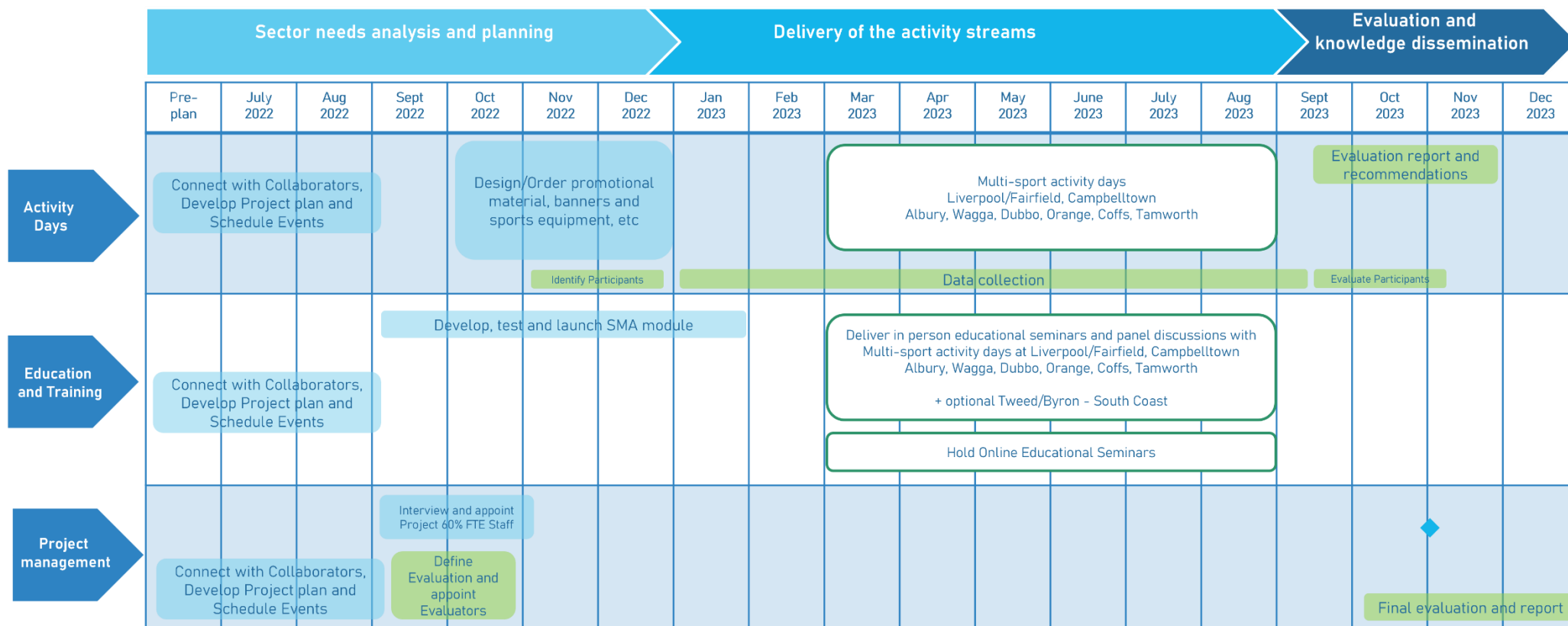
Organisation	Role
Sport NSW	Project delivery
NSW Office of Sport	Funding body
SPRINTER ² Group	Evaluation support
Disability Sports Australia	Delivery partner
Variety- The Children's Charity NSW	Delivery partner

² Sport and Recreation Intervention and Epidemiology Research Group

Figure 1. Disability Inclusion Project: Project Schedule and Delivery Timeline



Disability Inclusion Project Project Schedule



Evaluation Methods

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to critically appraise the extent to which Sport NSW's DIP contributed to increasing opportunities for CWD to participate in sport and active recreation; and building capacity in SSOs, Local Councils and other providers to provide inclusive sport and active recreation for PWD.

Logic Model

The logic model for the DIP was co-created by SPRINTER and Sport NSW to ensure clear understanding between stakeholders involved in the project (Figure 2). Logic models aim to tell the story of a project in a few words, demonstrating the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

Evaluation Questions

A series of evaluation questions were established to identify what worked and what didn't work for PWD and sports organisations in the DIP. These questions align with the DIP logic model (Figure 2) and included:

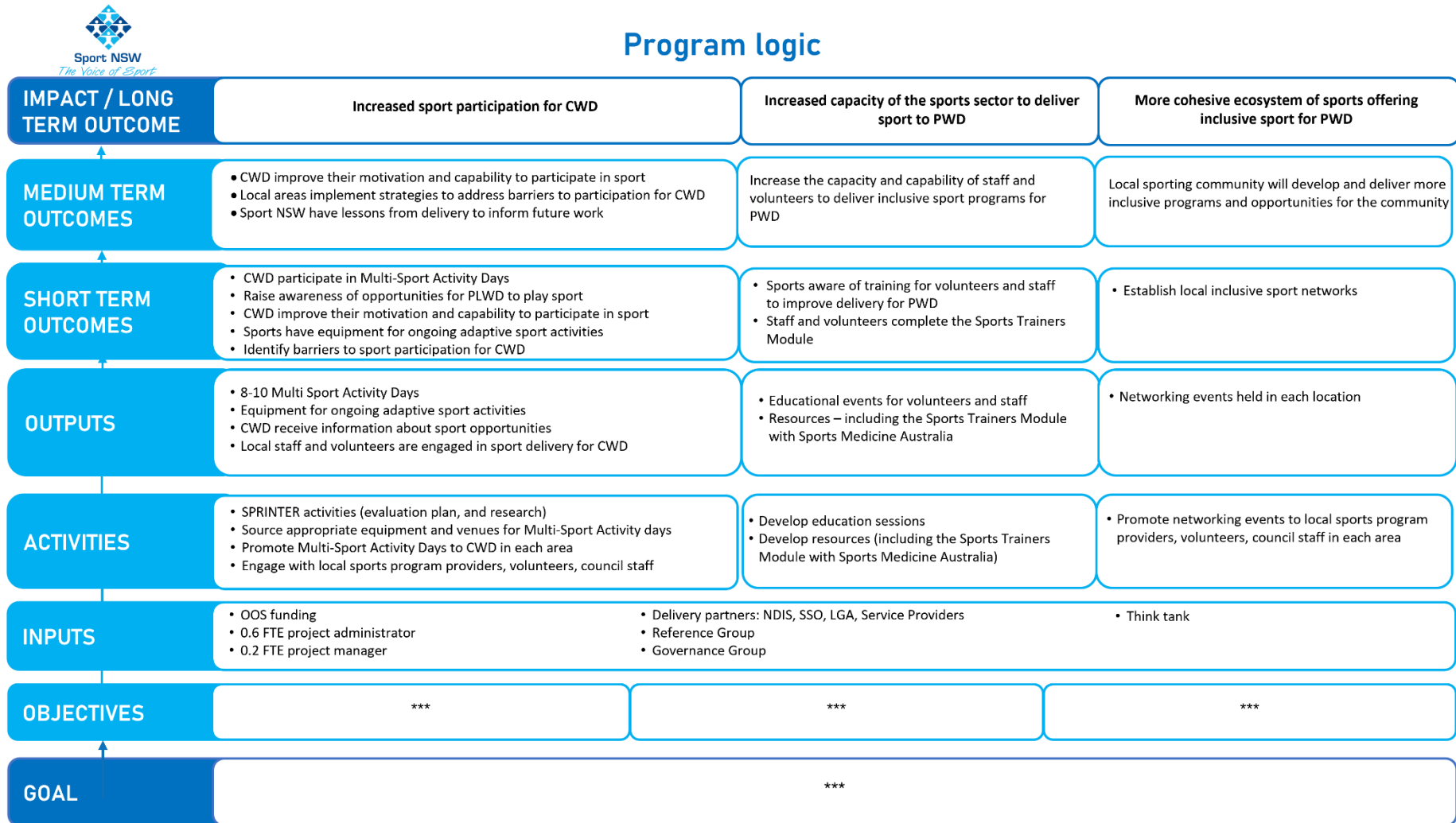
Process Evaluation:

1. How many multi-sport activity days were held?
2. To what extent are local staff and volunteers engaged in sport delivery for CWD?
3. How many educational events for volunteers and staff were held?
4. What resources are available for volunteers and staff?

Short-term Outcome Evaluation:

5. How many CWD participated in the multi-sport activity days?
6. What are CWD's levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport?
7. To what extent do sports have access to quality sports equipment for ongoing adaptive sport activities?
8. What are the barriers for CWD to sport participation?
9. To what extent are sports aware of training for volunteers and staff to improve delivery for PWD?
10. How many staff and volunteers completed the Sports Trainers Module?
11. How many local inclusive sports networks were established?

Figure 2. Logic model developed in partnership with SPRINTER (the University of Sydney) and Sport NSW for the Disability Inclusion Project



Evaluation Design

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach including **progress reporting** (process evaluation), **surveys** (process and outcome evaluation) and **semi-structured qualitative interviews** (outcome evaluation).

During the course of the DIP, SPRINTER and Sport NSW worked collaboratively to procure the data through each of the following roles:

- Sport NSW recruited participants for surveys and provided progress reporting data.
- SPRINTER recruited participants for semi-structured interviews.

Participant Recruitment

Child with their parent/carer survey

Children who registered to attend at least one of the fifteen DIP multi-sport activity days were invited to participate in a survey with their parent/carer present. Sport NSW organised for study invitation packs to be distributed to parents/carers through schools (sent home in children's backpacks). Each invitation pack consisted of the following:

- Study invitation letters to participate in a survey and/or qualitative semi-structured interview
- Participant information statements (parent/carer and child-friendly versions)
- Study recruitment flyer

Organisation survey

All organisation representatives who attended one of the Adaptive Sport Community Seminars were invited to complete an online survey. At the end of each Seminar, a QR code linked to the survey was presented to all attendees on the screen and a link to the survey was also sent in a follow up email.

Semi-structured interviews

Through the child with parent/carer survey, participants were provided an opportunity to indicate interest in participating in an online one-to-one qualitative semi-structured interview. Participants expressing interest in an interview were required to provide consent to be contacted by a member of the SPRINTER research team. Survey participants who expressed interest in attending an interview and provided consent to be contacted received a follow-up email containing the following:

- An explanation of the study aims and eligibility criteria* to participate in an interview
- Brief details about the interview component of the study (expected duration, interview topics covered)
- Participant information statements (parent/carer and child-friendly versions)
- Study consent form (for participants wishing to provide prior written consent to participate in the interview)
- Link to an online Microsoft Bookings interview registration form (where participants could nominate a suitable date/time to attend an interview)

*To be eligible to participate in a semi-structured interview, participants must have met all of the following criteria at the time of study enrolment:

1. *Attended a Multi-Sport Activity Day (Variety Activate Inclusion Sports Day) in 2023*
2. *Living with disability*
3. *At least 6 years old^f*

†Participants aged 13+ years could opt to participate in an interview without a parent/carer present if their parent/carer had provided prior written consent for them to do so or were able to provide verbal consent at the start of the scheduled interview.

Data Collection

Child with their parent/carer survey

Participants who registered to attend a DIP multi-sport activity day had the option of completing the survey online on Qualtrics through a QR code provided or using paper copies to enable as many people as possible to respond. Participants who completed the survey were eligible to enter a draw to win a \$100 sports gift voucher.

Information collected through the survey included: sociodemographic information (date of birth, gender, postcode, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status, language spoken at home, and disability type), the child's motivations and capability to participate in sport (using the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) for youth with disability³), and barriers to participation.

See Appendix A (pp 51) for a full copy of the child with parent/carer survey questionnaire.

Organisation survey

Following each of the eight Adaptive Sport Community Seminars, attendees were invited to complete an online survey through Qualtrics to provide feedback on the Seminar. Information collected included: role within organisation, organisation type, satisfaction with the Seminar, number of staff/volunteers from the organisation who had completed the Sports Trainer Module, availability of equipment at the organisation, resources received from the Seminar, and barriers to delivering inclusive sport for PWD.

See Appendix B (pp 56) for a full copy of the organisation survey questionnaire.

Semi-structured qualitative interviews

All interviews were conducted by a trained qualitative research expert with experience of interview-based research and facilitated by a member of the research team. A disability support person was assigned to co-facilitate the interviews, unless participants and/or their parents/carers indicated that they did not prefer or need additional support during the interview.

A semi-structured interview guide was developed to capture process and outcome evaluation data. The interview guide included open-ended questions to elicit a detailed recount of the program delivery and outcomes of the project on participants. See Appendix C (pp 60) for further details of the interview process and guide.

All interviews were conducted online using Zoom and video-recorded.

Progress Reporting

Sport NSW securely shared relevant data from their online registration and membership database with the SPRINTER group for the period of project delivery (March-December 2023). Progress reporting collected the following information about PWD: the number and locations of DIP multi-sport activity days held, the number of participants who attended these days, and the number of staff and volunteers engaged in sport delivery for PWD. Additionally, progress reporting collected the following information about sports organisations: the number and locations of DIP Adaptive Sport Community Seminars.

³ Tracey, D., Maïano, C., Gagnon, C., Craven, R., McCune, V. S., & Morin, A. J. S. (2021). The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire adapted for youth with intellectual disabilities (TEOSQ-ID). *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 56, 102006. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2021.102006>

Data Analysis

Survey data

The online survey data was downloaded, and the paper survey data was manually entered. These two datasets were merged. We calculated area level socio-economic status using postcode of residence. Socioeconomic status was classified using the Socioeconomic Index for Area (SEIFA), specifically the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage which ranks areas in Australia according to relative disadvantage. Postcode level SEIFA percentiles were categorised into quartiles, with the lowest 25% being classified as the most disadvantaged (1st quartile) and the highest 25% classified as the least disadvantaged (4th quartile).

Descriptive statistics (frequencies and proportions) were calculated for all demographic characteristics (age, gender, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status, language spoken at home, disability type, and socioeconomic status). Descriptive statistics were also calculated for outcomes of interest (thoughts and feelings about sport, sport participation levels, and barriers to participation) by demographic characteristics. All analyses were conducted in Excel and SAS Enterprise Guide 9.4 (SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA).

Interview data

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 6 participants and transcribed verbatim using a secured and accredited transcription service, *Way With Words* (<https://waywithwords.net/>). Prepared transcripts were examined for errors by two members of the research team. This involved listening to the interview recording whilst simultaneously reviewing the transcripts for each interview. This process enabled the researchers to become deeply familiar with the transcript content.

Due to the current sample size, an inductive, thematic content analysis was used to identify key themes of each passage and understand common ideas emerging from interview quotes; this may have been a few words, sentences, or whole paragraphs. The research team met to discuss their interpretations of the data and emerging themes. This reflexive process was conducted iteratively over three rounds until the data were refined into concepts and themes that comprehensively answered the relevant research questions. Best practice for qualitative data analysis was used throughout the data analysis process⁴. In exploring this data, we recognise the uniqueness of each individual and emphasise respect for diversity as a pillar for program best practice in the space of sport and disability.

Illustrative quotes from interview participants (and attending parents/carers) are presented in the format of individual Case Studies (pp 34 to 48). Quotes have been de-identified to ensure anonymity of participants. Alias names have been used to provide additional understanding about the genders of participants (and parents/carers, where applicable). Interviewee profiles are outlined in Table 3.

Ethics

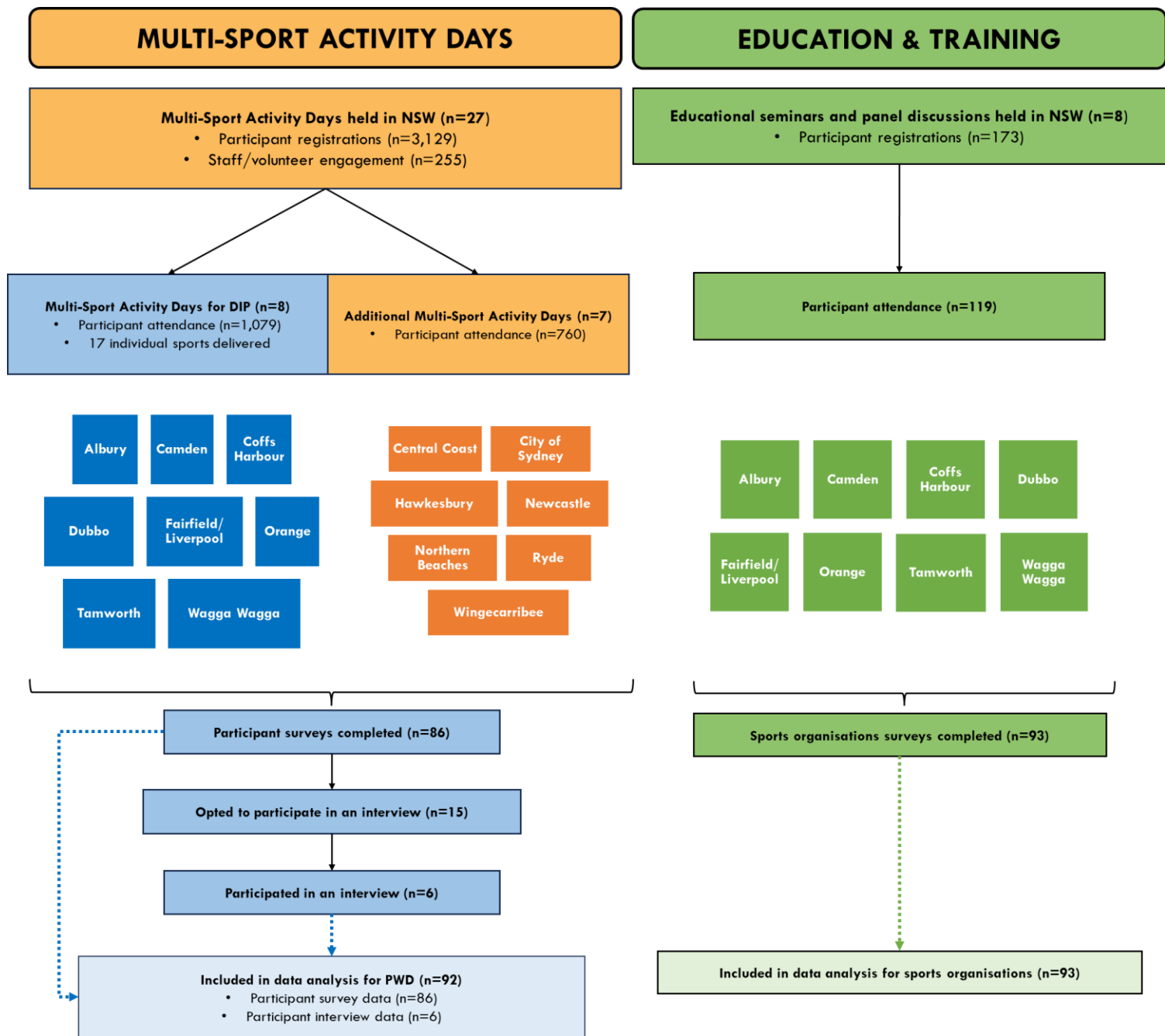
The University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee granted ethics approval for this evaluation (ethics number 2023/132). Where required, written informed consent was attained prior to data collection.

A flowchart has been created to illustrate the flow of participants and data through each phase of the evaluation outlined above (participant recruitment, data collection and data analysis), for each project stream of the DIP (Figure 3).

⁴ Huberman, A., & Miles, M. (2002). *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion*
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412986274>

DIP Study Participants and Data Flow

Figure 3. Flow of study participants and data through the SPRINTER evaluation, for each DIP project stream



Process evaluation outcomes

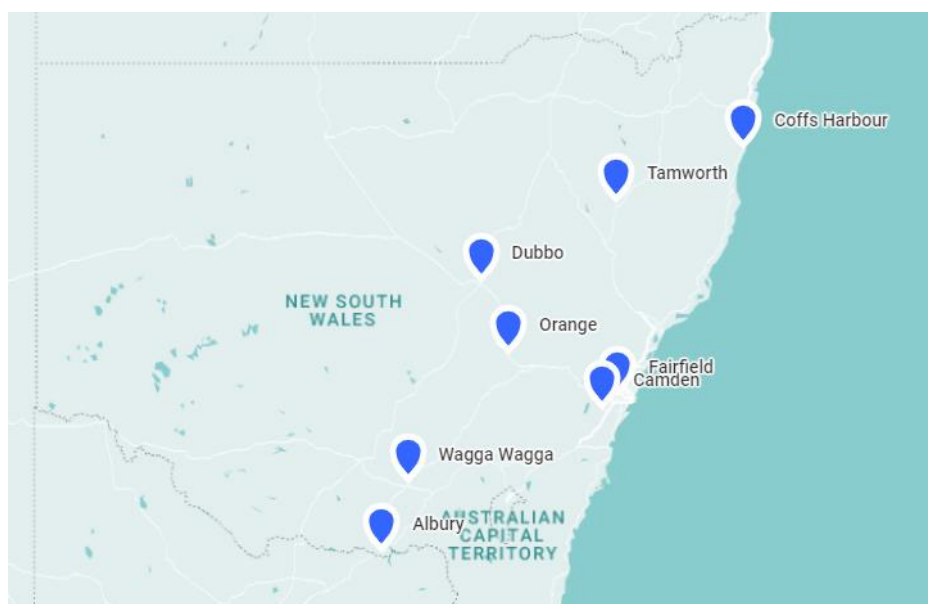
Sports organisations

How many educational events for volunteers and staff were held?

Sport NSW held 8 Adaptive Sport Community Seminars across NSW. These sessions brought people together from various inclusive sport organisations to:

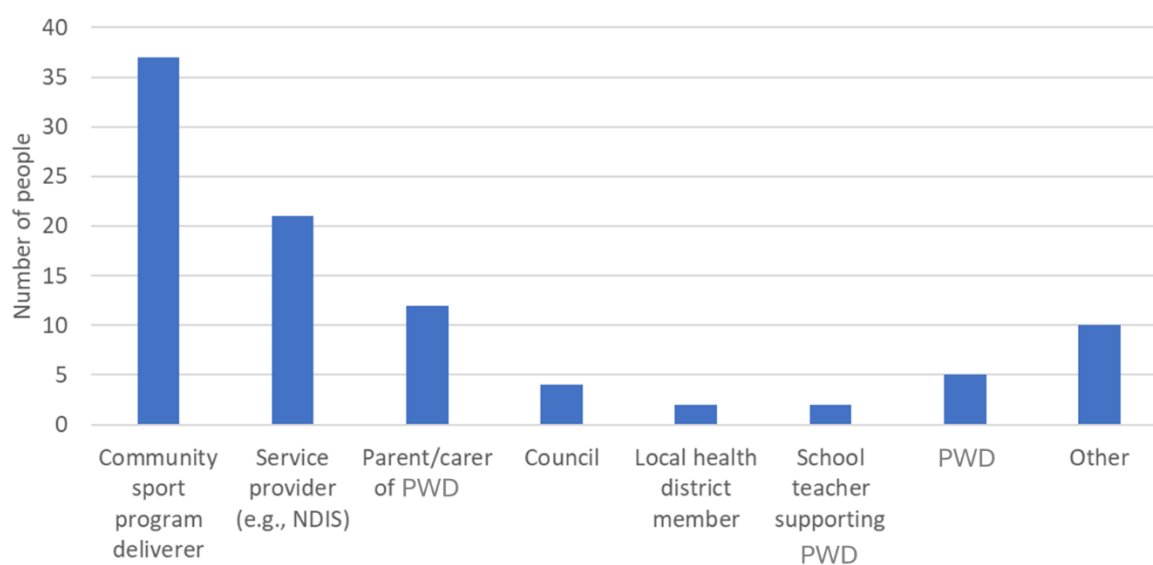
- 1) Provide information on inclusive sport resources; and
- 2) Share experiences through panel sessions.

Sessions were held in the following 8 localities:



After each of the 8 Adaptive Sport Community Seminars, attendees were invited to complete a survey. A total of 93 attendees completed a survey. Majority of attendees were community sport or active recreation program deliverers (n=37), service providers (n=21) and parent/carers of PWD (n=12) (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Number of people who attended the Adaptive Sport Community Seminars and completed a survey (n=93)



65% of Adaptive Sport Community Seminar attendees reported that attending the seminar increased their ability and knowledge to support PWD to participate in sport.

What resources are available for volunteers and staff?

The Sports Trainer Module was successfully developed with Sports Medicine Australia. The Module is delivered over 1.5 hours via a live online classroom.

This Module focuses on a range of considerations that should be made when working with athletes with disability, both universal and specific for those with physical, intellectual or sensory disability, including:

- Initial relationship building and rapport
- Establishing awareness and understanding of the role of the first responder
- Athlete pre-screening
- Environmental considerations such as venue accessibility, lighting etc.,
- Different styles of communication

PWD

How many multi-sport activity days were held?

Sport NSW, in partnership with Disability Sports Australia and Variety- the Children's Charity NSW, held 27 multi-sport activity days across NSW in 2023. A total of 3,127 participants were registered to attend these days.

To what extent are local staff and volunteers engaged in sport delivery for PWD?

Approximately 255 activity providers, corporate volunteers, student and staff engaged in the delivery of sport across the 27 multi-sport activity days. A total of 78 staff and volunteers engaged in the delivery of the 8 multi-sport activity days that were originally planned for survey data collection for the DIP.

Short term outcomes

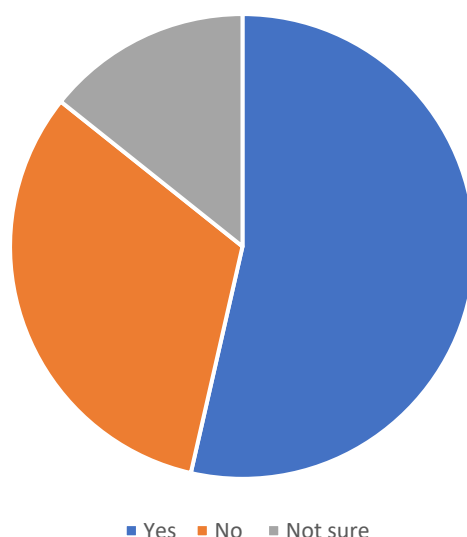
Sports organisations

The following section (pages 13 to 14) presents key findings from the quantitative survey data completed by representatives of sports organisations who attended the DIP Adaptive Sport Community Seminars.

To what extent do sports have access to quality sports equipment for ongoing adaptive sport activities?

Approximately half of attendees reported that their organisation has access to quality sports equipment for ongoing adaptive sports activities (54%), while one third of attendees reported that they did not have access to quality equipment (32%) (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Responses to 'does your organisation have access to quality sports equipment for ongoing adaptive sport activities?' among people who attended the Adaptive Sport Community Seminars and completed a survey.



To what extent are sports aware of training for volunteers and staff to improve delivery for PWD?

Of those who attended the Adaptive Sport Community Seminars, only 23% reported that someone from their organisation had completed the Sports Trainers Module. However, 86% of attendees

reported that they received sufficient information and resources from the Adaptive Sport Community Seminar.

How many staff and volunteers completed the Sports Trainers Module?

Each of the Adaptive Sport Community Seminars had a Sport Trainer Module session linked to it, which was also opened to the wider NSW sporting community. Across the 8 sessions, a total of 86 people completed the Sports Trainer Module.

How many local inclusive sports networks were established?

Each Adaptive Sport Community Seminar resulted in local inclusive sports networks through sharing contact details to connect the attendees representing various stakeholders in the inclusive sports space. Sport NSW also ran 2 round table events with key State Sporting Organisations and State Sporting Organisations for people with Disability staff. This group planned to meet regularly to make inclusion part of business as usual.

PWD

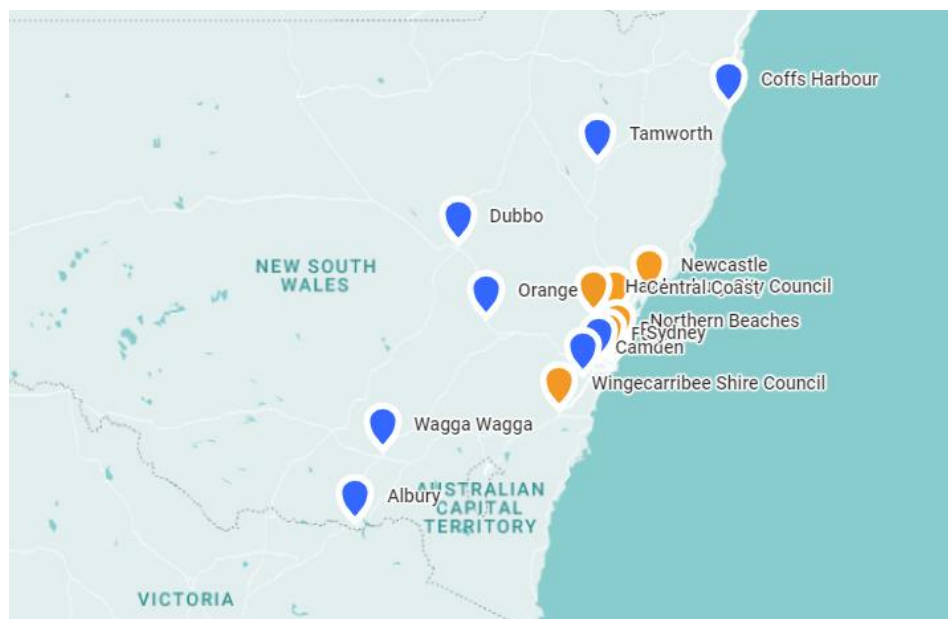
The following section (pages 15 to 30) presents key findings from the quantitative survey data completed by PWD who attended the multi-sport activity days.

How many PWD participated in the DIP multi-sport activity days?

Surveys were distributed to 1,839 participants (and their parents/carers) who registered to attend at least one of the 15 multi-sport activity days included as part of the DIP activity stream, at the following localities⁵:

Albury	Camden	Central Coast	City of Sydney	Coffs Harbour
Dubbo	Fairfield/ Liverpool	Hawkesbury	Newcastle	Northern Beaches
Orange	Ryde	Tamworth	Wagga Wagga	Wingecarribee

Before or during each of the above DIP multi-sport activity days, participants (and their carers) were invited to complete a survey. A total of 86 participants (5%) completed a survey.



⁵ There were 8 localities (blue boxes) originally planned for survey data collection as part of the DIP. An additional 7 localities (orange boxes) were added to increase the recruitment pool of survey data participants.

Participant demographics

Sociodemographic characteristics of participants who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day and completed a survey are shown below in Table 1.

- Over half (58%) of children who attended the multi-sport activity days and completed a survey were boys.
- Nearly half of all children were aged 9-12 years (47%), followed by 31% who were aged 5-8 years, and 17% representing the oldest age cohort (13-17 years).
- Twenty nine percent of children spoke a language other than English at home, demonstrating that the multi-sport activity days reached members of multicultural communities.
- Almost a fifth (17%) of children who completed a survey identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This is much higher than the estimated 5% in the census data, demonstrating high reach into Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities.
- The multi-sport activity days have reached 14% of children classified in the most disadvantaged quartile (Q1), and 12% in the least disadvantaged quartile (Q4).

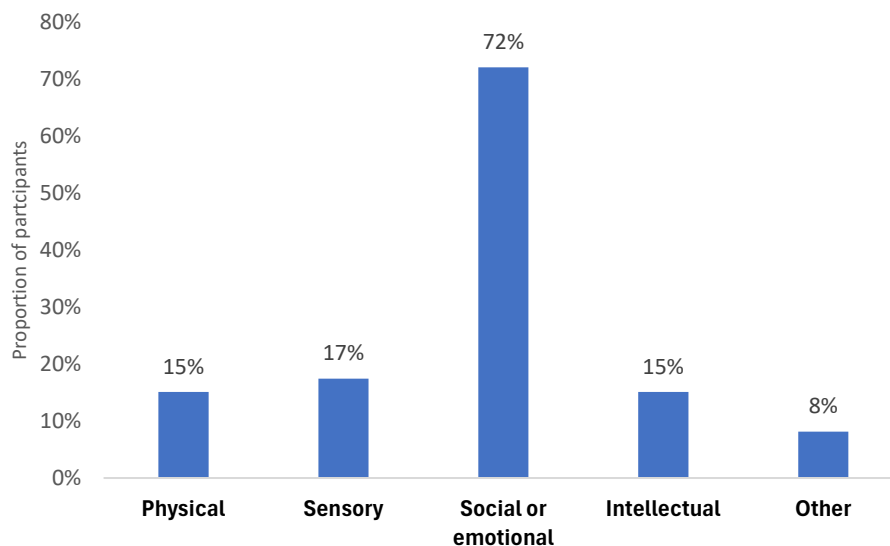
Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day and completed a survey (n=86).

	N	%
Total	86	100
Gender		
Male	50	58%
Female	36	42%
Age group		
5-8 years	27	31%
9-12 years	40	47%
13-17 years	15	17%
Missing	4	5%
Language spoken at home		
English only	61	71%
Language Other Than English	25	29%
Identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		
No	67	78%
Yes	15	17%
Undisclosed	4	5%
Socioeconomic status†		
Q1 (most disadvantaged)	12	14%
Q2	38	44%
Q3	22	26%
Q4 (least disadvantaged)	10	12%
Missing	4	5%
Type of disability*		
Physical	13	15%
Sensory	15	17%
Social or emotional	62	72%
Intellectual	13	15%
Other	7	8%
Missing	6	7%
Mobility aid		
Wheelchair	4	5%
Walker	20	23%
Both	1	1%
None	17	20%
Missing	44	51%

Note: †SEIFA quartile 1 (Q1) is the most disadvantaged quartile, and quartile 4 (Q4) is the least disadvantaged quartile. *Percentages do not add up to 100% as participants could select more than one type of disability

Survey completers who attended the DIP multi-sport activity days had various disabilities. The majority (72%) of attendees reported having social or emotional disability, 17% reported having sensory disability, and 15% reported having either physical or intellectual disability (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Types of disabilities reported by children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day (n=80)



Note: Participants could select more than one type of disability

Twenty nine percent of attendees reported using some type of mobility aid; 23% used a walker, 5% used a wheelchair, and 1% used both. However, this item was missing for 51% of survey respondents (Table 1).

What are PWD' levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport?

In order to understand levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport, attendees were asked to rank their level of agreement (out of 5) with 12 statements beginning with "In sport, I am the most proud of myself when..."

An overall average rating of 3.6 indicates that children who attended the DIP multi-sport activity days reported moderately positive levels of their motivation and capability to participate in sport.

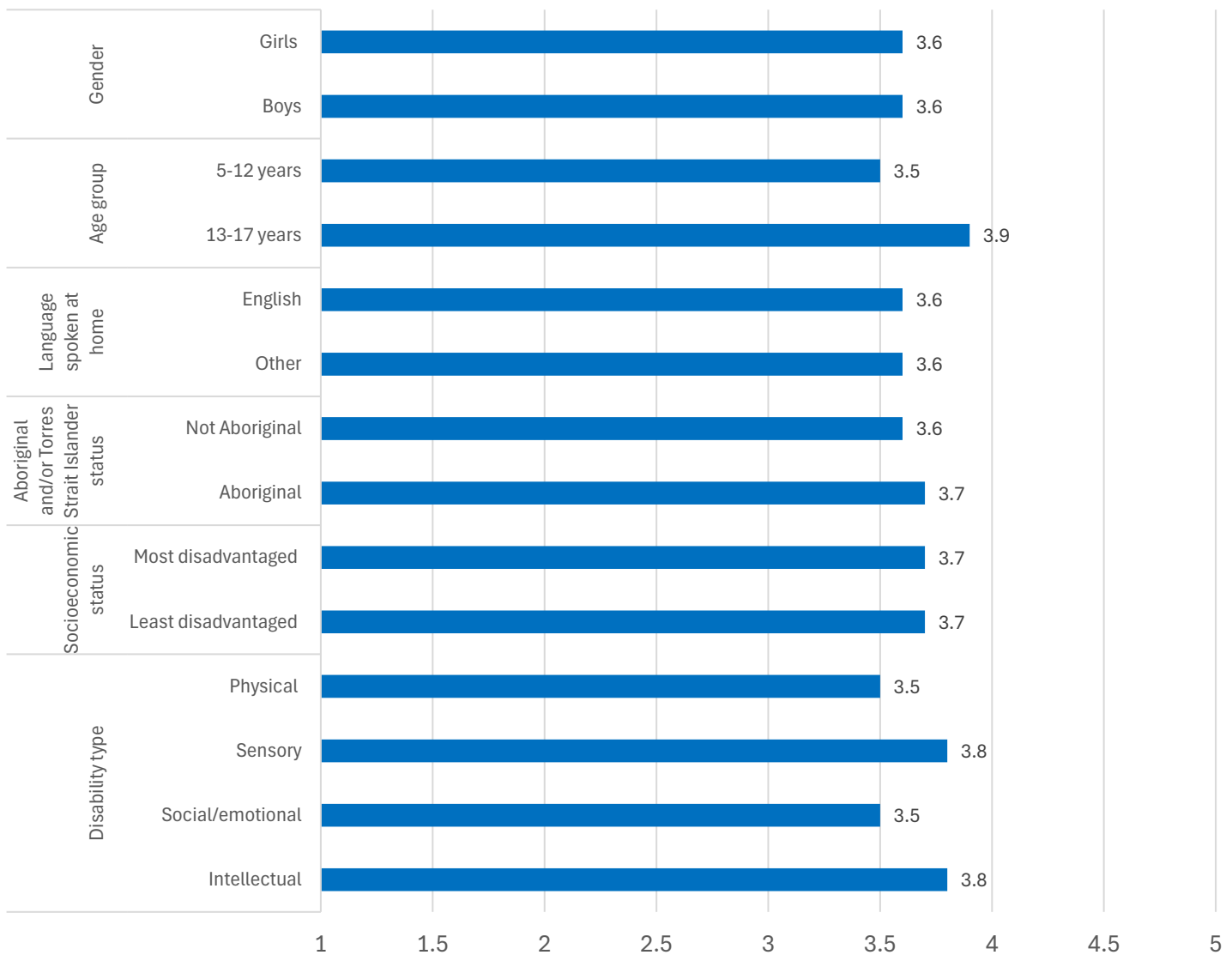
Average score ratings for each statement are outlined in Appendix D (pp 64).

There were no significant differences between sociodemographic subgroups in terms of motivation and capability to participate in sport (Figure 7):

- Girls and boys each had an average score rating of 3.6, indicating moderate levels of motivation and capability to participate in sports.
- There was also no difference in the average score ratings of motivation and capability for sport participation between participants that spoke English only and those that spoke a language other than English at home (3.6).
- No socioeconomic gradient was evident for motivation and capability to participate in sport; children living in the most and least disadvantaged areas scored equally on a moderate level of motivation and capability to participate in sport (3.7).
- Participants who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander had similar levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport as those who did not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (3.7 and 3.6, respectively).
- Children who reported having physical or social/emotional disability had slightly lower levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport compared to children with sensory or intellectual disability (3.8 and 3.5, respectively).
- Children in the older age group (13+ years) reported higher levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport (3.9) than those in the younger cohort (5-12 years) (3.5).

There are no significant differences in motivations and capability to participate in sport and active recreation among priority population subgroups. This is a positive finding as it indicates that lower levels of participation are due to external barriers that can be reduced.

Figure 7. Average levels of motivation and capability to participate in sport for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day, by priority population subgroups (n=85)



Qualitative insights into motivators for sport participation:

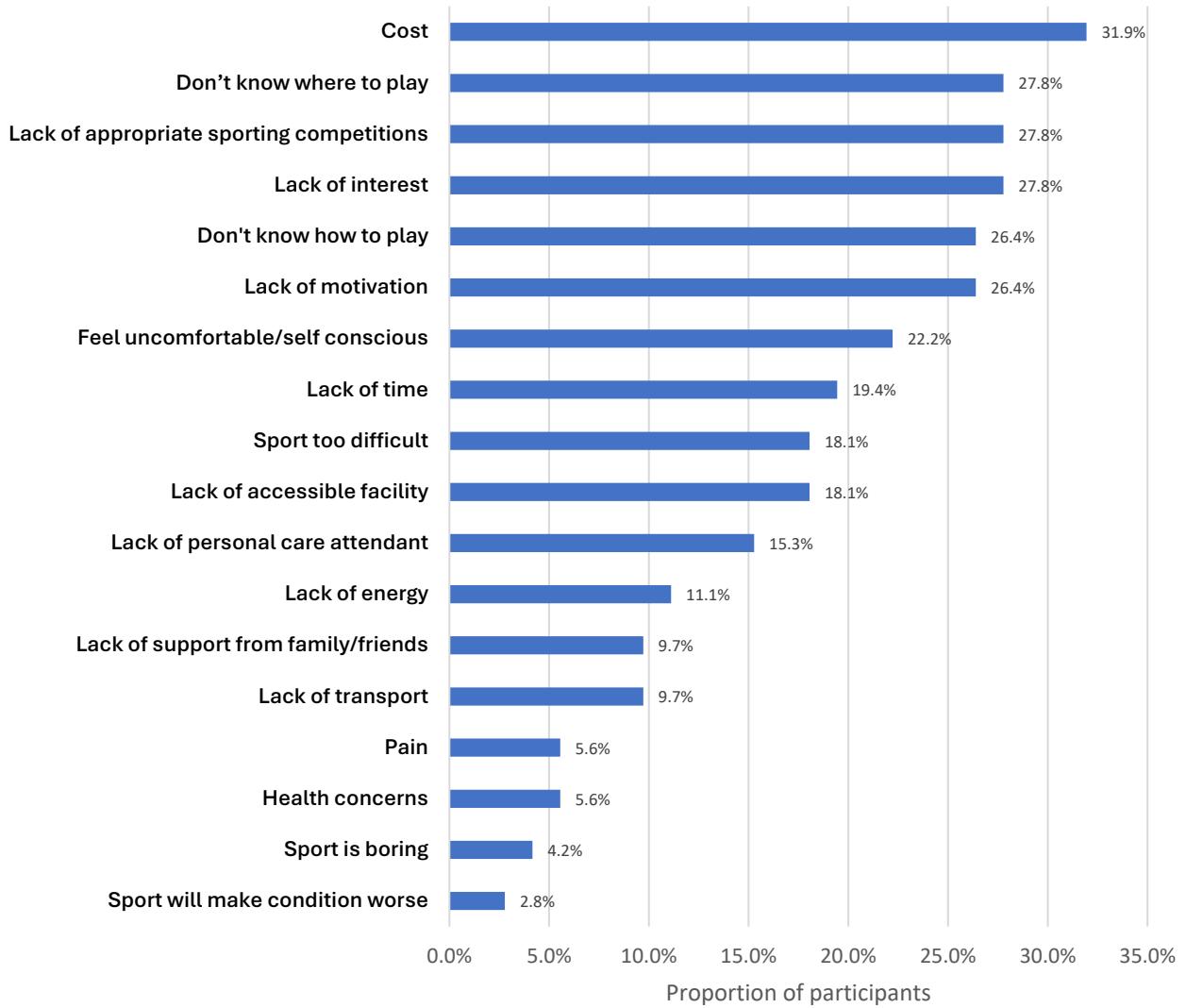
We explored motivators for sport participation through qualitative semi-structured interviews. Numerous positive things that the participants felt or experienced on the day and/or took away from the event, as well as preferences they might have towards specific sports, helped us understand what motivates them to participate in sport. **Social connections** featured prominently as a positive outcome from the event days. Some common themes of interest were that it gave them a **sense of ‘joy’, ‘feeling happy’, ‘self-esteem’, ‘connection’, ‘friendships’, ‘not feeling so alone’, ‘judgement-free’ and ‘commonality and belonging’**.

These will be outlined in further depth in the individual Case Studies (pp 34 to 48).

What are the barriers for PWD to sport participation?

Overall, the top 5 barriers to sport participation included: cost (32%), not knowing where to play (28%), a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (28%), a lack of interest (28%), and not knowing how to play (26%) (Figure 8).

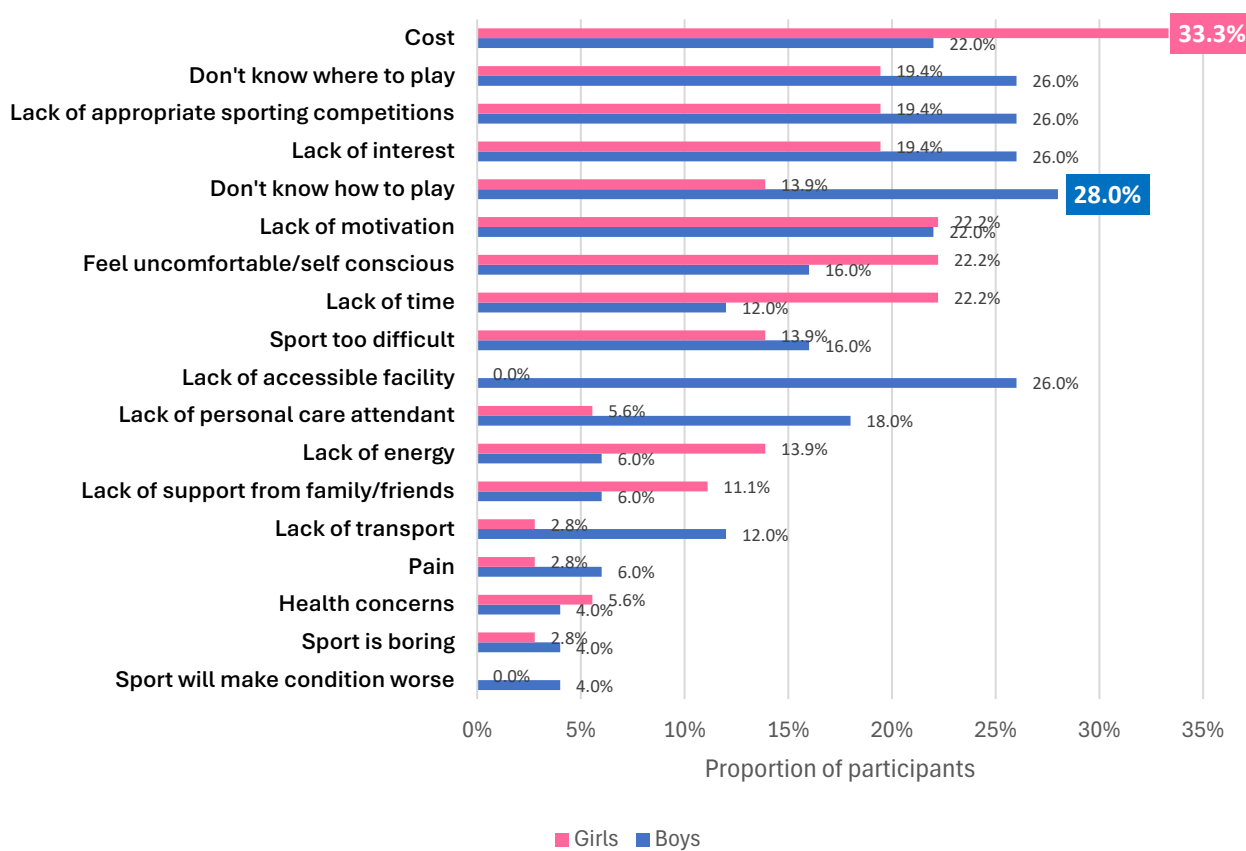
Figure 8. Overall barriers to sport participation for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day (n=72)



The following section presents key findings about barriers to sport participation by various priority population subgroups:

Of all children attending the DIP multi-sport activity days and completed a survey, the most common barriers to sport participation for girls were cost (33%), lack of motivation (22%), feeling uncomfortable or self-conscious (22%), lack of time (22%), and not knowing where to play (19%) (Figure 9). Whereas, boys reported that their most common barriers to sport participation were not knowing how to play (28%), lack of accessible facilities (26%), not knowing where to play (26%), a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (26%) and a lack of interest (26%) (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Barriers to sport participation for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day, by gender (n=86)

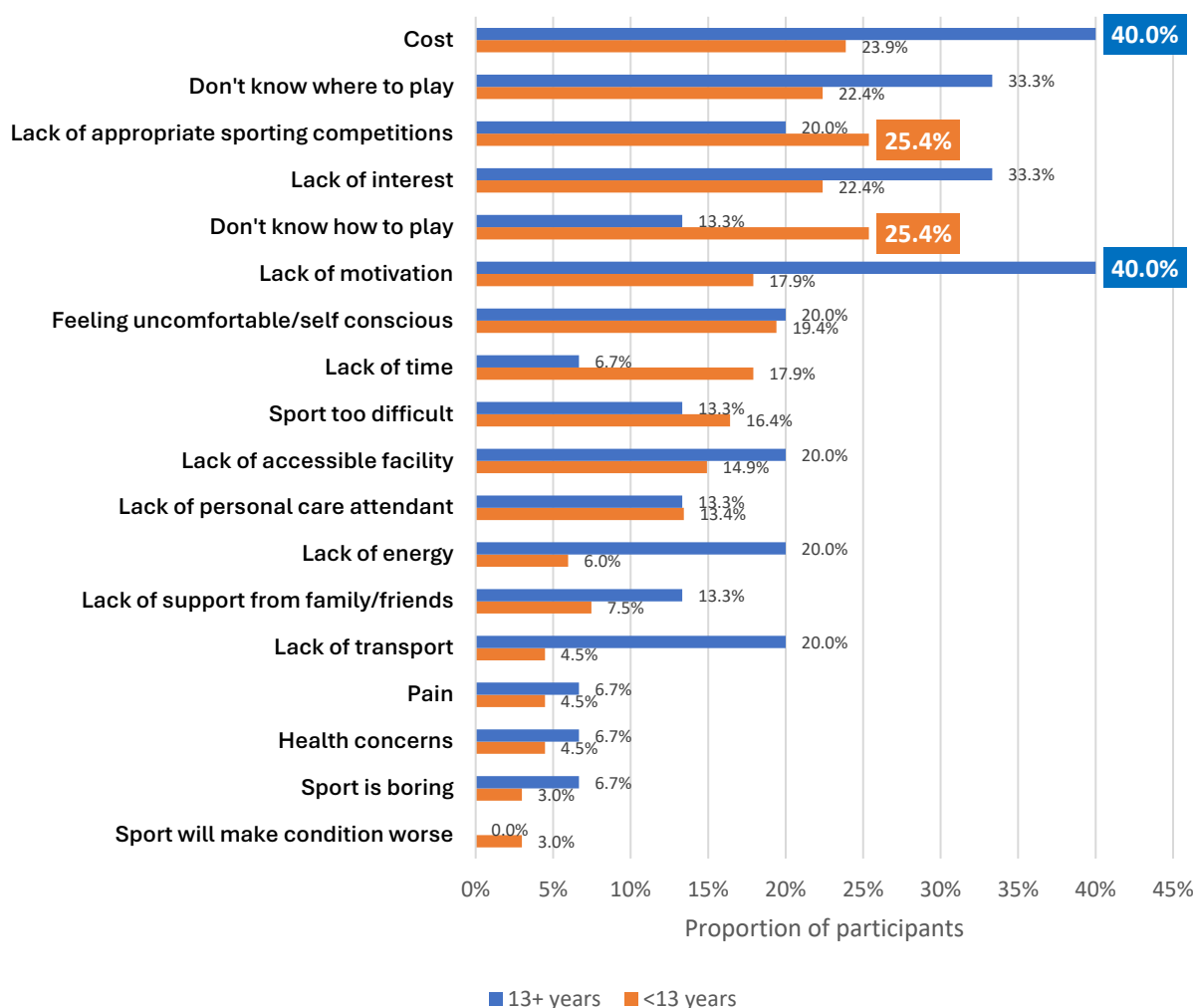


The top barriers reported by children aged under 13 years were lack of appropriate sporting competitions (25%), not knowing how to play (25%), cost (24%), not knowing where to play (23%), and a lack of interest (23%) (Figure 10).

Those aged 13+ years reported that their top barriers to sport participation were cost (40%), lack of motivation (40%), not knowing where to play (33%), a lack of interest (33%), and feeling uncomfortable or self-conscious (20%) (Figure 10).

It is noteworthy that cost, not knowing where to play, and a lack of interest were commonly identified by children in both younger and older age groups as top barriers to sport participation (Figure 10).

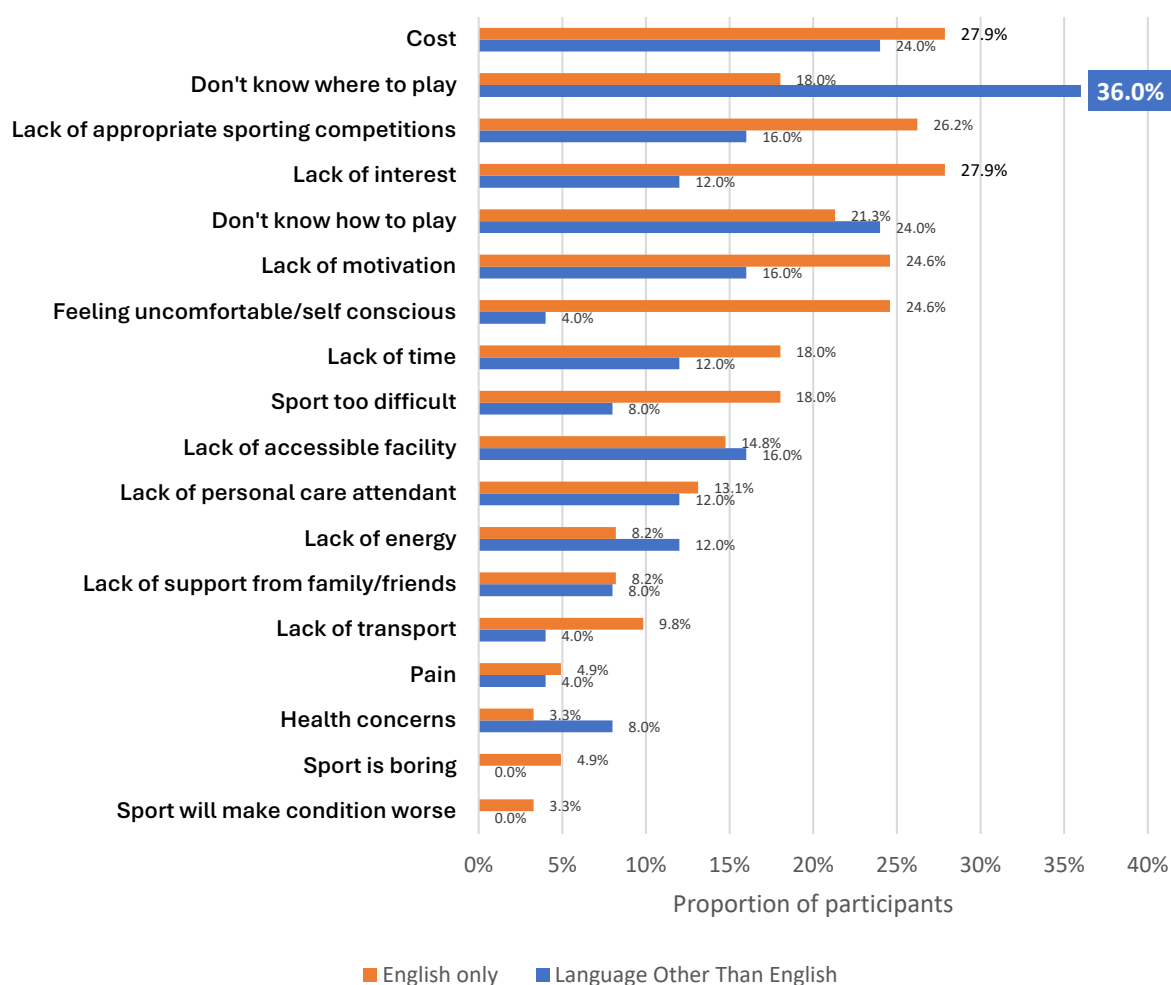
Figure 10. Barriers to sport participation for children attending a DIP multi-sport activity day, by age group (n=82)



Among children who spoke a language other than English at home, 36% reported not knowing where to play as a barrier to sports participation. Other common barriers identified by this priority population subgroup included cost (24%), not knowing how to play (24%), a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (16%), and a lack of motivation (16%) (Figure 11).

The largest differences between the proportion of respondents who spoke English vs another language at home were for barriers related to feeling uncomfortable or self-conscious, not knowing where to play, and a lack of interest. Among these, 'don't know where to play' was selected by twice the proportion of children who spoke a language other than English at home compared to those who spoke English only. 'Feeling uncomfortable or self-conscious' and 'lack of interest' were reported to be less of a barrier to participation for children who spoke a language other than English at home compared to those who spoke English only (Figure 11).

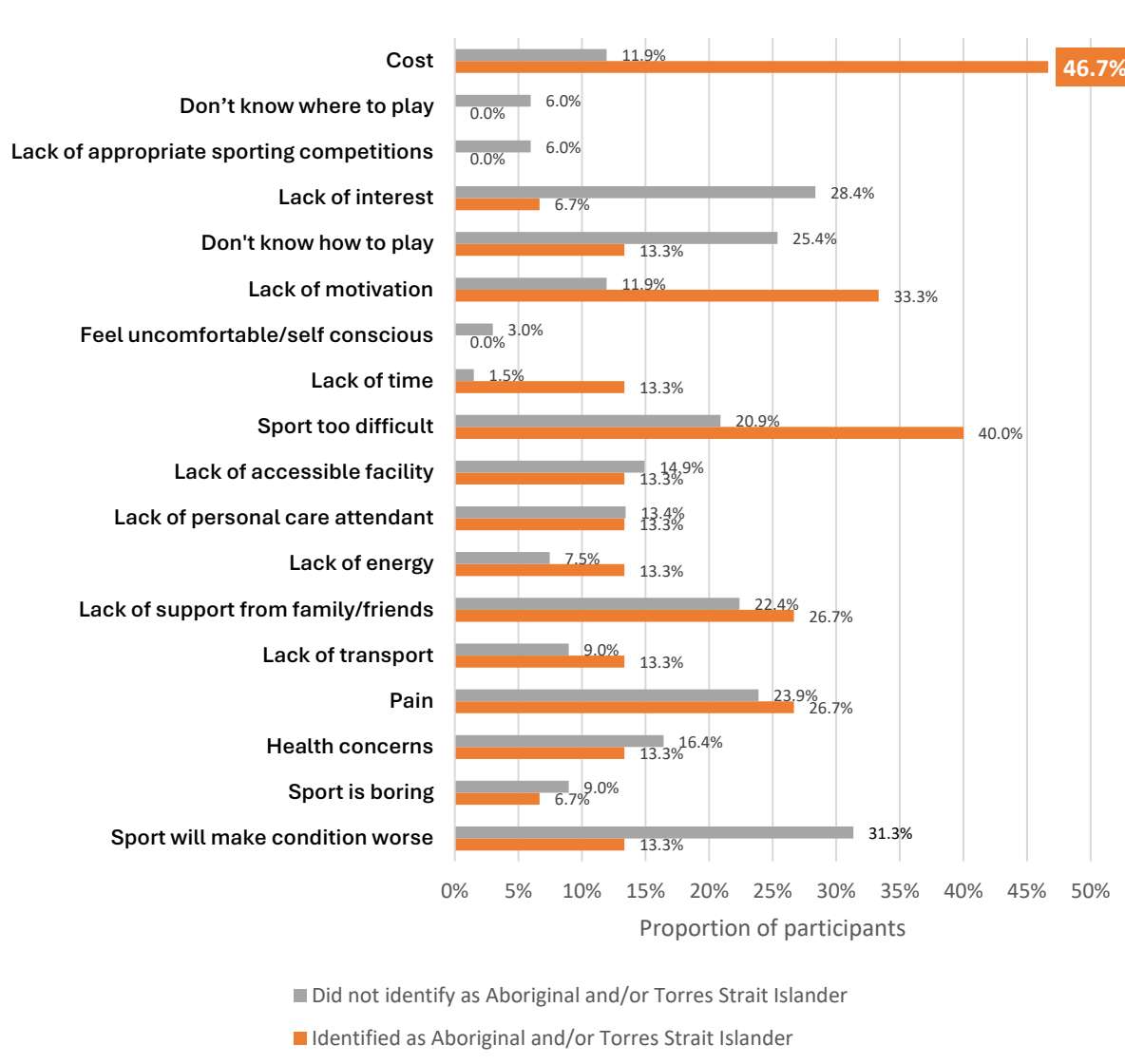
Figure 11. Barriers to sport participation for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day, by language spoken at home (n=86)



Of the DIP multi-sport activity day attendees who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, nearly half (47%) reported cost as a barrier to sport participation. Other common barriers identified by this priority sub-population included finding sport too difficult (40%), a lack of motivation (33%), a lack of support from friends and family to play sport or recreation (27%) and pain (27%) (Figure 12).

Interestingly, compared to attendees who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, those who did not found cost and finding sport too difficult to be less of a barrier to sport participation, with only 12% and 21% of this subgroup selecting these as barriers (Figure 12).

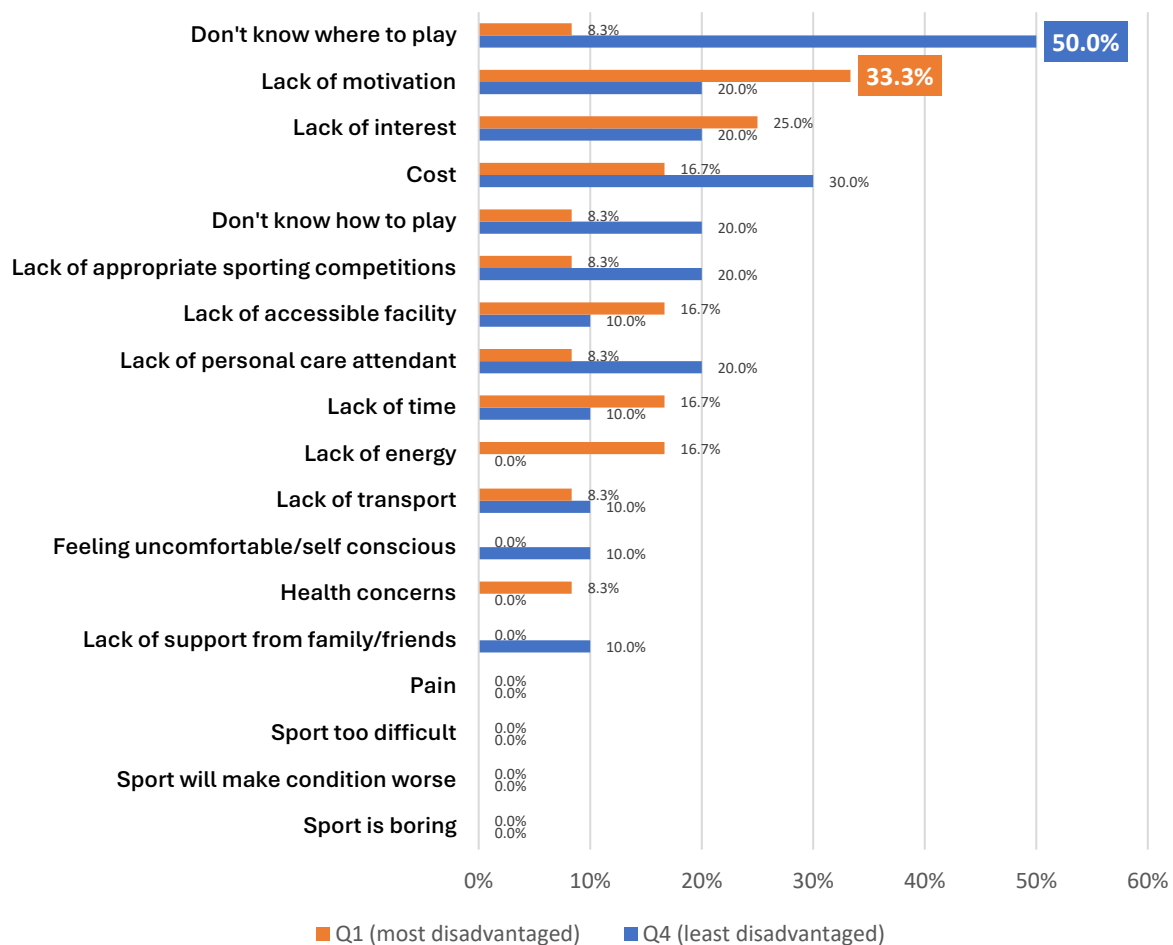
Figure 12. Barriers to sport participation for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day, by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity (n=86)



Children who attended the DIP multi-sport activity days and were living in the most disadvantaged areas reported that their top barriers to sport participation were a lack of motivation (33%), lack of interest (25%), cost (17%), and lack of accessible facilities, time and energy to play (17% each) (Figure 13).

The finding that cost was more commonly reported as a barrier by those living in the least disadvantaged areas compared the most disadvantaged areas is not consistent with previous research (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Barriers to sport participation for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day, by socioeconomic status (n=22)

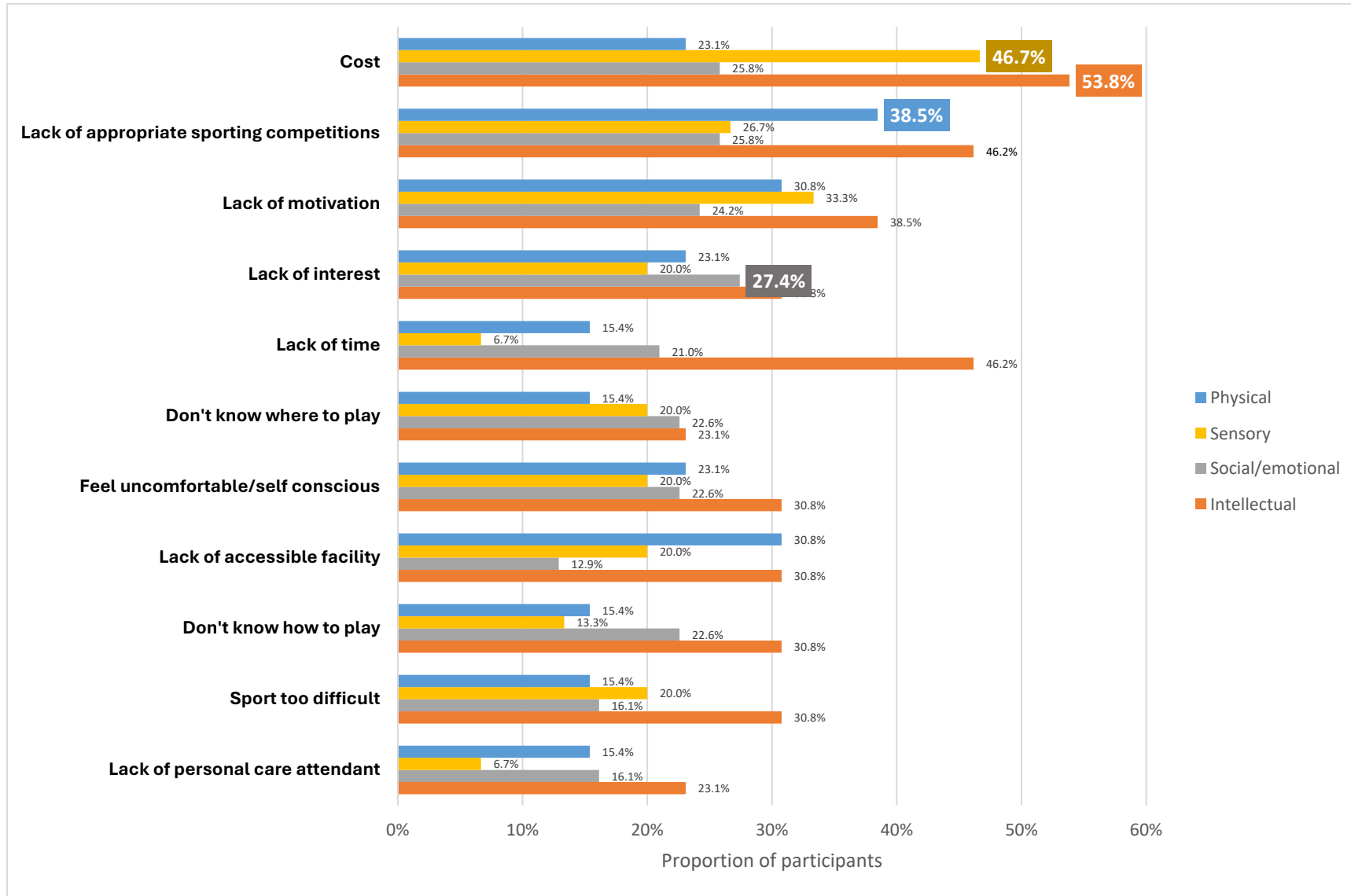


Note: Survey completers in SEIFA quartiles 2 and 3 have not been included in this data.

Barriers to sport participation varied with types of disability reported by children who attended the DIP multi-sport activity days (Figure 14):

- Those with **physical disability** reported that their top barriers to sport participation were a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (39%), lack of motivation (31%), cost (23%), lack of interest (23%), and feeling uncomfortable or self-conscious (23%).
- Attendees with **sensory disability** identified their most common barriers to sport participation were cost (47%), a lack of motivation (33%), a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (27%), and a lack of energy (27%).
- A lack of interest was identified as a barrier to sport participation by 27% of those who have **social or emotional disability**, followed by cost and a lack of appropriate sporting competitions (26% each).
- Over half (54%) of attendees who reported having **intellectual disability** experienced cost as a barrier to sport participation- the highest proportion reported for this item across all disability types. Other top barriers experienced by this subgroup included a lack of appropriate sporting competitions and time (46% each), and a lack of motivation (39%).

Figure 14. Barriers to sport participation for children who attended a DIP multi-sport activity day, by type of disability (n=80)



In addition to the quantitative data captured through the survey, 43% of respondents also provided open-text responses to specify details around their perceived barriers to sport participation for their child. When asked about what other reasons the child might not be playing sport or physical recreation as much as they would like, parents and carers generally indicated that this was commonly due to a lack of awareness and availability of appropriate sporting opportunities, social challenges and issues with self-confidence, physical demands of sports, and cost barriers. Examples of illustrative quotes are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Illustrative quotes of parents'/carers' and/or child's perceptions of the barriers to sport participation for the child

	EXAMPLES OF PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO CHILD'S SPORT PARTICIPATION
LACK OF AVAILABILITY AND AWARENESS OF ADAPTIVE AND INCLUSIVE SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES	<i>[Child] need simple games which can be easily understood</i>
	<i>Due to [Child]'s verbal limitations and understanding, we have held back on sports due to lack of special needs sport options</i>
	<i>We used to have him enrolled in a swimming lesson but it end up stressing us whenever his instructor is absent due to the substitute's lack of understanding of him</i>
	<i>We don't know where to find sport or recreation that will have more understanding of their situation</i>
	<i>[No] accommodations for being blind</i>
	<i>CALD background⁶, parents are not always aware of opportunities</i>
	<i>[Child]'s potential in swimming is limited due to no group disability swimming camps</i>
LACK OF SELF CONFIDENCE; SOCIAL CHALLENGES	<i>Anxious about trying new things, getting hurt, not succeeding</i>
	<i>[Child] struggles being out of her comfort zone</i>
	<i>When [child] plays sport her team can become upset and won't pass the ball to her. [Child] can cry during a game and get very embarrassed.</i>
PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF SPORT	<i>Due to the nature of his disability finding a sport he can physically participate in has been challenging. [Child] tried soccer but was unable to run without being in a lot of pain after the game</i>
COST (E.G., FOR ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT)	<i>At least lowering the cost of their need and proper government support.</i>
	<i>Cost of enrolling into more sports is not affordable at the moment for us as a large family though [child] would like to participate in more then what she does.</i>

⁶ CALD refers to 'Culturally And Linguistically Diverse'. In the context of this report, this term is synonymous with children who spoke a language other than English at home.

EXAMPLES OF PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO CHILD'S SPORT PARTICIPATION	
	<i>[Child] would love to join sports but he needs one in one support and it's quite expensive</i>
LACK OF ENGAGEMENT WITH AND UNDERSTANDING OF RULES OF PLAY	<i>Lack of understanding in regards to "team" sports. Example: when signed up to NRL, did not like sharing the ball and didn't like the rules because that's not the way he made up the rules for that game</i>
	<i>[Child] has little concentration and gets bored easily. Gets distracted easily.</i>
	<i>Child expects to be at the top without putting in the work</i>

Qualitative insights into barriers to sport participation

We also explored barriers to sport participation in further depth through the qualitative semi-structured interviews. Themes that stood out appeared to arise from the fears, hesitations and barriers participants felt they faced. This **included being 'shy', having a fear of being hurt, feeling pressure, worrying they might 'fail',** and in one of the youngest participants, **a sense that sport was 'boring' and lacked a 'purpose or point'.** There were also frustrations beyond personal experiences such as **feeling geographically isolated** from suitable coaches and teams.

Enthusiasm to participate in sports/multi-sport activity days could also be affected by the lack of options to join activity groups of similarly aged participants. Some participants showed hesitation to participate due to feeling unsure whether the space or activity could accommodate their **mobility limitations and sensory preferences.** Issues with **confidence in their skills** at sport and **asking for assistance** were also highlighted as barriers to participation. Some participants could feel overwhelmed at various stages or activities, and would prefer **greater flexibility in program structuring and scheduling.**

These will also be outlined in further depth in the individual Case Studies (pages 34 to 48).

Synthesis of Qualitative Results

The personal reflections and perspectives of CWD on their experiences of the DIP multi-sport activity days are vital for ensuring best outcomes and for improving future events. In-depth semi-structured interviews were particularly effective in revealing some of the preferences, biases, personal histories, and feelings that this population group can have that are not as easily captured through surveys.

In the qualitative analysis, we identified five key values and goals that participants associated with sport. These were:

- 1) **Recreation and Fun**
- 2) **Competition**
- 3) **Skills progression**
- 4) **Social Connections and Sense of Belonging**
- 5) **Personal Development and Confidence Building.**

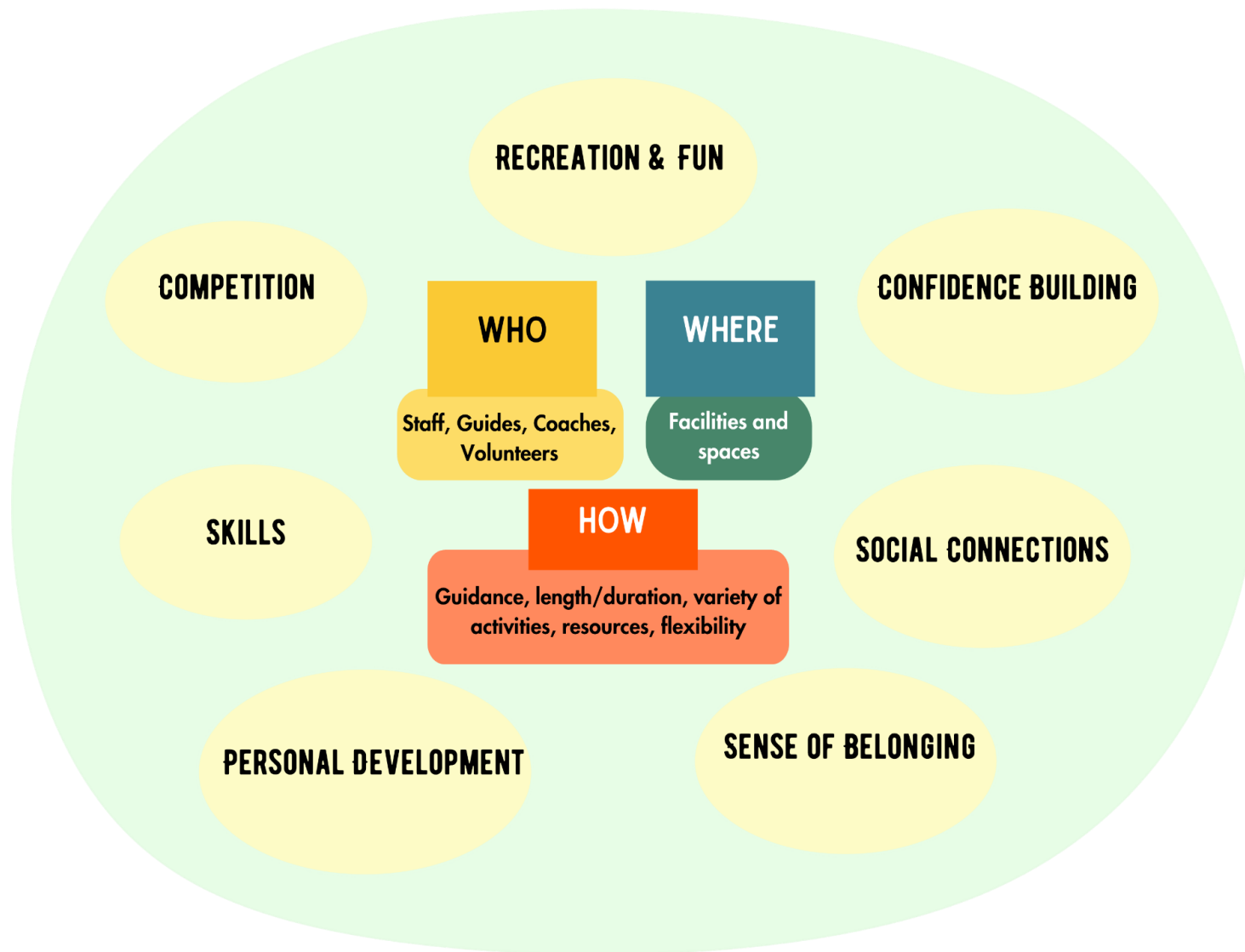
Additionally, the research also captured the main ways that participants evaluated their experiences. These were:

- A. **'WHO'** is involved in running the day (staff and coaches)
- B. **'WHERE'** the events are held (facilities and spaces)
- C. **'HOW'** the events are run- guidance, length, variety (of activities), resources (e.g., equipment and infrastructure)), flexibility (e.g., ability to opt in/out of activities).

These frameworks provide a useful guide when reviewing the individual case studies in the report and contributing to key recommendations. A matrix schema has been developed that captures the range of themes outlined above to indicate what works and opportunities for improvements for delivery of the multi-sport activity days (see Matrix of Values in Sport for Children with Disability , pp 32).

We highlight from the interview findings the motivations, capabilities and barriers to sport participation that are reflected in the Case Studies below.

Matrix of Values in Sport for Children with Disability



Case Studies

Interviewee case study profiles are summarised below in Table 3. The average length of each interview was 40 minutes.

Table 3. Interviewee case study profiles

Case study #	Interviewee alias	Gender	Age group (years)	Disability type				Disability support person present	Carer present	Interview length (mins)
				Physical	Sensory	Social/emotional	Intellectual			
1	Zahara	Girl	13+	✓				✓		47
2	Erin	Girl	13+	✓				✓		37
3	Kwame	Boy	13+	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	56
4	Abigail	Girl	13+	✓						42
5	Zach	Boy	<13			✓	✓		✓	27
6	Kim	Girl	13+		✓	✓			✓	30

Individual Case Studies are presented in the section below (pages 34 to 48)

Case Study 1: Zahara

Zahara is from the cohort aged 13 years and over and has mobility disability. Her main interests were basketball where she stated she loved “challenging and defending”. She emphasised the day generated feelings of belonging, happiness, making friends and feeling positive about interacting with others through sport.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS, FRIENDSHIP AND BELONGING

Being able to meet others in a supportive environment was one of the highlights for Zahara. Sport days can give participants a sense of community and provide the opportunity to develop social connections through sharing an environment with others that understand and allows them to be themselves.

“I was so happy to meet with my friends and making more friendship with them and getting to know them. The positive thing that I think happened was being given the opportunity to meet my other people and that gave me a sense of belonging to them and I felt like I'm not alone in things.”

Zahara emphasised the positive impact of being a part of a community that is built on a shared understanding about having disability:

“Having a disability outside isn't that easy and you meet people and some of them are so judgemental in the way they look at you and everything. But at that point [at the Multi-Sport Activity Day] you will meet with everyone who is disabled, and you feel like this is a community where I totally feel safe being around with. We totally get each other and understand each other. And everything was so impactful in some way.”

Age differences between teenagers and young children could create barriers of connection for some of the older participants but Zahara was able to relate to the cohort she met. She reflected that she was able to connect with others and enjoyed developing friendships:

“[Age] doesn't really matter actually. So, I'm a social person and I like to socialise with many people, so it doesn't really matter as long as we're having a good friendship and we're all making each other comfortable, and I think that's enough.”

Zahara also felt that participation in sports, through the multi-sport activity day, has contributed positively to her personal development:

“With experience [of the multi-sport activity day] I am really thankful that I was able to take part in that and I think it really helps me individually. Being part of the sport helped me in getting to understand other people the way I'd like them to understand me too. I think, personally it was more of a self-improvement.”

SKILLS PROGRESSION, AND THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF TEAM ENVIRONMENTS

Zahara provides insight into the participants who have a sport of choice and appreciate being able to continue practicing at the multi-sport activity day. She felt:

“Basketball has always been my passion. So, just taking part in it gives me joy.”

Not all participants welcomed the competitive element of sports, but for Zahara her enjoyment includes that it is challenging. When asked about what aspects of basketball she found challenging, she outlined:

“I think it is the most [challenging] with defending...you always have to be careful with the moves and how you go around...I think that's a big challenge, but it's quite interesting. So, I'm still enjoying it.”

Zahara identified some specific challenges around team sports. These included social challenges in navigating team dynamics; feeling pressure to ‘be on the winning side’; and maintaining a positive team spirit whilst facing unpredictability of the game and its outcome:

“Sometimes it's hard when you're not getting to understand each other as a team and you're having disagreement or maybe someone is trying to bring up a new idea and someone else is thinking that's not the way to do it. And so, you have to come to a conclusion and until you come there I think it takes time. I takes a lot of time to make everyone agree to that one plan.”

“Playing in a team I think sometimes is so challenging... you have to go with the momentum of the ball in the court. And sometimes if you're not moving that quick to respond back that means it will be losing, you will be on the losing side. And if you are not together as a team, let's say you are not quick or your member is, the teammate is slow, I think that will make you most of the time to lose it. And having to work together will be somehow hard.”

Whilst acknowledging these challenges, Zahara also felt that fun and progression of social and teamwork skills are also added benefits of participating in team sports. She viewed the opportunity to learn from peers/other players as a valuable asset that strengthens team bonding and enhances a capacity to reflect on oneself and others as well:

“I think just working as a team makes it more interesting and fun and you get to learn from each other. And, yes, I think mainly you get to learn from each other. And it brings that bond where you have to go as a team, you're not playing alone. And so, you have to be mindful of the other person and the way you regard yourself.”

EVALUATION OF STAFF AND COACHES

Reports from participants about the general staff and coaches was overall excellent. Different participants preferred differing levels of guidance and attention. Zahara found the staff helpful in providing guidance and direction on the day:

“We had a coach...And I think that's really helpful when your coach gets to give you direction on what you're supposed to do and how you're supposed to carry yourself out when you're not making the right decision as a team. Yes, so I think that was so helpful and I really appreciate that.”

Zahara emphasised that having a coach who understands the needs of persons with disability is valued. When Zahara was asked whether it was important to be coached by staff who also have disability, she replied:

“I think when you have that kind of coach [who] gets to advise you according to how you guys are feeling... It's not really that the coach does not have to have a disability, but at least a specialist who even understands.”

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER REFLECTIONS: SPACE TO HAVE TIME ALONE AND OPPORTUNITIES TO STAY IN TOUCH

Having a dedicated rest space would be appreciated and allow Zahara to take breaks when needed:

“Maybe to have that area when you're feeling like you're not being yourself you can go and just relax or something and you will come back feeling okay.”

In conclusion the most successful part of the multi-sport activity day for Zahara was the personal joy, new positive challenges and social connections it offered her.

Case Study 2: Erin

“[The multi-sport activity day is] a good activity that helps so many young selves like us who feel they are less in their society or community. Living with a disability is not an easy journey to walk through. And that activity really gives us some meaning to continue being strong, and holding, hanging in there, hoping things will be well one day.”

‘Erin’ is also from the cohort aged 13 years and over, has mobility disability, and speaks English as a second language. Her interview highlighted insights into some personal impacts of the multi-sport activity day, such as the benefits that sport has had on her self-esteem. She was also enthusiastic about the benefits of learning and loved being part of a team. Her interview adds to the common theme identified amongst most participants; participation in the multi-sport activity day as being a source of positive feelings and connections.

SKILLS PROGRESSION AND PERSONAL GROWTH: BENEFITS OF TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL SPORTS

Being goal orientated was one of Erin’s motivators to participate in team sports (basketball):

“I love being part of a team and having to work together as a team. I think that that’s fun, to experience the moment together with my teammates and the happiness that comes after achieving our goal.”

At the same time, Erin identified some challenges of having mobility limitations when playing in a team and keeping up with the game:

“I think you have to be quick in getting the ball back and being in a state that you are not making the side to lose. So, I think as a team, you need to be fast enough to be able to go well with the game and for disabled people, I think mobility is sometimes the problem- going around, trying to be in the game can be difficult sometimes.”

Since participating in the multi-sport activity day, Erin has tried swimming as a new sport. When looking at photos of swimming she offered a different perspective than before. Erin highlighted one of the benefits of solo sports is that she appreciates the space to focus on progressing her skills as an individual player and the freedom to participate in her sporting activities of interest.

“I’ve tried swimming. I am still having some difficulty getting through it. I’m in the process of learning. What I like about swimming is it’s not that much of a team sport and at least that gives me an environment to get through to learn and work on my areas of strength and maybe weaknesses, without a team being involved. I also really want to do something on my own.”

Although new to the sport, Erin highlighted that her motivation to continue swimming and improving her skills in the sport also stems from her enjoyment of the sport as a fun/recreational activity:

“I like water. I like being in water and watching people swim. I think it’s so enjoyable and fun... having to dive through, I think that’s fun for me, and I would really, really want to try it one day, and be the best.”

The day also enabled Erin to feel an improved sense of self-esteem, develop her skills and provided an opportunity to establish new friendships in a supportive environment:

“Something positive that I can say, it helped me to build my self-esteem and it also helped me to strengthen my balance and mobility skills. It’s also given me an environment to create new friendships.”

‘INVISIBLE’ NEEDS AND OTHER CHALLENGES

There were several ‘invisible’ needs that Erin shed light on in terms of how the multi-sport activity day might improve. This included her desire for more options to have time out or privacy in times when she might feel overwhelmed. Fear of not meeting others ‘expectations’ could also be a barrier to participation:

“You’re scared of people and you even doubt if you will do well. At that point, I think you need someone to talk to or to help you go around that and some privacy, if need should be, for you to come back to the moment or to help you be in there when you really are low.”

Erin disclosed that fear of losing or having pressure from competition can create anxiety for participants:

“The hard thing that I’ll say is you reach a point, you’re in there, and you lose your self-esteem. At that point, I would see my other friends and I wasn’t sure if I’m going to perform [as] well as they were doing, and that really disturbed me for a while.”

Erin shared that another ‘invisible’ challenge she experiences when playing sport is hesitation around seeking support. She highlighted that this hesitation stems from fear that she may be burdening others with a regular or frequent need for support to engage in activities.

“My main problem that I’ve been speaking about, sometimes I feel when I talk or ask for help all the time, I might be of disturbance or think about the bother that may cause...”

Erin is able to overcome this barrier through self-encouragement/motivation to maintain a positive attitude:

“Mainly, I do use words of motivation. I just speak it to myself, and I think that helps me to bounce back. That is how I normally deal with that. I just encourage myself that ‘I can do it!’”

FEAR OF NOT HAVING/LOSING CONTROL

Erin highlighted that a barrier to trying a new sport, despite her enthusiasm to do so, is a fear of losing control due to her mobility limitations. When asked to share her thoughts on a bike-riding activity, Erin states:

“My only worry is always what if I lose the brakes and I lose control and maybe hit someone? I’m still not strong with my mobility, so I’ve never tried it, though I would wish to someday. But it’s fun. I think I’m just scared of losing control.”

EVALUATION OF STAFF AND COACHES

These insights from Erin draw attention to the ways coaches and staff can still positively intervene by being there ‘on call’ for when participants are comfortable and ready to reach out. She explained,

“I needed more talk about the sports and I talked it through with my coach. She was of help, great help. And before I reached to talking it out, it's where I have the problem of just going quiet. When I reach that point where I am overwhelmed and I'm feeling like the feeling is taking over, taking control over me, I just speak it out.”

The number of staff present in Erin's opinion was important as she emphasised that “having enough coaches” was one of the things that could have been improved. She also appreciated that coaches were well-trained and welcoming. However, she explains that availability of coaches were limited due to the numbers and diversity of participants who attended on the multi-sport activity day:

“On such a day, there were so many of us and we all are different. And you find that you may be needing help at the moment and the coaches that are around that would help you are somewhere handling someone else. And you end up either just keeping quiet or by the time they get to you, you already somehow are all right or maybe doing better at the moment.”

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER REFLECTIONS

When Erin was asked about what advice she would give to others who are new to attending an multi-sport activity day, she would encourage new participants to:

“Stick together with the team and when they are not feeling right, they can speak out and reach out to the coaches. And at least to have that mentality that they are not alone in this journey. And that they are also part of a family that they need to feel free to be around with.”

In providing an overall summary of the day, Erin was left feeling empowered with hope and meaning in life:

“I will say it's a good activity that helps so many young selves like us who feel they are less in their society or community. Living with a disability is not an easy journey to walk through. And that activity really gives us some meaning to continue being strong, and holding, hanging in there, hoping things will be well one day.”

Case Study 3: Kwame

Kwame is from the cohort aged 13 years and over. He has autism and experiences challenges with verbal communication. Kwame has mobility limitations and speaks English as a second language.

His main interests were soccer and video gaming. Throughout the interview, Kwame was supported by his carer who had attended the multi-sport activity day with him.

HOW PROGRAM IS RUN - VIRTUAL WORLDS AND FAMILIAR SPORTS

Kwame expressed a lack of enthusiasm during his overall experience at the multi-sport activity day. The experiences of participants could vary due to a range of factors, such as some having a pre-existing interest in one sport and feeling most connected doing activities based on that at the event.

“I remember I was not really into the whole programme. I don’t know what happened that day, I was not really feeling the day.”

Kwame’s sentiment may also have been a result (at least in part) of the lack of options for sports and activities on the day that he is interested in (e.g., football and badminton):

“The hard [activities]- I think they should not be there. [The organisers] should focus more on letting us choose which ones we like.”

During the interview the conversation began to include the topic of gaming. Being more autonomous, having control and knowing how to advance were important to Kwame as part of this:

“The gaming world it’s different from reality. Yes, the whole experience is different from the reality. I get to be in charge of what to do, [like] the avatars.”

Others, in both age groups (under 13 years, and 13+ years) who were less enthusiastic about the sports at the event and/or those shown in the photo elicitation exercises shared that they also had a strong interest in gaming.

THE EVENT ENVIRONMENT - VARIETY OF SPORTS

Kwame indicated that despite having some hesitations, trying a new sport could result in a positive experience when he and others were encouraged by the coaches to join in:

“Some games- when you play it and you are new, you end up loving them. I got to practice with [coaches] a little bit. And they are supposed to be a forum where they can engage us in this kind of sport, they give us some knowledge about it... so that they can have an interest to join in.”

SENSORY ISSUES AND PREFERENCES, MOBILITY LIMITATIONS

Kwame offers valuable insight into sensory preferences and issues that some participants may experience as a barrier to sports participation. He describes for instance how he enjoyed the new sport of basketball but wearing different shoes for it was not a good match for his mobility and skills, and caused some problems:

“That was not fun- you have to wear some kind of shoes different from soccer, from football.”

Another potential barrier to participation for Kwame included physical limitations as a result of his mobility disability:

“You have to use your hands to move the ball and yes, I think I prefer using my legs to pass around the ball. You have to jump to pass the ball into the hoop. It was hard.”

LACK OF FLEXIBILITY IN PROGRAM SCHEDULE/STRUCTURE

Another issue that Kwame raised was the lack of flexibility around the program structure/schedule. He shared that he was not able to leave the game as early as he would have liked:

“You have to wait and play until the end so that you all leave together. You are supposed to get your freedom to leave if you’re not interested. After some time they’re supposed to allow us to leave and spend something more less hard. I can say it was not fun for me.”

EVALUATION OF STAFF AND COACHES

Similar to other participants, Kwame’s feedback on the overall day, staff and coaches was positive. He specifically noted the helpful nature of the staff in terms of facilitating connections with other participants:

“The guides- they were warm, welcoming and they were helpful. If there was some problems, they help us be more comfortable around each other.”

Confidence and feeling comfortable was a common theme in the interviews, and Kwame stressed the importance of both the participants as well as the event guides in trying to help people overcome certain social barriers on the day:

“When you see someone shy, I approached one and we spoke, but the guides were more around. They were more engaging with everyone, so we were all on the same page.”

The coaches were described as accommodating, approachable and engaging:

“Everyone, including the coaches, helps you engage, and then you get to be happy around other people. The coaches tried to engage the shy ones and make them feel comfortable around the whole programmes and everything. I’m a shy person but I try to engage sometimes when I’m in the mood.”

Beyond ensuring a welcoming social environment, the coaches also explained the activities and took on specific roles. Kwame appreciated the availability, guidance and expert knowledge of the staff that was provided to participants and enabled smooth running of the program throughout the day.

“There were guides as you move around the different programmes. There were guides who are with us from the beginning, but there were different coaches of different programmes. I think it’s a good thing because some programmes required us to know about the sport, so it’s good to have someone with that knowledge.”

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER REFLECTIONS

Kwame offered a few points for improvement. This included increasing the number of staff to facilitate running of the event days.

He also described how it would be beneficial to have a dedicated space for participants to have a time out or quiet time:

“... have some place I can go and be myself, where I can relax. There are benches but there are other people around the bench, so you’re not really alone. They should consider letting us take some free area where you can relax yourself.”

He was also affected by sensory aspects during a volleyball game. While he was offered headphones to use on the day, Kwame highlighted discomfort associated with unfamiliar sensory aids:

“[The headphones] were different from my gaming ones. They were uncomfortable. I would love mine, I can bring them.”

Despite these recommendations, Kwame acknowledged some positive aspects of the program such as a welcoming environment and engaging environment:

“I think the whole thing there was good when you went [and] actually engaged in it. If you find a sport that the team is welcoming you and it’s introducing you well, you can engage in the sport.”

He encouraged others to go along to a multi-sport activity day, highlighting the overall positive experience and sense of belonging that the day can bring about:

“I would say try and engage in the programme because some are very positive and [allow participants to] just be themselves.”

Case Study 4: Abigail

“There was a time that my mom was telling me about the Inclusion Day [multi-sport activity day], and I was very skeptical about it. I felt it was something that isn't going to help me. I thought it was something that was going to make me feel pain afterwards. I know there are a lot of people who fear change, but then when it's a different mentality, you're definitely going to enjoy the moments.”

Abigail is from the 13 years and over cohort and has mobility limitations (difficulties with walking).

Her interview sheds light on the supportive role others such as a parent or 'buddy' can play in making participants feel comfortable at the multi-sport activity day. She also shared important insights on what it is like for individuals who were previously athletic prior to having disability, and attending the event with the goal of being introduced to or improving their skills in adaptive sports. Her overall response to the day was also positive.

PERSONAL GROWTH AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The interview with Abigail indicates that when some participants have a guide or 'buddy' or parent by their side, they are more likely to enjoy the day and make friends. Once they feel supported and are comfortable, they can also find a real sense of commonality and belonging at the events:

“Usually, my mom takes me around and she always tries to introduce me to new people, whenever I meet new people. For me as an individual, most times I feel not so comfortable talking to people that I barely know. But then, when I am introduced to them, and we get to talk, and I find them accommodating, that's how our friendship begins.”

Having a parent and other family members attend the event with Abigail was also a source of reassurance and positivity for her on the day:

“My mom and some of my cousins came around. It was fun. Having my mom stand by the side and cheer me up, that's a lot. It makes me happy. It makes me feel very good.”

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND BELONGING

When reviewing photos of ball sports like netball, Abigail emphasised the importance of feeling appreciated and encouraged when participating in sports:

“I like the fact that I have to run. I have to run and I have people beside me to cheer me up, which rarely happens. But it's like an opportunity to bring people to appreciate me, to bring people who already appreciate me to appreciate me.”

One of the most positive takeaways that Abigail felt she had from the multi-sport activity day was the opportunity to connect with others who had a similar disability as her, describing them as people who felt like a 'second family':

“You feel like, yes, you actually have people who go through the same thing. It makes you feel good if you’re a family, like apart from your normal family when you are home. You feel like, basically, everything that happens to you, these people here understand.”

Abigail described how valuable it was having a sense of belonging, and not feeling isolated and alone:

“I am, or I was, in a wheelchair like this. So when I see people on a wheelchair like this, it makes me feel like, ‘yes, these are my people’. We are in the same condition and all.”

There was also a strong sense of appreciation she expressed in being able to maintain contact with friends she made on the day. She was also enthusiastic about finding ways to stay connected:

“I had [met] a lot of people from other cities, but then there's one person around my area, and that was the person I connected with. Maybe having a group would be nice, like a Facebook group. Either a Facebook group or a WhatsApp group that can accommodate people, where people get to talk from time to time.”

SKILLS PROGRESSION – TAKING ON NEW SPORTS AND CHALLENGES

Since experiencing mobility issues, Abigail has tried and enjoyed wheelchair basketball. It has renewed her love of sporting activities and belief that she could enjoy herself once again following a period of doubt. Wheelchair basketball also presented certain challenges to Abigail as she was new to this adaptive form of the sport, and others were more experienced at it:

“In trying the whole sport activity in the wheelchair. I wouldn’t say it was easy for me, because I actually started off with people who are very good in the game. And myself, I am just trying to adapt. I’m just trying to try it out. So, to some extent, it’s foreign, but I’m still trying to improve, to be better in the game.”

Although wheelchair basketball was challenging, Abigail also emphasised that for her, she was motivated to participate in this sport by the skills she was able to gain, rather than competitiveness:

“It’s a good thing to see people doing it, because when you see this is something you can actually do, you are motivated to do without the fear of you having to fall from your wheelchair and all. So, yes, I don’t see it as competitive. I see it as a challenge. I see it as a motivation.”

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER REFLECTIONS

Safety and risk management were also raised as potential areas for improvement by program providers:

“[Participants] really push themselves to be able to go so high and the floor is very strong and slippery. And you might see yourself on the floor. So, yes, I think they should be very careful about that.”

In summary, Abigail shared that prior to attending the event, she was anxious and had doubts. However, she ended up being pleasantly surprised at how she enjoyed her time on the day. Abigail encourages others who have never attended an multi-sport activity day to come along and give it a try:

“I advise people who have never been or who are intending to actually try going, they won’t regret it.”

Case Study 5: Zach and Beth (mother)

Zach is from the under 13 years age group. He has autism and intellectual disability. Zach was friendly and was more engaged when talking freely, in an unstructured interview style. Beth facilitated communication between the interviewer and Zach and actively engaged in the conversation. Beth enthusiastically shared her perspective as a parent wanting her child to have good experiences with sport. In this case study report, we focus on Zach's responses.

BARRIERS TO RECREATION AND FUN

Zach was not enthusiastic about sport, but importantly, shared some direct and alternative perspectives not common to most of the other interviewees. His definition of sport, which aligns with 'traditional' goals such as competition, was also valuable for understanding what barriers could deter participants or decrease their interest in participating in sports. For example, when asked what he did not like about basketball, he responded:

"Everything... With basketball, it's just bouncing a ball in a hoop, what's the point? I don't see why we should play it. It's a boring game, so no, you can't get me into it."

He had similar feelings towards other ball sports we showed him during the photo-elicitation exercises. Upon seeing photos of tennis, he also questioned the purpose of the activity:

"It's like soccer, I'm bored, and I won't play the game."

"Hitting the ball with the racquet- what's the point?"

"Nothing can make it interesting. I don't even like sports games at all. I hate sports."

Zach was impressed with other sports he was shown in the photos and expressed strong emotions toward his overall disinterest in sport.

Key reasons offered were that sport was 'boring' and like 'torture', although Beth reminded Zach about a time when they both enjoyed a race in a wheelchair at one of the events. She explained to him that at this previous experience the emphasis was much more on fun and play than skills or competition.

One sport that Zach expressed interest in was swimming, but from his perspective:

"Swimming isn't sport. It's a swimming carnival thing, but it's a race thing, it's not even a sport thing, it's just a racing game."

This highlights an important area for program providers to be aware of- variation exists in how children with disability perceive or define 'sport'. It may be beneficial to consider these in future program planning.

When asked if he preferred indoor or outdoor pools he replied:

"An outside pool, obviously. The indoor is just pools, and there's no waterslide, no fun activities there. It's just boring. So, that is a no for me."

This insight again emphasises the importance of recreation and fun as valued aspects of sports for Zach.

PHYSICAL SAFETY AND SENSORY CONSIDERATIONS

Zach highlighted some concerns around safety and fear of injury when participating in sports:

“But I only swim in shallow ends. I have a little floatie, but I’m not going to be able to swim, I’m just going to be able to spectate with it. I have to make sure I don’t fall off, because if I’m in the deep end I could drown.”

Additionally, this perceived lack of safety/fear of injury extended to other sports as well. Beth reminded her son that he also liked gymnastics, which he agreed but explained:

“I don’t like the splits, no splits. It should be forbidden, it’s just a torture pain.”

He also liked having padded mats to soften any falls as he feared he would be hurt.

Zach also discussed sensory issues, such as the temperature of the water. He also indicated that the lower the risk of injury the activity had, the more likely he might engage and enjoy it. He explained for instance that with swimming at a pool:

“Yes, I can stand in it, but I do not like it, because the water is freezing.”

Despite having some specific aspects he did not like or feared about swimming he also stated towards the end of the interview “my dream sport would be swimming.” Zach also demonstrated awareness of the physical benefits of sport/exercise, enthusiastically posing the question:

“Did you know that some people might have growing pains, and did you know some exercise, like swimming, can help your bones feel better?”

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER REFLECTIONS

One of the takeaways from Zach’s interview includes that it would be good to ‘screen’ what types of sport activities participants want to engage in and ones that they are afraid or disinterested in before they attend, so that staff and coaches can provide more guided play.

Another future direction arose from an interesting ‘impromptu’ conversation when the Zach introduced his pets, including his pet dog. This part of the interview was where Zach was most animated and energetic in speaking. When asked if he would enjoy the multi-sport activity day more if he could bring his dog or see a specially trained care/therapy dog at the events, he was highly enthusiastic and engaged. This was also a theme that arose with another one of the interviewees, suggesting pets, service dogs and other therapy/companion animals could help participants feel more engaged, comfortable, and confident.

Case Study 6: Kim and Julie (mother)

Kim is a girl from the 13 years and over age cohort. Kim has autism, anxiety and sensory processing disorder. Her mother, Julie, also attended and was a talkative and encouraging presence. Kim's interview was largely facilitated through Julie. While Kim's input was limited, she shared that overall, the multi-sport activity day was a fun and positive experience. She had previous/current sport experience with netball, basketball, football (rugby and AFL) and water polo. She was also enthusiastic about trying the wheelchair sports available on the day and looking at them in the photo elicitation exercises, although she was not usually a wheelchair user. The interview largely concentrated on Julie's reflection as a parent where she discussed issues such as geographical barriers, lack of available sports teams that are able to accommodate to needs and preferences of people with disability, and a lack of flexibility in the competitive selection process.

GEOGRAPHICAL BARRIERS

Where participants lived could create barriers for them to play sport with others with disability and access staff who had experience with adaptive sports. Julie stated that her daughter, Kim, was keen to play more basketball but faced geographical limitations and limited team spots in their regional area:

"In our town, it's very, very difficult to play basketball and to get a team, and that's something that we really struggle to be involved in."

The selection process to join sport teams was a specific barrier that was raised. Julie described her experience as a difficult one due to a lack of available teams:

"You send off an email saying that your child really wants to play, to try and register your interest. But it comes along and they tell you there's no team, so you just miss out all the time, and you're just waiting to hear whether you can get one."

Julie also outlined that strict eligibility requirements also pose difficulties for Kim to be participating in team sports:

"[Kim] really likes that sport. They just seem to take the experienced and representative players, though, so it's hard to get in and play. They just couldn't get a team for her. It's extremely popular, and what they do is they have their rep players, and their rep players have to play in three different teams, so that takes up the team spots, they're the same players playing in all the teams."

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS – AGE RANGE CAN BE A BARRIER

The age range of participants could create barriers for adolescents who could feel frustrated and out of play if given the opportunity to only interact with younger children. Kim explains at one multi-sport activity day "they were just little kids" and that it was "boring". Julie added:

"It was really exciting that they had that sport and that she had the opportunity to play. I didn't realise they were all so young, compared to her..."

PERSONAL GROWTH AND CONFIDENCE-BUILDING

Along with physical benefits, Kim's mother offered some insight into how sport days could contribute to the participants' personal growth:

“It was a great day to have, for her to be able to play sport. Even though she likes sport, when you're playing with ordinary teams, it can be very deflating. So, when you get to play with other people that have got extra needs, it makes it more fairness. It gives you a sense of confidence.”

EVALUATION OF STAFF AND COACHES

Julie suggested that sports that her daughter already had experience with were the most welcomed and appreciated and that the staff and coaches were often aware how this benefited participants. Julie stated for example that, “It was a familiar environment, she plays netball.” Julie also appreciated how the event allowed her daughter and others to have fun rather than just focus on being “more competitive.”

“The coaches try and keep you in the same positions for familiarity. There's no huge pressure on the kids, it's just a game.”

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER REFLECTIONS

The above insights suggest a need to have targeted programs that can educate and equip sports clubs and codes, particularly in regional areas, on how to be more inclusive. It would also be beneficial to interview sports clubs to understand what issues and barriers they perceive as contributing to the lack of opportunities for individuals with disability. Julie also proposed:

“As a parent, it would be wonderful if we had sporting groups for disabilities. We do have soccer here, but obviously, she doesn't like soccer. It would be nice if these days, like this, that other sports, like basketball, and rugby, and stuff like that, would have a better approach to including more people with a disability because they don't.”

Parents also appreciated more frequency and occasions for follow up:

“It would be nice to have [multi-sport activity days] a couple of times a year.”

Additionally, Julie also suggested featuring sports role models during the event day:

“It would have been nice if some sports players, like ones that are great sports players, would be able to attend and be invited as well. Even if it's just at a local level, inviting some of the bigger personalities to come along would be great.”

Evaluation Caveats

In this evaluation, the evaluation team utilised an academically sound and evidence-based approach to assess the effectiveness of the Sport NSW Disability Inclusion Program, against the outcomes identified in the logic model. The process has been managed by a pragmatic and experienced evaluation team to ensure validity and reliability of the findings.

The mixed methods approach adopted provides insights that will enable researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to better understand the sport experiences of children with disability and the capacity of the sport sector to provide inclusive sport and active recreation for children with disability. However, there are challenges that must be acknowledged.

- This report focuses on the outcomes of participants who voluntarily completed a survey and/or interview. There is potential for self-selection bias (i.e., volunteers tend to be different from those who do not volunteer) and social desirability bias (i.e., respondents answer questions in a way that they perceive to be viewed favorably by others).
- The evaluation outcomes around children with disability may not be generalisable to the wider population of people with disability.
- The data collected in this evaluation is cross-sectional and provides a snapshot of the current experiences, motivations, and barriers to sport participation for children with disability. Therefore, conclusions about causal and attribution for change are limited. Future evaluations should consider collecting data at multiple timepoints to assess change over time.

Recruitment challenges

- Survey response rates were low. At the first three DIP multi-sport activity days, children with disability (with their parent/carer) were invited to complete the online survey through a QR code. Due to the low response rate at these first events, we started to provide paper copies of the surveys in addition to the QR code. Providing both the QR code and a paper copy of the survey increased the response rate slightly, but it remained relatively low. As such, there is potential for sampling bias. Future evaluations in this population should consider multiple channels for collecting data, such as online, paper, telephone, researchers asking survey questions face-to-face and recording answers to ensure a representative sample of people with disability.
- The research team encountered significant challenges around recruitment of interview participants. Future evaluations would benefit from ascertaining, from participants and/or their families, the specific barriers to study participation or reasons for cancellations after making an interview booking. This could be conducted more effectively by partnering with relevant stakeholders who have more frequent and direct contact with participants and their parents/carers (e.g., school staff).

Data collection methods

- Some survey items were developed specifically for this study and were not subject to validity or reliability testing before being included in the evaluation survey.
- Participants who completed the survey may not have completed all survey questions, resulting in different samples for variables presented. The total sample of data included for each variable is presented in each figure title.
- While a case study approach allows for extraction and interpretation of rich qualitative data, a small sample size may limit the generalisability of results to the wider population of people with disability.
- The use of videoconferencing to undertake the semi-structured interviews may pose limitations on the research team's ability to read and interpret body language, facial expressions and emotions conveyed by interviewees effectively and accurately.

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The University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee granted ethics approval for this study (Protocol number: 2023/132).



Appendix A

Child with parent/carer survey

Disability Inclusion Project Evaluation Survey

Thank you for your interest in taking this survey. The survey is designed to be completed by you (parent/carer) with the child present.

Please answer these questions in relation to the child that will be attending the Activate Inclusion Sports Day.

Q1. Name: _____

Q2. Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy): _____

Q3. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Q4. Postcode of residence: _____

Q5. Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent?

- No
- Yes
- Prefer not to say

Q6. Do you speak a primary language other than English at home?
If yes, please specify.

- No
- Yes : _____
- Prefer not to say

Q7. School: _____

Q8. School year: _____

Q9. Disability type (please circle the most appropriate below):

- Physical:** Cerebral Palsy / Quadriplegia / Paraplegia / Amputee / Short Stature / Brain Injury
- Sensory:** Vision-impaired- Blind / Deaf- Hard of Hearing
- Social/Emotional:** Autism
- Intellectual:** Down Syndrome
- Other: _____

Q10. Mobility status (please circle the most appropriate below):

- Wheelchair user:** full-time / part-time
- Walker:** unaided walker / walking stick / frame / crutches

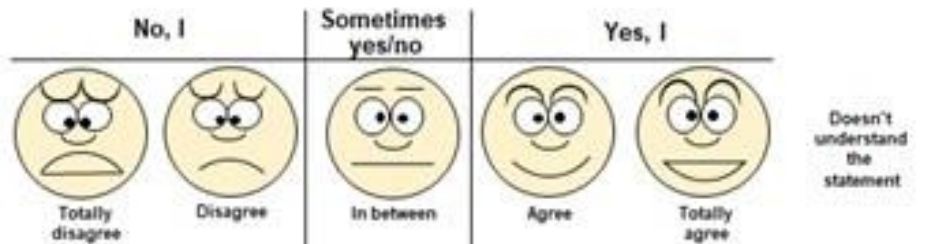
Q11. Which Activate Inclusion Sports Day(s) will the child attend?

- Albury
- Tamworth
- Dubbo
- Orange
- Coffs
- Liverpool
- Blacktown

Q12. We are interested to understand the child’s thoughts and feelings about sport.

For the following statements, ask the child for their answers with reference to the below sentence:

“In sport, I am the most proud of myself when...”



	Totally disagree	Disagree	In between	Agree	Totally agree	Doesn't understand the statement
1. I am the only one who can do things correctly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I learn to do new things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I am better than my friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I learn something that is fun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Others mess up but I do not	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I learn a new skill by working hard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I work really hard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I score the most points or goals in a game	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. What I learn makes me want to practice more	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I am the best	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I learn something that makes me feel good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I do my very best	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13. In the past week, on how many days was the child physically active for **at least 60 minutes**?

This could be made up of different activities including walking, cycling to school, and sport at lunchtime or an exercise class.

- 0 days
- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- 7 days

Q14. In the last 12 months, approximately how many **times** in total has the child participated in organised sport and physical activity (including any practice or training)?

You only need to respond to **one** of the options. If zero times in 12 months, please enter the number 0.

- Times per week: _____
- Times per month: _____
- Times per year: _____

Q15. Please select any of the following statements or concerns as to why the child might not be involved in organised sport and physical activity or not playing organised sport or participating in physical activity as much as they would like.

- Cost of the sporting or physical recreation equipment
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of time
- Lack of interest
- Lack of energy
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of support from friends or family to play sport or physical recreation
- Lack of personal care attendant who will help them play sport or physical recreation
- Lack of accessible facility
- Lack of appropriate sporting competitions
- Sport or physical recreation is boring or monotonous
- Sport or physical recreation will make their condition worse
- Sport or physical recreation is too difficult
- Don't know how to play sport or physical recreation
- Don't know where to play sport or physical recreation
- Health concerns prevent them from playing sport
- Pain prevents them from playing sport or physical recreation
- They feel uncomfortable or self-conscious when playing sport or physical recreation

Q16. Can you think of any other reasons why the child might not be involved in an organized sport or physical activity or not playing sport or physical recreation as much as they would like? If so, please list:

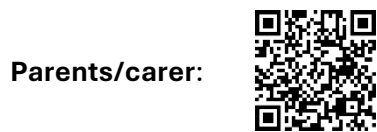
Q17. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the child's experiences participating sport and physical recreation?

Q18. Sport NSW are the peak body for sport in NSW. They have partnered with researchers to better understand barriers to sport participation for children living with disability.

If you would like to complete the post survey in two months' time, please provide your email here:

Q19. Are you (parent/carer) and your child interested in participating in a one-hour online Zoom interview to discuss barriers and identify solutions to increase sport participation for children living with disabilities?

To be eligible to participate in an interview, the child must be **at least 6 years**. For more information about this study:



I consent to being contacted at the below email address:

If you have indicated your interest to participate in an interview, a researcher will be in contact with you in the next week.

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Appendix B

Organisation survey

Sport NSW Disability Inclusion Project- Adaptive Community Sport Seminar Survey

Q1. Please select the most appropriate option:

I am a...

- Parent/carer of a person living with disability
- School teacher directly supporting people living with disability
- Community sport or active recreation program deliverer
- Service provider (e.g., NDIS)
- Local health district member
- Other (please specify): _____

Q2. Organisation name:

Q3. Please provide details about members of your organisation:

- Number of paid staff (FTE): _____
- Number of volunteers: _____
- Number of known playing members who live with disability:

- Total number of playing members:

Q4. Does your organisation have someone in a role focused on inclusion?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q5. How many staff/volunteers from your organisation received education and training from the Educational Seminar?

Q6. How many staff/volunteers from your organisation completed the *Sports Trainers* Module?

Q7. Does your organisation have access to quality sports equipment (existing or new) for ongoing adaptive sport activities?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q8. Did your organisation receive sufficient information and resources from the Educational Seminar?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q9. What additional information and resources are you interested in hearing in future educational seminars?

Q10. How satisfied are you with the number and quality of adaptive sport opportunities your organisation delivers each year?

- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied

Q11. Please select any of the following statements or concerns as to why your organisation might not deliver adaptive sports and physical activities as much as they would like.

- Human resources (e.g., insufficient staff, volunteers, members)
- Finance (e.g., adequate and stable revenue, memberships, fundraising, government support, other revenue)
- Infrastructure (e.g., communication, information technology, facilities)
- Planning and development (strategies, tailored initiatives, marketing, and promotion)
- External relationships (e.g., partnerships, relationship with government)

Q12. Can you think of any other reasons why your organisation might not deliver adaptive sports and physical activities as much as they would like? If so, please list:

Q13. Please select the most suitable option:

- Overall, I was satisfied with the Sport NSW Community Seminar.
- Attending the seminar has increased my knowledge on the services and resources available to support people living with disability to participate in sport.
- Attending the seminar has increased my ability to support people living with disability to participate in sport.
- If similar seminars were delivered in my local government area, I would attend.

Q14. Would you like to receive information to register for the *Sport Medicine Australia Sports Trainer Course*?

- Yes
- No

Q15. Please provide your details below:

- Name: _____
- Email: _____
- Mobile: _____

Q16. Do you have any additional feedback for Sport NSW on the seminar?

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Process

Overall Interview Structure

A semi-structured interview style was the most suitable method to capture process and outcome evaluation data for this project as the interviews flowed more smoothly when the interviews shifted into a more unstructured style of conversation.

Prior to gaining verbal consent for participation in the interview (unless written consent was previously provided), interviewees (and any accompanying parents/carers) were provided with the following details:

- **Brief background of the study**
- **Interview process and housekeeping***
- **Data privacy, confidentiality, and storage**

Adjustments to the level of formality, terminology and use of youthful 'slang' or lingo were considered once the interviews had begun. The level of detail that the participants shared varied, with those aged 13+ years providing more information, and with those aged under 13 years offering shorter responses and being more engaged with more direct and shorter questions.

*The potential of sensitivity around topics covered during the interview and vulnerabilities that may be experienced by this priority population subgroup were acknowledged. Given the sensitive nature of this study, the research team assured interviewees of the voluntary nature of participation in this study and their rights to participate in or withdraw from the interview in any capacity they desire or feel comfortable to do so. To minimise the likelihood of distress or harm to interviewees, interviews were conducted in a way that emphasised participant-centredness and ensured that participants were treated with respect and dignity throughout the entire interview process. At the end of the interview, participants were also offered contact information of support organisations that provide mental health and wellbeing support⁷.

Interview Questions

The interview guide included 7 open-ended questions to elicit thickly described and detailed reflections of the program delivery and outcomes of the project on participants. The key questions were:

Question #	Question
1	What is something positive which happened at the Activate Inclusion Sports Day?
2	What activities do you currently do?
3	Using current activities (in photographs displayed) as a reference, what makes these activities fun?
4	What makes these activities hard?
5	Choose an activity from one of the pictures that you have never done before but would like to try (as a way of exploring what some barriers to participation might be)
6	Since attending the Activate Inclusion Sports Day have you tried any new activities?
7	What advice would you give someone new to help them have a great time at the Activate Inclusion Sports Day?

⁷ Whitney, C., & Evered, J. A. (2022). The Qualitative Research Distress Protocol: A Participant-Centered Tool for Navigating Distress During Data Collection. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 21, 16094069221110317. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221110317>

Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation was used to accompany the interviewing process; a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation was used to display up to 13 photographs during the interview. Photographs were sourced from the *Activate Inclusion Sports Day* Facebook page upon gaining permission from project deliverers and ethical clearance to do so. Images were purposively selected to showcase a range of the following:

- **Types of sport/activity** (e.g. Badminton, wheelchair football, mini-golf, 10-pin bowling, cycling, football and basketball)
- **Emotions of participants** (e.g., individuals looking happy, showing concentration)
- **Game formats** (e.g., individual and team sports, adaptive forms of activity)
- Individuals with various **types of disability**

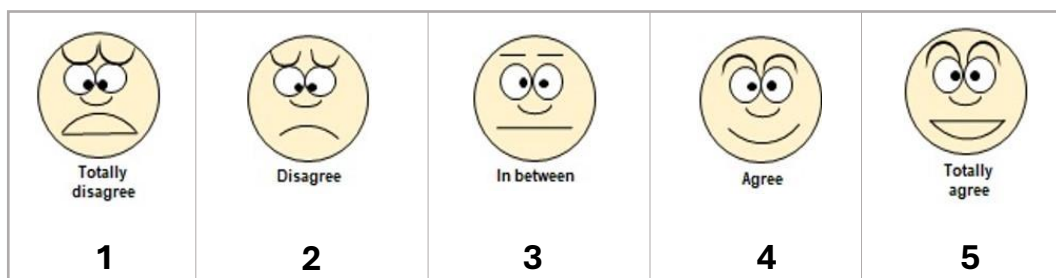
Participants were guided through each photograph and informed at the start of the interview that they were able to comment 'pass' onto the next image if desired. This part of research process included gauging the participants' interest and level of engagement with the photos. Some photographs were replaced with alternative ones after the initial interviews due to issues identified such as that some photos were repetitive (e.g., ball sports and racquet sports but different angles or individuals), images that were frequently 'passed' on or where more than one participant stated they were not interested in the sport.

Examples of photographs displayed during the interview are shown on the next page.



Appendix D

Average score ratings of participant agreement with statements from the adapted TEOSQ⁸



<i>"In sport, I am the most proud of myself when..."</i>	Response rate	Average score rating out of 5
1. I am the only one who can do things correctly	69%	3.3
2. I learn to do new things	76%	4.0
3. I am better than my friends	70%	2.8
4. I learn something that is fun	73%	4.2
5. Others mess up but I do not	67%	2.5
6. I learn a new skill by working hard	72%	4.0
7. I work really hard	73%	3.7
8. I score the most points or goals in a game	65%	3.0
9. What I learn makes me want to practice more	73%	3.8
10. I am the best	72%	3.1
11. I learn something that makes me feel good	73%	4.3
12. I do my very best	72%	4.2

Overall, the statements that ranked the highest in terms of agreement among children who attended the DIP multi-sport activity days were related specifically to motivation and capability to:

- Learn something that makes them feel good (4.3)
- Learn something that is fun (4.2)
- Do their very best (4.2)
- Learn to do new things (4.0)
- Learn a new skill by working hard (4.0)

⁸ *Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire*: Tracey, D., Maïano, C., Gagnon, C., Craven, R., McCune, V. S., & Morin, A. J. S. (2021). The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire adapted for youth with intellectual disabilities (TEOSQ-ID). *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 56, 102006. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2021.102006>