Who is in the house?
Session Overview

- What is the NYS IRRC?
- Recreation, so what’s the big deal?!
- Recreation in the big picture – the ISP
- Inclusive recreation resources
- Summary, discussion, questions
The mission of the NYS IRRC is to promote and sustain participation by people with disabilities in inclusive recreation activities and resources throughout the state of New York.

Funded by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.
Collaborative Partnerships

- Tourism: I Love New York
- Recreation/TR Professionals: NYSRPS, NYSTRA
- Self-Advocates: SANYS, Independent Living Centers, others
- State Agencies: OPWDD, OPRHP, DEC, others
- Regional advisory committees
Our Core Activities

- Inclusivity Assessments
- Inclusion U
- Training and technical assistance
- Online inclusive recreation database
- Collaborative partnerships
- Recreation Referral Service
- College coursework & experiential learning
- Rigorous research & evaluation
Inclusivity Assessment Tool

- Physical access
  - Approach
  - Enter
  - Use
  - Specialty checklists
- Social inclusion
  - Administrative practices
  - Programming practices
- Adaptive equipment
NYS IRRC Website and Database

Disabilities Without Boundaries

The New York State Inclusive Recreation Resource Center (NYS IRRC) believes that all people should play wherever they choose.

The mission of the NYS Inclusive Recreation Resource Center is to promote and sustain participation by people with disabilities in inclusive recreation opportunities throughout the state of New York and beyond.

Headquartered at SUNY Cortland in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies Department, the NYS IRRC is here to help make recreation inclusive for all people.

The NYS IRRC is funded by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.
Become an Inclusivity Assessor!

- Attend Inclusion U training
- Pass the “Final Exam”
- Work with NYS IRRC to choose recreation sites to assess
- Go assess!
- Your assessment becomes part of the online database!!
NYS IRRC CORE VALUES

#1 ALL people deserve to be treated with positive regard

#2 ALL people have strengths and abilities

#3 ALL people of ALL abilities have the right to recreate & play wherever they choose

#4 Recreation is key to a happy and healthy life
“Language is not only a means of communication, but it shapes the way people perceive and experience the world.”

Sherrill, 1993
Person First Language

“The primary intent of using sensitive language is to refer to all individuals in a manner that will build mutual respect and understanding”

Sheldon & Dattilo
Person First Language

- Never use a disability or diagnosis as an adjective (e.g., the autistic child, the blind woman)

- Never use a disability or diagnosis as a noun referring to a condition (e.g., the epileptic, the paraplegic, the disabled)

- Instead, use a disability or diagnosis only when referring to a condition (e.g., a person with an intellectual disability, people with disabilities)
Person First Language

Avoid the use of . . .

- “suffers from”
- “afflicted with”
- “victim of”
- “confined to”
- Confusing and insensitive acronyms (MR, MS, CP, C5)

A person simply "has" a condition or disability, period!

http://www.disabilityisnatural.com
Person First Language

- "Disabled" is also not appropriate.
- Traffic reporters frequently say "disabled vehicle." They once said "stalled car."
- Sports reporters say "the disabled list." They once said "injured reserve."
- Other uses of this word today mean "broken/non-functioning."

People with disabilities are not broken!

http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/peoplefirstlanguage.htm
And then there is the “H-word”!!!!

- "Handicapped" is an archaic term that evokes negative images of pity, fear, and more.

- The origin of the word is from an Old English bartering game, in which the loser was left with his "hand in his cap" and was thought to be at a disadvantage.

- A legendary origin of the "H-word" refers to a person with a disability begging with his "cap in his hand."

www.disabilityisnatural.com/peoplefirstlanguage.htmhttp://
All people have strengths & abilities

The ability and opportunity for an individual to make decisions, believing him or herself to be capable, self-driven, yet connected to the community and a support system.
The Strengths Approach

“Courage is not the towering oak that sees storms come and go; it is the fragile blossom that opens in the snow.”

Alice M. Swaim, American author
Meet.....

Jenny

Sara
### A little about each girl:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jenny</th>
<th>Sara</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I fixate on animals, lights, and motion</td>
<td>I like cats and playing computer games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I display attention-seeking behaviors</td>
<td>I like to show off for my friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I display off-task behaviors when fatigued at school</td>
<td>I work hard at school, but like to take breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am at times non-compliant</td>
<td>I stand up for myself when picked on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I display self-stimulating behaviors</td>
<td>I have many hobbies that interest and absorb me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I display poor socialization skills</td>
<td>I choose my friends wisely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have dependencies on others</td>
<td>I love people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I run away</td>
<td>I go for walks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have tantrums</td>
<td>I insist on having my way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can get disoriented and have a short attention span</td>
<td>I change my mind about things at times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have splinter skills</td>
<td>I am talented in some areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principles of the strengths-based approach

- Every individual, group, family, and community has strengths
- Difficulties (illness, disability, addiction, etc.) are also sources of opportunity and challenge
- We do not know the upper limits of a participant’s capacity to grow and change – never assume we do!

Saleebey (2005)
Principles of the strengths-based approach

- Collaboration with participants (not expert domination)
- Every environment is full of resources
- Hopefulness matters
- Context matters
- Strengths can be nurtured
#3 **ALL** people of **ALL** abilities have the right to recreate & play wherever they choose

...Inclusion
What Does Inclusion Mean?

- Being accepted and appreciated for who you are
- Having the same choices and opportunities in recreation activities as other people
- Being with friends who share your interests, not necessarily your disability
- Being a valued customer and a welcomed participant
- Recreation areas and facilities are accessible and easy to use by everyone
- Having the necessary supports so every person can benefit
- Having a sense of belonging
Inclusion considers......

- Physical Inclusion
  ...Built recreation environments
  ...Natural recreation environments

- Social Inclusion
  ...Programs, services, and events
  ...Administrative practices
What Does Inclusion **Not** Mean?

- Putting large groups of people with disabilities in one program
- Disrupting the natural proportion of individuals with and without disabilities in the community
- Special, labeled programs
- “Caring for” or “looking after” people with disabilities
Perspectives

- Normalization theory states that people should have:
  - Least restrictive and age-appropriate environments
  - Valued roles in their communities

- Ecological theory:
  - People with disabilities are part of a larger system, where the environment provides opportunities, resources, and barriers.
Recreation and Play.....
The benefits are endless!!

#4 Recreation is key to a happy & healthy life
Recreation and the ISP....

Recreation allows opportunities for...........
• Meaningful and enjoyable leisure
• Reinforcing of academic & daily living skills
• Strengthening of friendships
• Exploring new activities
• Contributing to development of motor skills
• Developing and improving communication skills
• Development for successful transition skills
• Refining socialization skills
• Enhancing self concept / self esteem
• Self expression & self development
• Developing and improving coping skills
• Practicing decision making skills
Recreation and Leisure

- Leisure is a strength
  - Leisure has the POWER to make people feel good about themselves & form a positive identity..... “I am a windsurfer!”

- Leisure provides a context to build strengths
  - Leisure provides opportunities for people to make positive changes
Recreation.....Beyond Dunkin Donuts
Let’s chat about “meaningful” or quality recreation and leisure experiences.

- Do the people find “meaning, enjoyment and growth” in their leisure pursuits?

- Do their leisure pursuits provide opportunities to use their strengths to exercise “effortful skill in concert with stimulating challenges?”
FIRST, do the individual’s recreation & leisure experiences provide the opportunity to . . .

- Discover and then exercise & share strengths and personal attributes?
- Learn more about leisure and one’s attitudes and feelings toward leisure?
- Develop and clarify interests, preferences, talents, abilities, skills, and competencies?
- Discover and clarify aspirations for leisure?
Meaningful Recreation.....

- Does the person savor the experience?
- Do they talk about it, want to do it again, look forward to more?
- Is the individual fully immersed, deeply involved in the experience, perhaps losing track of time or what is going on around her or him?
- Is the individual engaged and challenged?
- Does the individual experience personal growth and enhanced well-being?
What leisure related skills make recreation meaningful?

- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Values clarification
- Planning
- Assertiveness
- Social interaction
- Communication
- Managing time, money, stress
- Activity skills
What leisure related knowledge makes recreation meaningful?

Leisure-related knowledge:

- Who am I?
- What is recreation & leisure?
- What opportunities are available?
- What resources are available?
What leisure related attitudes make recreation meaningful?

Leisure-relate attitudes:

- Playfulness
- Intrinsic motivation
- Self-determination
- Freedom
- Acceptance
- Optimism
- Openness
- Movement, growth & development
SECOND, consider the environment:

Does the recreation and leisure environment facilitate . . .

- Real choices?
- Social supports?
- Offer typical lifestyle rhythms?

Is the recreation & leisure inclusive?

- Physically?
- Socially?
- Administratively?
What we know....

The research clearly shows that people grow and flourish through recreation and play.

Recreation provides the ideal setting to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes!
5 Minute Reflection
Discovering Recreation Dreams

- Assessment process
- Developing meaningful goals
- Identifying resources
- Evaluating success!!
How can you help transform dreams & goals into inclusive recreation opportunities???
Recreation Assessment

Goals, aspirations, skill and abilities of the participant

Supports & Accommodations
Adaptations
Equipment
Staff training
Etc....

Demands of the activity and environment

Bridging the gap
Assessing strengths & abilities

What internal strengths does the person bring?

- Interests and preferences
- Talents and abilities
- Skills and competencies
- Knowledge
- Aspirations and goals
- Character strengths and virtue
Assessing strengths & abilities

What external strengths does the person have?

- Family and support
- Home resources
- Social support and friendships
- Community & environmental resources
- Inclusive communities
- High expectations and positive attitudes
LET’S LOOK AT RECREATION RESOURCES

New York State

Local Community

Home and Family

Personal
Discovering Recreation Dreams & Goals
(assessment)
Development of Meaningful Goals

- Joe will participate in swim lessons at his local community center
- Anne will participate weekly in the local kayaking club meetings and outings
- Pete will volunteer each week at the local ASPCA
- Nadine will travel to Memphis, Tennessee to visit Graceland
- Laurie will become a lifeguard
DEVELOP
MEANINGFUL GOALS
So, what are the demands of the activity?

Goals, aspirations, skill and abilities of the participant

Supports & Accommodations
Adaptations
Equipment
Staff training
Etc....

Bridging the gap

Demands of the activity and environment
Assess the recreation activity

- Determine the requirements of the activity
  - What skills does the person need?

- Assess the recreation environment
  - Is the site or activity physically accessible?
  - What skills and knowledge do the recreation providers have?
  - Are there supports and accommodations that need to be put in place?
  - Is the site in the NYS IRRC database?
So, what supports & accommodations are needed?

Goals, aspirations, skill and abilities of the participant

Bridging the gap

Supports & Accommodations
Adaptations
Equipment
Staff training
Etc....

Demands of the activity and environment
The Inclusion Plan: Laying the groundwork

- Think of yourself as a bridge builder. You are building a bridge of natural supports and accommodations.
- Discuss any supports, accommodations, or modifications the individual may require with the agency or program...which we’ll discuss.
Additional Staff or Volunteers

- Some participants may need more staff supervision or physical support.
- Supports are used to foster the inclusion process and to allow the individual to be as independent as possible.
- The agency/program must put policies and procedures in place to determine the hiring and training of staff, volunteers, or peers who provide support.
Exploring Types of Support (people)

- Modified staff ratios
- A peer support system
- A leisure coach system

...A leisure coach (staff, volunteers, or another participant) directly supports a participant with a disability

...The coach helps the participant with a disability develop skills and make friends

...The coach fades out as individual develops skills and makes friends
Is Peer Training or Orientation needed?

- Help other participants understand the person with a disability
- Provide “Similarity training”
- Participant with a disability and/or parent/guardian can visit group
- Suggest ideas for socializing and communicating
- Provide simulation activities
- Open forum for questions and discussion
Sharing Positive Participation Strategies

- Helping providers understand that behavior is a form of communication

- Provide information to staff to foster positive participation (some participants may have a written plan)
  - Best ways to help engage the person
  - Sharing strengths and interests

- Know the appropriate strategies to foster positive participation and avoid “triggers,” and to redirect or calm the person when necessary

- Provide a quiet space for individuals to use as a preventative strategy or to allow an individual a place to regroup or relax
Let’s consider accommodations

- Accommodations help an individual participate in an activity as independently as possible
  - Adaptive equipment
  - Skill modification
  - Rule modification
  - Space modification
  - Goal structure
  - Team/group modifications
Accommodation: Equipment Modification
Accommodation: Skills Modification

- Changes in the skill requirements that allow more independent participation
Accommodation: Space modification

Changes in the space or area where an activity is conducted allows for fuller participation

Examples:
Accommodation: Goal modification

- Change the structure of the activity so that the goal is cooperation versus winning (competition)

...Example:

How many volleys can both teams keep going
Accommodation: Team or Group Formation

- Change the way teams or groups are formed or function

...Example:

Rotate positions frequently
LET’S PLAY BALL!!
Evaluate Inclusion Strategies

- Regularly communicate with the participant, family, and staff

- Make changes as needed
  ... Supports
  ... Accommodations
  ... Environment
  ... Program
Document!

- Write down what works and doesn’t work in a central place, to help other staff and volunteers

- Write down the participant’s progress and the inclusion experience overall, to help with program evaluation and improvement
NYS IRRC Resources

- Staff training for recreation providers
- Technical assistance to recreation providers
- Inclusion Advocates (in some regions)
- Inclusive Recreation Database
- Inclusion U Training (state-wide)
NYS IRRC Database

www.nysirrc.org
Become an Inclusivity Assessor!

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Comments or Questions?
2010 Project Staff & Contact Info

Dr. Lynn Anderson, CTRS, CPRP
Laurie Penney McGee, CTRS
Dr. Vicki Wilkins, CPRP
Amanda Lengauer
Graduate Assistant

Mailing address:
NYS IRRC
Box 2000
SUNY Cortland
Cortland, NY 13045

• InclusiveRec@cortland.edu
• 607-753-4833