

Learning Outcomes for Special Needs

At Let Loose! we are focused on making our Park inclusive for everyone.

The Climbing Wall

Here at Let Loose! We have a climbing wall which is equipped with pulleys suitable to assist people to reach the heights of the Tower. Whether a physical, cognitive, communication or sensory disability, there is a degree of participation that can be achieved. Some of the many benefits of climbing as they relate to certain disabilities are described below:

Sensory Disabilities

- As people climb, they are gaining exposure to movement and sensory input that can help in motor processing
- Climbing gives people's bodies proprioceptive input (being aware of body and movement in relation to its joints). The pressure they feel in their muscles and joints can help internal regulation
- Climbing helps develop the vestibular system
- Climbing is a very tactile activity
- The climbing wall is visually inviting and may serve as a motivator for children to climb, encouraging increased movement.

Physical Disabilities

- Core strength and muscle tone are positively affected by climbing
- Strength in hands, arms and legs can increase by climbing
- People who have physical limitations often participate in sedentary activities. Climbing, at whatever physical level possible, provides body movement that can increase circulation and assist in digestion
- Range of motion activities can increase flexion and extension, which helps prevent muscle atrophy
- Climbing helps people gain experience and confidence in bilateral movement and coordination
- Eye-hand and eye-foot coordination is practiced.

Cognitive Disabilities

- Action concepts such as on/off, up/down, right/left, go/stop can all be incorporated into climbing. This helps people learn and understand these words because they are experiencing them verbally as well as kinaesthetically
- Problem solving is naturally incorporated into climbing as children determine hand and foot placement throughout the climb
- Decision-making is involved as people will be faced with choosing a particular path and following through with their decisions
- Facing the climbing wall and constantly scanning the wall for the next hold to reach for can help take away auxiliary distractions and increase attention. This also helps people think sequentially

- People are better able to focus and attend to cognitive tasks after they have been able to use their whole body in activity

Communication Disabilities

- Receptive language can be targeted as people listen and process verbal direction by a teacher or another child, for example which colour hand hold to reach for
- Receptive language is further developed as children talk to each other while climbing so they know where they are in relation to others. This is especially important for people who have visual impairments
- Climbing allows for independent movement. People who have autism may not like physical contact and this is an activity that caters to that characteristic
- Cross-curricular activities invite written communication; for example, by finding letters or spelling words on the climbing wall