

# A Blueprint for Building Quality Participation in Sport for Children, Youth, and Adults with a Disability



Photo credit: Canadian Paralympic Committee



cdpp

Canadian Disability Participation Project

Le projet canadien sur la participation sociale  
des personnes en situation de handicap

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b> .....	3
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	4
<b>PART 1: KEY CONCEPTS IN QUALITY PARTICIPATION</b>	
The Foundational Strategies for Creating Quality Experience and Participation .....	6
The Building Blocks of Quality Experience and Participation .....	7
<b>PART 2: TOOLS FOR BUILDING QUALITY PARTICIPATION</b>	
A Four Step Process for Building Quality Participation.....	9
<b>Step 1:</b> Information Gathering .....	10
<b>Step 2:</b> The Quality Participation Checklist .....	11
Physical Environment Checklist.....	12
Program Environment Checklist.....	13
Social Environment Checklist	
Coach/Instructor .....	15
Peer .....	17
Family .....	18
General.....	19
<b>Step 3:</b> Program Audit and Improvement Tool – Putting It All Together .....	20
SWOT Analysis: How do your Total Rankings vs. Priority Rankings compare?.....	20
<b>Step 4:</b> Program Audit and Improvement Tool – Build a Plan to Enhance Program Quality.....	21
<b>Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block</b>	
Belonging.....	22
Autonomy .....	23
Mastery .....	24
Challenge .....	25
Engagement.....	26
Meaning.....	27

---

# PREFACE

## OVERVIEW

The Blueprint for Building Quality Participation in Sport for Children, Youth, and Adults with a Disability introduces key concepts that underpin quality participation, and provides tools for building quality participation in sport programs. The research evidence supporting the Blueprint is summarized in a supplemental report: Evidence-Based Strategies for Building Quality Participation in Sport for Children, Youth, and Adults with a Disability (available from [www.cdpp.ca](http://www.cdpp.ca)). There also is an accompanying scientific paper available at [www.cdpp.ca](http://www.cdpp.ca):

Evans MB, Shirazipour CS, Allan V, Zanhour M, Sweet SN, Martin Ginis KA & Latimer-Cheung AE. (2018). Integrating insights from the parasport community to understand optimal experiences: The Quality Parasport Participation Framework. *Psychology of Sport & Exercise*, 35, 79-90.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2018.04.009>

## FUNDING

This work was supported by a Partnership Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (grant number 895-2013-1021) for the Canadian Disability Participation Project ([www.cdpp.ca](http://www.cdpp.ca)).

## CITATION

Canadian Disability Participation Project. (2018). *Blueprint for Building Quality Participation in Sport for Children, Youth, and Adults with a Disability*. University of British Columbia, Kelowna, BC.

## WEBSITE

This report is available online at [www.cdpp.ca](http://www.cdpp.ca)

## AUTHORS

The Blueprint was created by:  
Jasmin Ma, MSc, PhD Candidate  
University of British Columbia  
Veronica Allan, MSc, PhD Candidate  
Queen's University

## CONTRIBUTORS

Jasmin Ma, University of British Columbia  
Veronica Allan, Queen's University  
Amy Latimer-Cheung, Queen's University  
Blair Evans, Pennsylvania State University  
Celina Shirazipour, Dalhousie University  
Kathleen Martin Ginis, University of British Columbia

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the disability sport administrators, coaches, and athletes who provided feedback on drafts of the Blueprint.

## PUBLICATION DATA

April 2023- version 2.0

## CONTACT INFORMATION

<https://cdpp.ca/contact>

©Canadian Disability Participation Project, January 2020



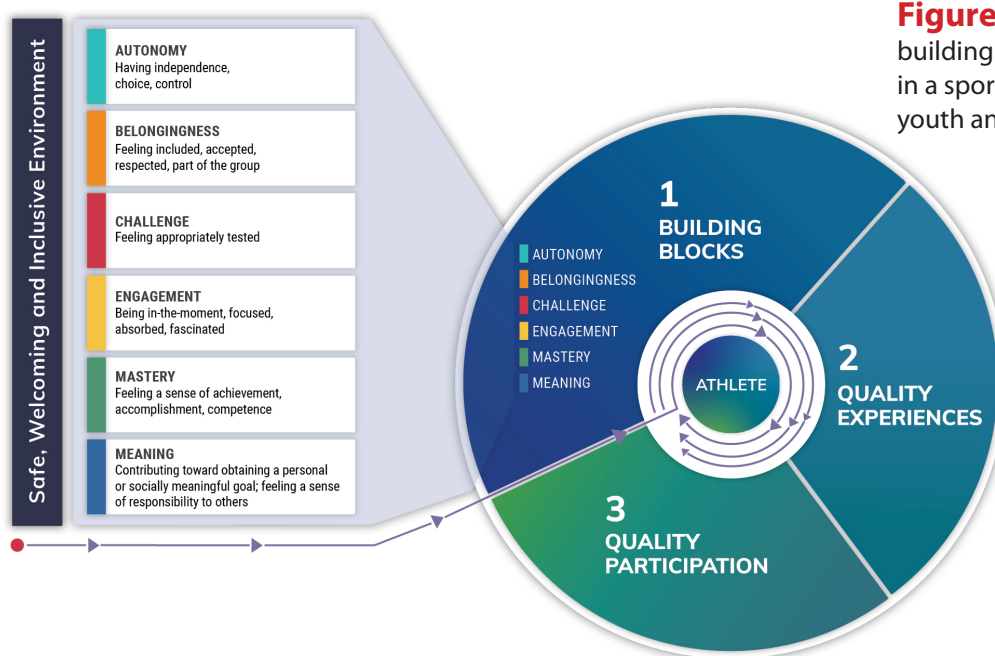
# Introduction

## Purpose

This blueprint document has been created for program builders, including administrators, coaches, and policy makers. It introduces key concepts that underpin quality participation, and provides tools for building quality participation in sport programs for children, youth, and adults with a disability.

## What is quality participation?

Quality participation is achieved when athletes with a disability view their involvement in sport as satisfying and enjoyable, and experience outcomes that they consider important.



**Figure 1.** A blueprint for building quality participation in a sport program for children, youth and adults with a disability.

## How to build quality participation

As the blueprint suggests, quality participation is built from an athlete's positive experiences. Repeated and sustained exposure to quality experiences should contribute to lasting quality participation. Quality experience is built from six building blocks: belonging, autonomy, mastery, challenge, engagement, and meaning. In turn, these six building blocks must be supported with a proper foundation consisting of physical, program and social environments that are welcoming, accessible and supportive.

## The Blueprint document

The next section of this document (Part 1) further explains the key components necessary for building quality experience and participation in parasport, starting with the foundation and then building upwards. Part 2, which includes the *Quality Participation Checklist* and the *Program Audit and Improvement Tool*, provides program builders with guidance as they work to ensure that these key components are reflected and incorporated in their programs.



# Part 1: Introduction to Key Concepts in Quality Participation



Photo credit: Canadian Paralympic Committee



# The Building Blocks of Quality Experience and Participation

Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning
Feeling part of a group, included, accepted, and/or respected by others	Having independence, choice, and control	Experiencing achievement, competence; having sense of accomplishment	Feeling appropriately tested	Feeling focused, in-the-moment, and absorbed; experiencing flow	Contributing toward obtaining a personal or socially meaningful goal; feeling a sense of responsibility to others

These six building blocks, layered on top of a supportive foundation, lead to positive, enjoyable sport experiences. Repeated and sustained exposure to these quality experiences should contribute to lasting quality participation. The *Quality Participation Checklist* links these building blocks with the foundational environmental strategies that support them.



## Key Considerations

- Quality experience is individual and dynamic:
  1. Individuals will place different values on these key building blocks—the way to create a quality experience for one athlete will often not be exactly the same as for another athlete.
  2. The value athletes place on each building block may change over time—for example, a sense of belonging may be important at the start of an athlete’s participation, but challenge and meaning might be the most important later on.
- There is no need to incorporate all of the building blocks. Ideally, all six building blocks would be used to meet the needs of all athletes. However, effective results can also be obtained by relying on only a few. It likely is more effective to do a good job implementing the buildings blocks that are most important to the majority of the athletes in the program, as opposed to doing a poor job incorporating all of them.
- Prioritize the six building blocks based on your organization’s mission/vision and the majority of your athletes’ needs. Remember, your mission/vision should be clear so that athletes can expect appropriate outcomes to result from their participation.

# The Foundational Strategies for Creating Quality Experience and Participation

Physical Environment

Program Environment

Social Environment

Many strategies can be used to ensure the physical, program, and social parasport environments can provide a solid foundation with which to support the six building blocks and, ultimately, foster quality sport experiences and participation. The *Quality Participation Checklist* provides a list of these strategies and examples of how they can be integrated into a parasport program (see page 8).

## Key Considerations

- Some of the strategies are important for creating quality experiences and are also essential for any form of participation to occur.
- Implementing one strategy could influence numerous building blocks of quality participation.
- It may not be possible or necessary to use all the strategies, but implementing more strategies will likely increase the potential for creating a quality experience.
- Many of the strategies relate to the social environment. These strategies are further organized into four categories:
  - 1) Coach/Instructor
  - 2) Peer
  - 3) Family
  - 4) General



Photo credit: Canadian Paralympic Committee



# Part 2: Tools for Building Quality Participation



Photo credit: Canadian Paralympic Committee

# A Four Step Process for Building Quality Participation

Outlined below is a four step process to guide you through a quality participation program audit. The tools provided for each step will help you to determine your program priorities, strengths and weaknesses. Following this process will enable you to create a plan to optimize quality participation within your program.

## The Four Step Process

	<b>Tool</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b>STEP 1</b>	Information Gathering	Develop and refine your organization's mission/vision and understand the majority of your athletes' needs.
<b>STEP 2</b>	The Quality Participation Checklist	Rate and justify how well your organization is currently employing the strategies that contribute to a strong foundation that can support the six building blocks.
<b>STEP 3</b>	Program Audit and Improvement Tool — Putting It All Together	Tally the checklist scores to identify the building blocks and strategies that can be implemented to improve quality participation.
<b>STEP 4</b>	Program Audit and Improvement Tool — Develop Your Quality Participation Strategy	Prioritize your strategies and develop your plan to implement missing building blocks.

## Step 1: Information Gathering

### Develop and refine your organization’s mission/vision and understand the majority of your athletes’ needs.

Your vision or mission should make it clear if your program is focused on providing fun, recreation, fitness, or competitive opportunities — or a combination of these. Ask for your athletes’ input and seek to understand why they’re participating. This will help you identify which building blocks you should focus on and, ultimately, prioritize your strategies.

Mission/Vision	Athletes’ Needs

Rank the building blocks below in the order of their importance to your organization’s priorities, based on the outline of your mission/vision and your athletes’ needs. Transfer these rankings to the bottom of page 20 in the *Priority Rankings* row.

<b>Belonging</b> Being a part of a group	<b>Autonomy</b> Having the ability to make choices	<b>Mastery</b> Experiencing success	<b>Challenge</b> Feeling appropriately tested	<b>Engagement</b> Feeling involved	<b>Meaning</b> Making it matter
---	---	--	--	---------------------------------------	------------------------------------

### Rank Building Blocks:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_



## Step 2: Quality Participation Checklist

### Purpose:

The *Quality Participation Checklist* is designed to help program builders identify i) strategies to strengthen the foundational support in their program’s physical, program, and social environments, and ii) the key building blocks (belonging, autonomy, mastery, challenge, engagement, and meaning) that are most important to layer on top of the foundation in order to improve quality experience and participation for athletes.

<p><b>2a)</b></p>	<p><b>Rate how well your organization is currently targeting each of the strategies.</b>            0 = Strategy not targeted: This strategy has not been addressed by the organization.            1 = Strategy partially targeted: Some aspects of this strategy have been implemented, but there is room for improvement.            2 = Strategy comprehensively targeted: This strategy has been well-implemented and the organization is satisfied with this strategy.</p>
<p><b>2b)</b></p>	<p><b>Justify your current rating with specific examples.</b>            For example, if your organization rated Access to Equipment as a 1, you might justify your rating as “sport chairs are available; however, some equipment is missing, including grip assistance gloves and chest straps”.</p>
<p><b>2c)</b></p>	<p><b>Transfer your current rating to the corresponding building blocks.</b>            Row by row, transfer the current rating score to each of the blank blocks in the Building Blocks Addressed columns. For example, if a 2 was written in the Current Rating column for Accessibility, a 2 would be written in the same row under Belonging, Autonomy, and Engagement columns.</p>
<p><b>2d)</b></p>	<p><b>Tally the scores.</b>            Add the scores in each building block column to generate individual building block scores. Add the scores for each individual building block to get an overall total score for the foundational strategy. There are no cut-offs for a “good” or “poor” score. These scores are simply to help you identify the building blocks and strategies with room for improvement (and the environments they’re in), and evaluate changes over time.</p>

## Step 2: Physical Environment Checklist

### Reminders for Filling out the Checklist:

2a) In the Rating box, rate how well your organization is **currently** implementing each of the strategies on a scale of 0 - 2.

2b) In the Justification for Rating box, justify your **current** rating with specific examples.

2c) In the Building Blocks Addressed boxes, work row by row and transfer the current rating score to each of the blank boxes.

2d) Tally the building block scores. Add each column for the individual building block scores, then add the individual building block scores for the total score.

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating  (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Accessibility</b>	Facilities are set up to allow access for participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible washrooms and change rooms are available, and can accommodate all participants</li> <li>• Wide entrances and exits; space to access equipment</li> </ul>								
<b>Travel and Access</b>	Sport setting is conveniently located for participants; participants have ease of access to the sport setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility is easy to access via public transportation</li> <li>• Accessible parking is available</li> <li>• Building is equipped with ramps and/or elevators</li> </ul>								
<b>Safe Places</b>	Participants are assured that the facilities and location are safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are properly trained and/or certified</li> <li>• Appropriate supervision or monitoring (if needed) is provided</li> <li>• Facilities and equipment are up-to-date</li> </ul>								
<b>Access to Equipment</b>	Participants have access to equipment that suits their needs or competitive level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment is available and/or affordable</li> <li>• Equipment is appropriately sized to the participant (e.g., wheelchairs, prosthetics, grip assistance gloves)</li> </ul>								
<b>Building Blocks Addressed in the Physical Environment</b>				/2	/6	/4	/4	/8	0	<b>Total Score: /24</b>

## Step 2: Program Environment Checklist

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating  (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Sport Type</b>	The sport type or activity is ideally suited to the needs of the participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheelchair rugby is designed for participants with functional impairments in at least three limbs (e.g., quadriplegia)</li> <li>• Participants who desire a connection to nature are able to participate outdoors (e.g., para-rowing, para-alpine)</li> </ul>								
<b>Program Size</b>	The sport program seeks ways to attract enough participants to be self-sustaining, and provides various options for being involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program implements strategies to attract new members (e.g., peer mentorship, have-a-go days)</li> <li>• Program offers opportunities to participate beyond athlete role (e.g., team leader, administrative responsibilities)</li> </ul>								
<b>Funding and Cost</b>	Program has funding to support the basic needs for participants' involvement and the cost is as low as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program is low cost or offers subsidies and/or strategies for participants to obtain funding assistance</li> </ul>								
<b>Options</b>	Participants have choice among activities that offer varying skill levels, and even different sports in some cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants have the opportunity to take on different positions or roles (e.g., defence, offence)</li> <li>• Participants can choose to modify the activity or environment to meet their unique needs (e.g., adjust net height, level of assistance)</li> </ul>								
<b>Individual Level of Challenge</b>	After consulting with each athlete, the activity is individually designed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities or equipment are modified to accommodate different skill levels (e.g., rules, net height, size of field of play)</li> </ul>								



Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
			(0-2)							
	to appropriately challenge all participants and even push athletes out of their comfort zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress of participant is monitored to adjust level of challenge over time (e.g., downward for degenerative conditions; upward if improvement is shown)</li> </ul>								
<b>Safe Activities</b>	Sport activities include a comfortable level of risk and limit potential for harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Temperature is regulated for participants with thermo-regulation issues</li> <li>Equipment is appropriately-sized and up-to-date</li> </ul>								
<b>Classification</b>	Classification process ensures equal opportunity, fair competition, and limited chances for alienation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classification is sport-specific, and includes evaluation in naturalistic environments (e.g., field of play)</li> <li>Classifiers are adequately trained and/or qualified</li> </ul>								
<b>Diversity</b>	Consider the level of integration with able-bodied athletes, or even of group members with differing abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pair or group participants with similar abilities</li> <li>Pair or group participants with complementary abilities</li> <li>Adapt activity to be challenging for all participants; base intervals or drills on relational (e.g., percent effort) rather than absolute measures</li> </ul>								
<b>Building Blocks Addressed in the Program Environment</b>				/10	/8	/10	/10	/8	/10	<b>Total Score: /56</b>

There are many strategies within the social environment that provide a foundation for building quality experience and participation. We have organized these strategies into four groups: 1) Coach/Instructor, 2) Peer, 3) Family, and 4) General to help better identify specific areas of the social environment that may need to be targeted.

## Step 2: Social Environment Checklist - Coach/Instructor

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Coach/ Instructor Knowledge, Skill, and Learning</b>	Coach/instructor possesses sufficient technical knowledge and skill related to the sport and the specific disability context to design appropriate activity. In cases where coach/instructor does not have the skills or knowledge, they collaborate with athletes and seek input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach is trained and/or certified within their particular sport</li> <li>• Coach has experience working in sport and/or disability contexts</li> <li>• Coach seeks input from credible resources and people (e.g., experienced coaches)</li> <li>• Coach asks athlete for ideas to best address their needs or make adaptations</li> </ul>								
<b>Coach/ Instructor Autonomy Support</b>	Coach finds ways for athletes to perceive they have some control over training programs or activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach allows athletes to choose the skill or technique that they feel is most important to work on</li> <li>• Coach provides options for activities from which athletes can choose during practice</li> </ul>								
<b>Interpersonal Skills of Coach/ Instructor</b>	Coach develops a supportive leadership style and fosters positive relationships with participants that engender trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach shows interest in athletes' personal lives and demonstrates concern for athletes' wellbeing</li> <li>• Coach is understanding of athletes' needs and goals and is able to relate to athletes</li> <li>• Coach models positive values for athletes (e.g., respect, sportsmanship)</li> </ul>								

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating  (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Coach/ Instructor Develops Roles</b>	Coach actively encourages individual members to take on roles that are vital for the group, and ensures that these contributions are recognized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach assigns roles to individual group members, or creates roles that participants can choose to fulfill (e.g., team captain, equipment manager, social events coordinator)</li> <li>• Coach recognizes contributions of group members with verbal praise, awards, etc.</li> </ul>								
<b>Coach/ Instructor Tracking Athlete Improvement</b>	Coach leads benchmarking or encourages self-monitoring so that athletes know when they have improved, even marginally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach implements regular fitness or skills testing, and/or records athlete progress</li> <li>• Coach provides athletes with training logs to record personal progress or notes</li> </ul>								
<b>Building Blocks Addressed in the Social Environment: Coach/Instructor</b>				/4	/4	/8	/8	/6	/4	<b>Total Score: /34</b>



## Step 2: Social Environment Checklist - Peer

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating  (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Group Environment</b>	Members within the sport activity become a cohesive group that feels united as they pursue shared goals. The group environment is supported and fostered by coaches/leaders and other group members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach or leader facilitates group goal-setting</li> <li>• Opportunities for team-building activities are provided</li> <li>• Athletes are grouped into sub-groups or teams with collective goals that stick together over time</li> </ul>								
<b>Mentorship or Role Modelling</b>	Participants have opportunities to mentor others, or to seek personal mentors to establish relationships with. Peers also contribute to the teaching/learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More experienced participants model behaviours/provide instruction/offer advice for less experienced participants</li> <li>• Program fosters opportunities for mentorship (i.e., peer support)</li> </ul>								
<b>Building Blocks Addressed in the Social Environment: Peer</b>				/4	0	/4	0	/2	/2	<b>Total Score: /12</b>

## Step 2: Social Environment Checklist - Family

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Educating Family Members</b>	Sport organization provides family members (e.g., parents) with opportunities to seek education regarding sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport organizations offer online resources or workshops for family members to learn about sport (e.g., equipment, costs, sport types)</li> </ul>								
<b>Familial Support and Integration</b>	Family members generally support sport involvement, and provide support in an autonomy-supportive manner. Organizations provide roles for family members to take on in the sport community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family members attend sport events as spectators or volunteers</li> <li>• Family members have opportunities to get involved on committees (e.g., fundraising) or in sport-related roles (e.g., coaches, referees)</li> </ul>								
<b>Building Blocks Addressed in the Social Environment: Family</b>				/4	0	0	0	/4	/4	<b>Total Score: /12</b>

## Step 2: Social Environment Checklist - General

Strategy	Definition	Examples	Rating  (0-2)	Building Blocks Addressed						Justification for Rating
				Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning	
<b>Harassment</b>	Athletes are protected from harassment and discrimination during all social interactions (e.g., with other participants, volunteers, program leaders, spectators).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All individuals involved with the program are required to participate in anti-harassment training</li> <li>Individuals are held accountable for their actions</li> </ul>								
<b>Sport-Related Attitudes</b>	Participants perceive positive societal attitudes toward sport, particularly from members of sport organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers at sport events treat able-bodied athletes and athletes with disabilities equally</li> <li>Positive messages about sport are circulated (e.g., in the media)</li> </ul>								
<b>Status of Disability</b>	Athletes experience equal treatment and support when participating alongside able-bodied athletes or within shared facilities. Sport is taken seriously.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocation of resources (e.g., funding, equipment, support staff) is equitable in able-bodied and disability sport settings</li> <li>Sport athletes are treated with respect while training or competing</li> </ul>								
<b>Unique Pathways</b>	Participants have support to pursue their individual pathways through sport, ranging from international, elite-level competition to recreational sport directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness of diverse sport opportunities (i.e., varied sport types, levels of competition)</li> <li>Participants are given opportunities to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready</li> </ul>								
<b>Building Blocks Addressed in the Social Environment: General</b>				/8	/2	/2	/2	/4	/4	<b>Total Score: /22</b>

## Step 3: Program Audit and Improvement Tool - Putting It All Together

**Purpose:** Tally the checklist scores and audit your program's strengths and weaknesses to identify the building blocks and strategies that you may consider targeting to improve quality participation.

**Instructions:** Transfer your scores from the checklist into the table below. Calculate a total score. Rank your total scores from 1 = highest score to 6 = lowest score. Compare your total ranking scores to your priority ranking. Complete the SWOT Analysis.

	Belonging	Autonomy	Mastery	Challenge	Engagement	Meaning
<b>Physical Environment</b>	/2	/6	/4	/4	/8	0
<b>Program Environment</b>	/10	/8	/10	/10	/8	/10
<b>Social: Coach/Instructor Environment</b>	/4	/4	/8	/8	/6	/4
<b>Social: Peer Environment</b>	/4	0	/4	0	/2	/2
<b>Social: Family Environment</b>	/4	0	0	0	/4	/4
<b>Social: General Environment</b>	/8	/2	/2	/2	/4	/4
<b>Total</b>	/32	/20	/28	/24	/32	/24
<b>Number of Foundational Strategies</b>	16	10	14	12	16	12
<b>Average</b>						
<b>Total Rankings (1-6): 1= Highest score 6= Lowest score</b>						
<b>Priority Rankings (transfer from page 10)</b>						

### SWOT Analysis : How do your Total Rankings vs. Priority Rankings compare?

**Strengths:** Which building blocks are your program's strength areas? How well do these strengths align with your program priorities? In other words, are the building blocks that ranked high in the total rankings the same as the building blocks that ranked high in your priority rankings?

**Weaknesses:** Which building blocks align with your program priorities but are not strength areas in your program currently? In other words, are there building blocks that are ranked high in your priority rankings but low in your total rankings?

**Opportunities:** Identify up to three building blocks your program could focus on to improve athletes' quality participation.

**Threats:** Identify any barriers or threats you foresee impeding the implementation of your strategies to target these building blocks.

## Step 4: Program Audit and Improvement Tool - Build a Plan to Enhance Program Quality

- 4a) Identify up to three building blocks your program should focus on to improve athletes' quality experience and participation. Identify focus areas by comparing your Total Rankings versus Priority Rankings.
- 4b) Identify foundational strategies your program could incorporate to support these building blocks. See page 22 for a quick reference guide of foundational strategies for each building block.
- 4c) Jot down some notes about how these strategies can be implemented into your program. Consider if there are any upcoming opportunities for implementing these strategies such as a training camp, funding opportunities, etc.

<b>Building Block Focus Area</b> (belonging, autonomy, mastery, challenge, engagement, meaning)	<b>Foundational Strategies</b> Identify two or three foundational strategies that could be implemented in your program	<b>Notes</b> Consider how the strategies will be implemented. Are there any upcoming opportunities or threats?



# Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block

## Belonging

Environment	Strategy	Example
Physical	Accessibility	Wide entrances and exits; space to access equipment
Program	Sport Type	Participants who desire a connection to nature are able to participate outdoors (e.g., para-rowing, para-alpine)
	Program Size	Program offers opportunities to participate beyond athlete role (e.g., team leader, administrative responsibilities)
	Options	Participants can choose to modify the activity or environment to meet their unique needs (e.g., adjust net height, level of assistance)
	Classification	Participants are classified alongside peers with similar abilities
	Diversity	Pair up or group participants with similar abilities
Social- Coach/ Instructor	Interpersonal Skills of Coach/Instructor	Coach is understanding of athletes' needs and goals and is able to relate to athletes
	Coach/Instructor Develops Roles	Coach recognizes contributions of group members with verbal praise, awards, etc.
Social- Peer	Group Environment	Athletes are grouped into sub-groups or teams with collective goals that stick together over time
	Mentorship or Role Modelling	Program fosters opportunities for mentorship (i.e., peer support)
Social- Family	Educating Family Members	Family members have opportunities to learn about sport and support their loved one's sport participation
	Familial Support and Integration	Family members attend sport events as spectators or volunteers
Social- General	Harassment	Individuals who are involved in the program are required to participate in anti-harassment training
	Sport-Related Attitudes	Volunteers at sport events treat able-bodied athletes and athletes with disabilities equally
	Status of Disability	Sport athletes are treated with respect while training or competing
	Unique Pathways	Participants are given opportunities to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready

# Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block

## Autonomy

Environment	Strategy	Example
Physical	Accessibility	Wide entrances and exits; space to access equipment
	Travel and Access	Facility is easy to access via public transportation
	Access to Equipment	Equipment is adapted to meet participants' needs
Program	Sport Type	Participants who desire a connection to nature are able to participate outdoors (e.g., para-rowing, para-alpine)
	Funding and Cost	Program is low cost or offers subsidies and/or strategies for participants to obtain funding assistance
	Options	Participants can choose to modify the activity or environment to meet their unique needs (e.g., adjust net height, level of assistance)
	Classification	Participants have opportunities to be classified in diverse sport types or activities
Social- Coach/ Instructor	Coach/Instructor Knowledge, Skill, and Learning	Coach asks athlete for ideas to best address their needs or make adaptations
	Coach/Instructor Autonomy Support	Coach allows athletes to choose the skill or technique that they feel is most important to work on
Social- General	Unique Pathways	Participants are given opportunities to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready

# Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block

## Mastery

Environment	Strategy	Example
Physical	Safe Places	Facilities and equipment are up-to-date (i.e., participants feel safe practicing skills)
	Access to Equipment	Equipment is properly fitted and adapted to support participants' skill development
Program	Sport Type	The sport type or activity is ideally suited to the needs of participants (e.g., wheelchair rugby is designed for participants with functional impairments in at least three limbs)
	Options	Participants can choose to modify the activity or environment to meet their unique needs (e.g., adjust net height, level of assistance)
	Individual Level of Change	Activities or equipment are modified to accommodate different skill levels (e.g., rules, net height, size of field of play)
	Safe Activities	Activities or equipment are modified and/or supervised to accommodate skill development (i.e., participants feel safe practicing skills)
	Diversity	Pair up or group participants with similar abilities
Social- Coach/ Instructor	Coach/Instructor Knowledge, Skill, and Learning	Coach is trained and/or certified within their particular sport
	Interpersonal Skills of Coach/Instructor	Coach understands the participants' needs or goals
	Coach/Instructor Develops Roles	Coach recognizes contributions of group members with verbal praise, awards, etc.
	Coach/Instructor Tracking Athlete Improvement	Coach provides athletes with training logs to record personal progress or notes
Social- Peer	Group Environment	Participants have the opportunity to learn from their peers
	Mentorship or Role Modelling	More experienced participants model behaviours/provide instruction/offer advice for less experienced participants
Social- General	Unique Pathways	Participants are given opportunities to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready

# Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block

## Challenge

Environment	Strategy	Example
Physical	Safe Places	Facilities and equipment are up-to-date (i.e., participants feel safe trying new skills)
	Access to Equipment	Equipment can be adjusted to provide different levels of challenge (e.g., size of ball, height of net)
Program	Sport Type	The sport type or activity can be adapted to provide different levels of challenge (e.g., contact versus no contact)
	Options	Participants have the opportunity to take on different positions or roles (e.g., defence, offence)
	Individual Level of Challenge	Progress of participant is monitored to adjust level of challenge over time (e.g., downward for degenerative conditions; upward if improvement is shown)
	Safe Activities	Activities or equipment are modified and/or supervised to accommodate skill development (i.e., participants feel safe trying new skills)
	Classification	Participants are classified alongside peers that have the same level of function, but challenge their abilities
Social- Coach/ Instructor	Coach/Instructor Knowledge, Skill, and Learning	Coach collaborates with athletes or seeks resources to make activities more challenging for each individual
	Coach/Instructor Autonomy Support	Coach provides options for activities that cater to varying levels of skill or ability
	Interpersonal Skills of Coach/Instructor	Coach understands the participants' needs or goals
	Coach/Instructor Tracking Athlete Improvement	Coach implements regular fitness or skills testing, and/or records athlete progress
Social- General	Unique Pathways	Participants are given opportunities to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready

# Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block

## Engagement

Environment	Strategy	Example
Physical	Accessibility	Accessible washrooms and change rooms are available, and can accommodate the number of participants
	Travel and Access	Building is equipped with ramps and/or elevators
	Safe Places	Facilities and equipment are up-to-date and have appropriate supervision
	Access to Equipment	Equipment is appropriately sized to the participant (e.g., wheelchairs, prosthetics, grip assistance gloves)
Program	Sport Type	Wheelchair rugby is designed for participants with functional impairments in at least 3 limbs (e.g., quadriplegia)
	Funding and Cost	Program is low cost or offers subsidies and/or strategies for participants to obtain funding assistance
	Options	Participants can choose to modify the activity or environment to meet their unique needs (e.g., adjust net height, level of assistance)
	Safe Activities	Temperature is regulated for participants with thermo-regulation issues
Social- Coach/ Instructor	Coach/Instructor Knowledge, Skill, and Learning	Coach asks athlete for ideas to best address their needs or make adaptations
	Coach/Instructor Autonomy Support	Coach allows athletes to choose the skill or technique that they feel is most important to work on
	Coach/Instructor Develops Roles	Coach assigns roles to individual group members, or creates roles that participants can choose to fulfill (e.g., team captain, equipment manager, social events coordinator)
Social- Peer	Group Environment	Athletes are grouped into sub-groups or teams with collective goals that stick together over time
Social- Family	Educating Family Members	Sport organizations offer online resources or workshops for family members to learn about sport (e.g., equipment, costs, sport types)
	Familial Support and Integration	Family members have opportunities to get involved on committees (e.g., fundraising) or in sport-related roles (e.g. coaches, referees)
Social- General	Harassment	Individuals who are involved in the program are required to participate in anti-harassment training
	Unique Pathways	Participants are given opportunities to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready

# Quick Reference Guide of Foundational Strategies Organized By Building Block

## Meaning

Environment	Strategy	Example
Program	Sport Type	Participants who desire a connection to nature are able to participate outdoors (e.g., para-rowing, para-alpine)
	Program Size	Program offers opportunities to participate beyond athlete role (e.g., team leader, administrative responsibilities)
	Options	Participants have the opportunity to take on different positions or roles (e.g., defense, offence)
	Individual Level of Challenge	Activities or equipment are modified to accommodate different levels of skill and challenge
	Diversity	Adapt activity to be challenging for all participants: e.g., Base intervals or drills on relational (i.e., percent effort) rather than absolute measures
Social- Coach/ Instructor	Interpersonal Skills of Coach/Instructor	Coach shows interest in athletes' personal lives and demonstrates concern for athletes' wellbeing
	Coach/Instructor Develops Roles	Coach assigns roles to individual group members, or creates roles that participants can choose to fulfill (e.g., team captain, equipment manager, social events coordinator)
Social- Peer	Mentorship or Role Modelling	Program fosters opportunities for mentorship (i.e., peer support)
Social- Family	Educating Family Members	Family members have opportunities to learn about sport and support their loved one's sport participation
	Familial Support and Integration	Family members have opportunities to get involved in sport organizations or activities
Social- General	Status of Disability	Allocation of resources and treatment of athletes is equitable in able-bodied and adapted sport settings
	Unique Pathways	Participants are given the opportunity to sample different sport activities and progress to higher competitive levels when ready