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principles

for encouraging people you support to be active

A guide for support workers, carers, teachers and parents for supporting those with complex disabilities.

A positive attitude is key

You don't need coaching qualifications or experience, a willingness to try is all you need.



Take risks

Try new things that challenges participants. Creativity and exploration should be encouraged.



Use any space

You can do activities anywhere, as long as it's safe. Try the lounge, garden or classroom!



Provide 'Active Support'

Encourage active participation and more meaningful experiences by allowing participants to feel, mirror or observe your movements.



Prioritise being active

Schedule activity into your day. Include walking, seated stretches, gardening or house chores.



Repetition and patience

Progress may not be quick or straightforward. Reduce the complexity of tasks, aim for quality engagement and repeat across weeks or months, if needed.



Consider wider outcomes

Encourage activities that help participants develop other skills such as communication, confidence and independence.



Celebrate success

Recognise individual progress regardless of how big or small.



Be responsive

Adapt to the behaviour and feedback of participants.



Have fun

We're more likely to form healthy habits if we enjoy doing them!



This resource has been created as part of the Sport England funded 'Sense, Active Together' project. For more guidance, please visit www.sense.org.uk/sport or email sense.active@sense.org.uk.



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