



**English Federation  
of Disability Sport**

Making **active lives** possible

# How to engage disabled people in Sport and Physical Activity

[www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)

# Workshop Outcomes

- Provide ideas on how to engage more disabled people in your activity.
- Give real life examples of where this has worked.

# EFDS research: Talk to Me / Supporter

- The information disabled people need to encourage them to think about taking part in an activity
- The role supporters play in encouraging disabled people to be active and the information they need to feel confident to do this

# 10 key principles to help drive participation

Drive  
awareness



1. Use the right communication channels
2. Put the activity in the right place

Engage the  
audience



3. Do not focus solely on disability
4. Link to individual values
5. Appeal to different values over time

Offer  
support and  
Reassurance



6. Make people confident your activity is for them
7. Be flexible and adaptable
8. Allow people to share their needs / experience
9. Be welcoming
10. Give examples people can relate to

Drive  
awareness



Engage the  
audience



Offer  
support and  
Reassurance



# 1. Use the right communication channels

# Communication Channels

Think about **who** you are trying to reach and **where** they would find information



Posters in the 'usual places'



Posters in local shop windows



Health care professionals

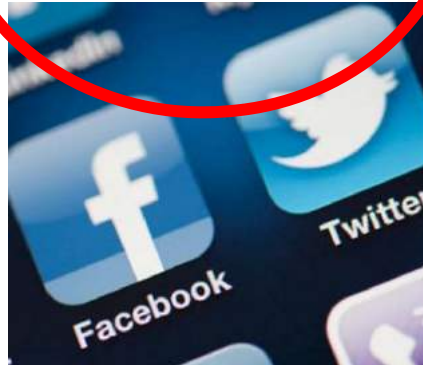


The local GP surgery

Google searches



Leaflets/Flyers through the door



Links via Twitter and Facebook



PR in newspapers

# ACCESS SPORT – COMMUNICATION

- **SOCIAL MEDIA** – fast becoming the most effective way to communicate to disabled participants and their parents and carers. Closed groups have particularly worked well. Community clubs have used their own social media to promote their sessions.
- **FLYERS** – by using knowledge from EFDS we have ensured the layout and font is as accessible as possible
- **NETWORKS** – by building a network of clubs, groups and organisations through relationship strengthening has meant the information has reached the right people. Strong networks encourage word of mouth to the right channels
- **YOUTH FORUMS** – speaking to young disabled people and their families helps build awareness of activities and gives access to information of what is out there.
- **WISP and SPORTSRUSH** – being part of a joined up wider network including BCC, SGC, BaNES C, NSC, Wesport and EFDS developing website and activity finder [www.sportsrush.org.uk](http://www.sportsrush.org.uk)





Use the channels I already trust ...



Streatham Youth and  
Community Trust

Founded 1946



VOICES



The Ear Foundation



communities first  
cymunedau yn gyntaf





Drive  
awareness



Engage the  
audience



Offer  
support and  
Reassurance



## 2. Put the activity in the right place

# What does this mean

Choose locations where people feel comfortable  
As travelling can be challenging for disabled people  
provide activities close to home

There's already so many struggles with taking part in sports without having to worry about getting there-I need something local to me, somewhere I know I can get to easily and not have to worry . **Elizabeth**

## Physically local

- Local park / green spaces
- Local leisure centre
- School and community centres
- Local shopping areas

## Digitally local

- Local blogs
- Local Facebook pages
- Local Twitter feeds
- Local online forums

# ACCESS SPORT – ACTIVITY IN THE RIGHT PLACE

- **SUPER SWIMMERS ACADEMY** – accessible pool, hire out whole pool so limited noise, centre provide separate room for registration
- **ABILITY SPORTS** and **DOWN SYNDROME FOOTBALL** – accessible local leisure centre, close to public transport links, venue staff friendly, welcoming and disability aware
- **COTHAM TENNIS** – local transport links, accessible toilet and car park, pathway to mainstream club
- **HENBURY BOCCIA** – large accessible carpark, accessible local leisure centre
- **SATELLITE CLUBS** – delivering and upskilling staff at local disability organisations so they can deliver their own activity



Drive  
awareness



Engage the  
audience



Offer  
support and  
Reassurance

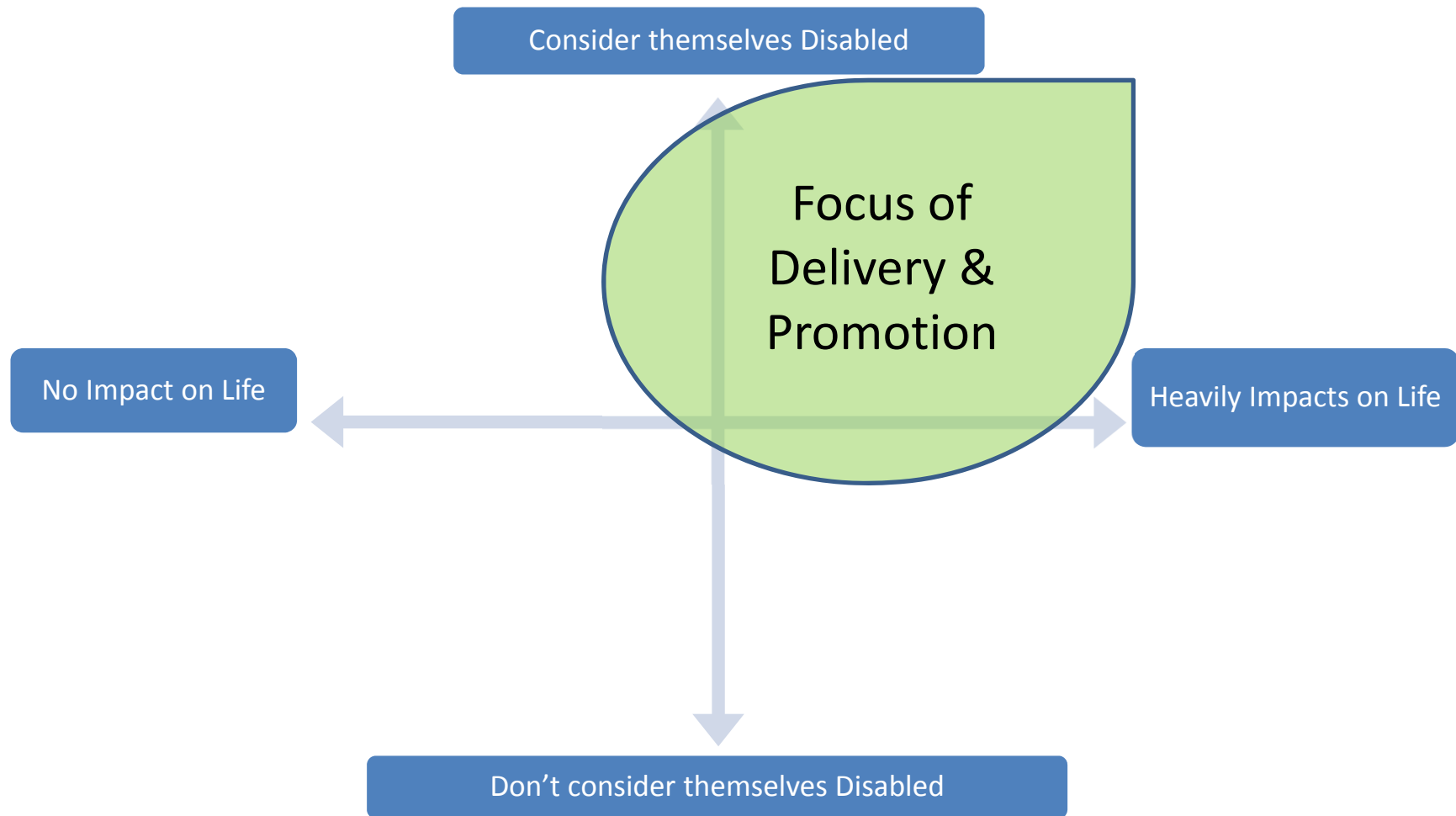


### **3. Do not focus solely on disability**

# What does this mean

- Our research has shown that a large proportion of disabled people do not identify with being disabled
  - Friends and parents also shy away from things which focus on disability
  - However professional carers may look for this specifically

# What does this mean



Me as an individual ...

## Cycling for All

Free sessions for all ages and abilities to get everyone onto their bikes and having fun

First Sunday of each month from 2 April to 1 October 2017 from 10am to 1pm

Qualified instructors use a range of specially adapted bikes to build cycling skills in a safe environment. Good-quality bikes and helmets provided.

Harvey Hadden Sports Village, Wigman Road, Billborough, Nottingham NG24 9TJ



Spaces limited so sign up now on 0115 8761600 or visit [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/goga](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/goga) for more information

Get Out Active logo, Nottingham City Council logo, and other partner logos.

## Get Out Active

IMAS INTERNATIONAL MIXED ABILITY SPORTS



Text or call us with any questions

### Mixed Ability & Family Swimming

Every Friday at Tong School

Swimming sessions for ALL ages

First Time? The session is for all abilities. Take the session at your own pace and increase your confidence in the pool

Logos for partners: Community First, Share, City of Bradford, and Options.



## Get Out Active

### FEMALE YOGA CLASS

**\*FIRST SESSION FREE\***

For beginners. Relax your body. Reduce your stress.

Newlands Hall, Putney Vale, SW15 3EP

Every Thursday  
9:30 - 10:30am

For more information contact Emma:  
etofh@enable.org  
020 8071 8712

Starts 7th September  
£3 Per session

Logos for partners: Y&B, Get Out Active, and enable.



Drive  
awareness



Engage the  
audience



Offer  
support and  
Reassurance

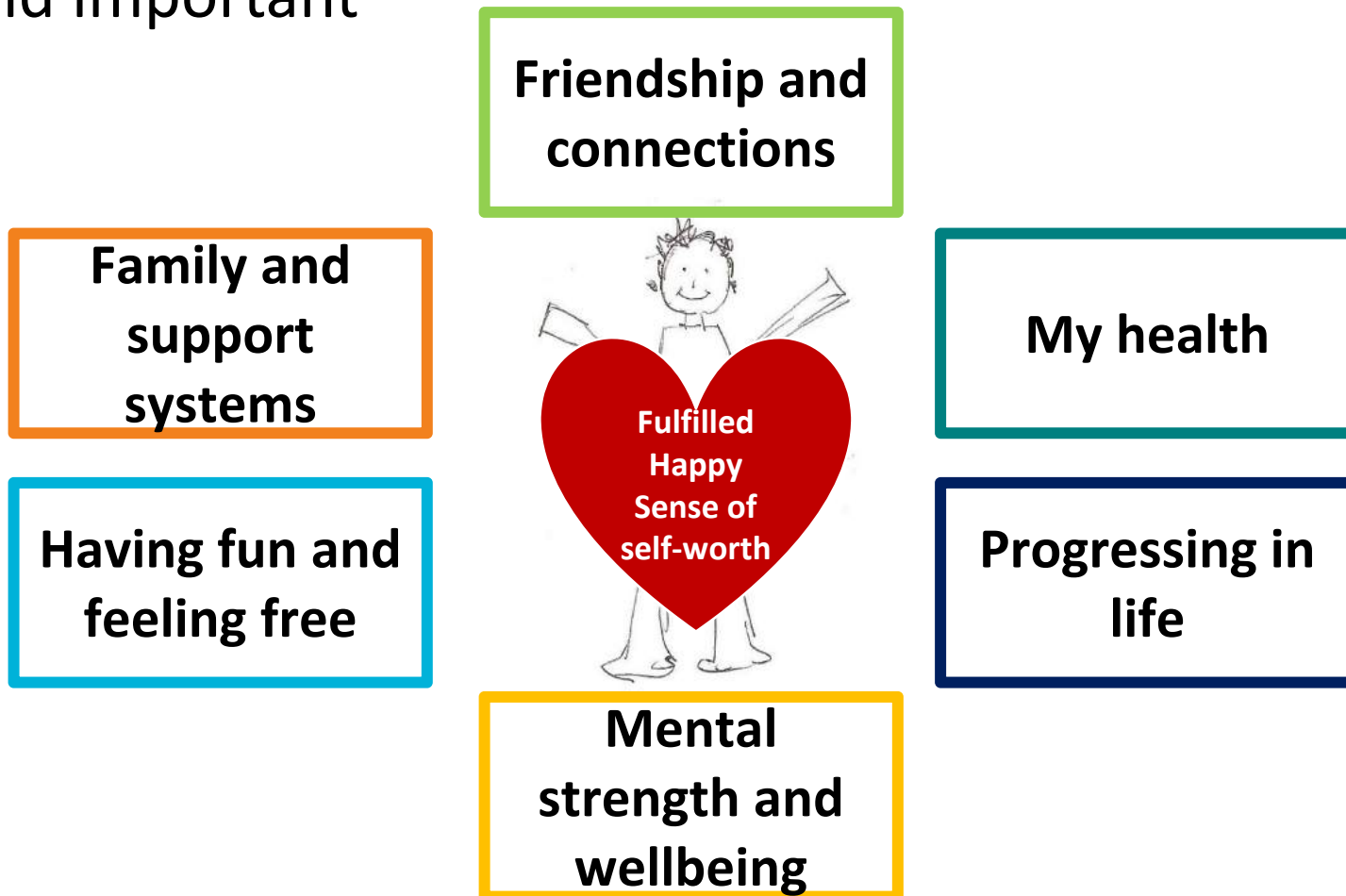


**4. Link to individual values**

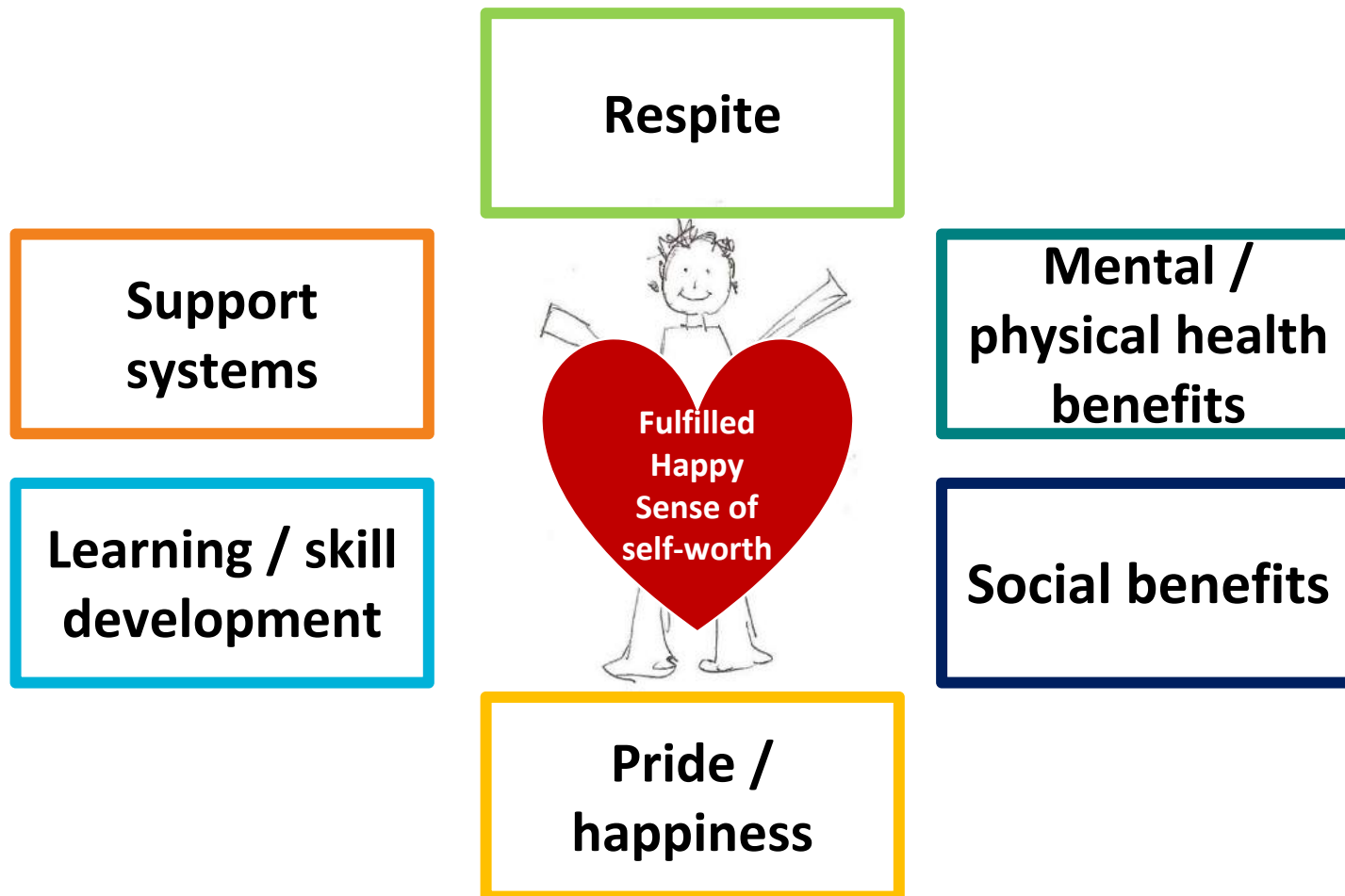
**5. Appeal to different values over time**

# What does this mean

Link your activity to the things that disabled people find important



# Values of supporters



# ACCESS SPORT – FOCUS ON DIFFERENT VALUES

## Development / Skills

Equipping disabled people with transferable skills to enable independence, self worth and confidence



## Meeting Friends/Being Social

Sense of belonging, being part of a group, a club, a bigger network, a sport, a community



## Fun / Competition

Providing weekly opportunities to engage in physical activity as well as creating pathways to compete



Drive  
awareness



Engage the  
audience



Offer  
support and  
Reassurance



**6. Make people confident your activity is for them**

**7. Be flexible and adaptable**

## What does this mean?

- Disabled people can be less likely to consider activities because they feel they're beyond their capability
- The fear of 'standing out' can be more disabling than their impairment
- Communications need to reassure participants that they will be welcome and that activities are suitable for them

I don't like going to disabled only classes, but when thinking about going with people without impairments I think I'm not going to be able to keep up with everybody else- sometimes I know I'm being silly but it really puts me off. I don't want to be singled out but I want other people to make me feel welcome regardless of my ability.

# How do you do this?

I want the other people there to be rubbish at it. Marie

## Consider using...

- Images of different ages, sizes and abilities
- Video /photos showing what the experience is like and who attends
- Case studies of others - the journey they've made
- Word of mouth / social networks.
- Social proofing is a powerful way to persuade someone to try as it does the vetting and influencing in one hit

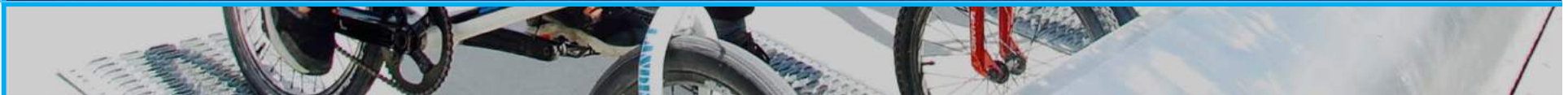
## Avoid using...

- Images of elite sports men /women
  - Although aspirational, they're less effective in direct comms as hard to identify with
- Images of people in team kit
  - Can feel exclusive.
  - Gives a sense of standing out before they've even joined



# ACCESS SPORT – BUILDING CONFIDENCE

- **CASE STUDIES** help give a picture of other people and their journeys
- **IMAGES** videos and photos help others to relate and identify
- **CLUB CELEBRATIONS** providing an inclusive setting to highlight successes and show others in the community what can be achieved
- **EMPOWER** disabled people to volunteer / coach / follow youth development pathways
- **SPECIALISED COACHES** helping to develop confidence through sport



Drive awareness



Engage the audience



Offer support and Reassurance



## 8. Allow people to feedback

## What does this mean?

- Disabled people and supporters like to be able to share their concerns with instructors about limitations which may impact their ability
- However openly declaring their needs can be embarrassing
- And past experience of sharing has led to exclusion
- So methods are needed for instructors to hear specific needs without singling people out and reassuring that by declaring their needs they won't be excluded

Drive awareness



Engage the audience



Offer support and Reassurance



## 9. Be welcoming

## What does this mean?

- An uncomfortable or awkward first experience can put people off coming back again
- 'First experience' includes
  - Arrival and getting there
  - All staff
  - Going to the changing rooms
  - Meeting everyone for the first time
  - Meeting the 'instructor'
  - The suitability of the class for their skill level

I went swimming and just getting from reception to the changing room was so hard. There was no one there to help me. It really put me off going back. **Alasdair**

Welcome me ...

Get Out  
Get Active



# Womens Night

Zumba, Circuits, Badminton, Sauna, Gym, Football, Netball and Cricket.

**Monday 16th Jan, 7pm – 10pm**

at Manningham Sports Centre,  
Carlisle Road, Bradford BD8 8DB

**First time?**

Have a chat with us!  
We want to encourage  
as many women and  
girls to join in, make  
new friends and enjoy  
activity together.

@GetActiveGOGA



**For more information...**

Call 01274 494927, email [kelly.gautry@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:kelly.gautry@bradford.gov.uk)  
or text your question to 07484521575.

Drive  
awareness



Engage the  
audience



Offer  
support and  
Reassurance



## 10. Show me

**Encourage me via your existing  
advocates**



## What does this mean?

- Those already involved are often very passionate about their experiences
- They have made the journey so can relate to others
- Opportunity to harness the enthusiasm and empathy and use it to encourage new members

## Encourage me via your existing advocates :



Existing advocates to become trainers and instructors



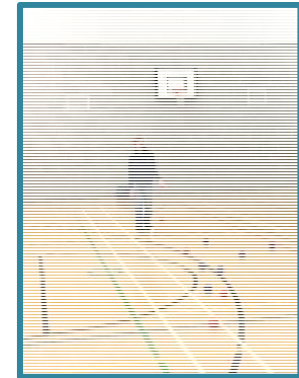
Buddy systems. Assign new members to existing members to look out for and offer support if needed



Open days/ event days- where current participants attend and demonstrate their enthusiasm and be available to answer questions new members might ask

# ACCESS SPORT – USE OF ADVOCATES

- **AMBASSADORS** – help to highlight disability rights and influence key decision makers
- **DISABLED VOLUNTEERS** – are trained and developed to help support sessions, becoming fantastic role models and help engage new participants
- **YOUTH PANEL**– giving disabled people a platform to discuss issues they face and help shape future plans
- **COACHES & VOLUNTEERS** – by upskilling to be inclusive and disability aware, we create a workforce of positive advocates and the right people helping to engage and support



People like me ...

Get Out  
Get Active





**English Federation  
of Disability Sport**

Making **active lives** possible

Mark Fosbrook  
Engagement Advisor  
West Region  
[mfosbrook@efds.co.uk](mailto:mfosbrook@efds.co.uk)  
07764 291670  
[www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)



Julia Williams  
Senior Programme Lead  
[Julia.Williams@accesssport.co.uk](mailto:Julia.Williams@accesssport.co.uk)  
07917753937  
[www.accesssport.co.uk](http://www.accesssport.co.uk)