



Coaching 101

Coaching Bowlers with an Intellectual Disability

Coaches need to understand the needs of Special Olympics athletes and any associated abilities that these athletes have. When determining a program or to teach a skill, you must keep in mind the bowler's stamina, strength, speed and suppleness.

Bowlers should be helped to select a skill according to their ability to understand the skill and their physical ability.

As a coach, you should use a variety of recognized techniques to help ensure the best possible experience that can improve fitness and health or sport specific performances in competitions.

Observing and analyzing Special Olympic Athletes

As a coach, you are continually analyzing the performance of your bowlers. In the case of the Special Olympics bowlers you must consider all three domains:

- learning and cognitive
- social and emotional
- physical and motor

When you are observing performance, you must consider various domains, not physical motor skills only. It is important that, as a coach, you learn to observe and incorporate behavioural domains into your practice plans.

Learning Cognitive needs:

Part 1: Difficulty in comprehending word meaning and following directions

Observable behaviours

- poor vocabulary
- slower rate of learning
- perceptual problems in receiving and processing information

Selected implications for instruction

- use words appropriate for the bowler
- keep the time between input and athlete response short
- use demonstrations with verbal cueing in instructing the task
- use peer modelling or a buddy system
- be concise, consistent, short in giving directions
- start with single teachable tasks, add subsequent tasks gradually
- use prompt positive reinforcement to provide the bowlers with knowledge of results provide repetition and practice in a variety of instructional activities, correlation word concepts and motor skills

Part 2: Difficulty in attending to the task

Observable behaviours

- short attention span
- easily distracted by sound and visual stimuli and a distraction to others
- low frustration levels
- unwilling to attend to task
- make decisions about tasks
- follow through and complete tasks

Selected implications for instruction

- use highly structured activities to keep the bowler attentive, make decisions about task to be accomplished, and maintain bowler's attention until the task is completed
- use controlled change when shifting from one activity to another or when changing bowler's location
- structure success – oriented steps that are achievable by the bowler
- define the physical limits for teaching and learning activities and reduce or eliminate distractions

Part 3: Difficulty in memory and generalization skills

Observable behaviours

- poor recall and retention skill
- lack of ability to transfer and generalize skills learned to other situations or for functional use

Selected implications for instruction

- use highly structured sequential instruction program
- deliberately plan and schedule for repetition and practice of skills learned in situations outside of the bowling centre
- use shorter and more frequent practice periods during the available time in the program structured sequential tasks that build upon initial task (chaining and shaping)

Social/Emotional needs

Part 1: Overly aggressive, inappropriate and inconsistent behaviours

Observable behaviours

- aggressive towards others
- disruptive to others
- lack self-control, impulsive
- refuse to cooperate
- easily distracted
- poor listening skills (interrupts)
- does not attend
- lacks consistency of behaviour with others
- disrespectful and defiant
- unresponsive

- low frustration level, impatient
- may have low self-esteem
- easily angered
- fights, refuses to work with others

Selected implication for instruction

- be concise, consistent and do not give lengthy directions
- limit lengths of work periods
- structure success-oriented tasks in small sequential steps that are achievable by the bowler
- provide instruction in relaxation exercises
- reinforce appropriate behaviours promptly
- encourage peer reinforcement and planned ignoring of inappropriate behaviours
- reduce auditory and visual distractions
- define limits of behaviour, set consequences and reinforce consistency

Part 2: Anxious, tense, afraid to be involved, defensive behaviours

Observable Behaviours

- unwilling to accept exercises/drills, etc.
- lacks responsibility to complete tasks
- protects themselves from embarrassment in front of others and coaches
- avoidance behaviours
- may exhibit 'I don't care' attitude
- waste time during practice
- misses practices

Selected implications for instruction

- structure success-oriented tasks in small sequential steps that are achievable by the bowler
- identify bowler preferences and interests in activities and related motor skills
- define limits of behaviour, set consequences and reinforce consistently
- use planned ignoring when behaviour will not cause serious problems on a short-term basis
- use prompt, positive reinforcement for behaviours
- give choices of activity participation

Part 3: Withdrawn, disinterested behaviours

Observable Behaviours

- lacks motivation
- does not respond when spoken to
- inconspicuous in practice
- fails to talk even when skill to talk is developed
- plays alone most of the time
- lacks interpersonal skills with peers to play and participate in activities and games
- may appear confused

Selected implications for instruction

- structure success-oriented tasks in small sequential steps that are achievable by the bowler
- use group tasks requiring specific assignment such as co-operation, sharing, taking turns and accepting responsibilities
- define guidelines for behaviours and provide time and place for bowlers to be alone
- identify bowler's preferences and interests in activities and relate tasks to those activities
- encourage conversations and discussion among peers on a one to one or small group basis
- assign a buddy to bowler

Part 4: Delayed personal-social development

Observable Behaviours

- lacks interpersonal skills such as
 - making and keeping friends
 - sharing and taking turns
 - accepting responsibility in group for assigned tasks
 - seeking help or assistance from others
 - maintaining self-control

Selected implications for instruction

- identify bowlers' preferences and interests in activities and use as basis for selection of activities and learning task
- encourage parallel activities and gradually plan structured associated and cooperative situations
- define guidelines for behaviours, set consequences, and reinforce promptly and consistently
- provide encouragement
- provide structured group tasks, assign roles and responsibility that bowlers can achieve
- use buddy system and peer modelling

Physical / Motor needs:

Part 1: Slowed, delayed motor skills acquisition and physical development

Observable Behaviours

- lacks physical skills to play selected activities
- low levels of performance in fundamental motor skills, low physical fitness and endurance
- poor postural control, irregular physical growth patterns, height, weight and body size

Selected implications for instruction

- limit scope of objectives taught to those that are most functionally relevant
- modify the difficulty of objective skill levels (entry and progress)
- vary the level of acceptable achievement on objectives for individual bowlers
- structure success-oriented steps that are achievable by the bowler

Part 2: Problems in developing and maintaining adequate levels of physical fitness

Observable Behaviours

- low levels of:
 - physical fitness
 - muscular strength and endurance
 - cardio-respiratory capacity,
 - flexibility
 - cardio-respiratory endurance
- weight control problems
- inactive, sedentary daily life

Selected implications for instruction

- emphasize and focus on selected physical fitness objectives suited to individual bowlers' needs
- modify the difficulty of objective skill levels (entry progress) based on fitness demands
- structure success-oriented steps that are achievable by the bowler

Part 3: Physical impairments that pose movement and or safety problems

Observable Behaviours

- low levels of tolerance for exercise stress
- poor adaptation to environmental changes coupled with exercise stress
- missing or impaired limbs
- type and amount drugs impact on exercise tolerance
- allergic conditions

Selected implications for instruction

- modify rules for individual bowlers or the entire group
- vary the level of acceptable achievement on objectives for individual bowlers
- limit scope of objectives taught to those that are most functionally relevant
- use periods of rest and relaxation and breathing exercises
- limit periods of exertion
- know the prior history of your bowler
- use buddy or partner system as needed

Part 4: Physical impairments may limit mobility and range of motion and varying degrees of dependence/independence

Observable Behaviours

- limitation in range of motion
- poor postural patterns
- varying degree of dependence
- independence in performing tasks
- insufficient travelling patterns
- problems in accessibility relevant to mobility

Selected implications for instruction

- limit scope of objectives taught to those that are most functionally relevant
- modify the difficulty of objective skill levels (entry and progress and or class
- guarantee accessibility to bowling centres for bowlers with crutches, braces, and wheelchairs

5 types of intervention

Types of intervention	Behavioural or actions by the coach
Inhibiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do nothing• Shout rebuke
Repeating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeat instructions• Demonstrate or repeat previous demonstration
Explaining	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain how to do it right (verbal or reference point• Question the bowler
Helping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reassure, encourage• Have the bowler start over
Adjusting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use different equipment or practice areas• Reduce difficulty level or give more time

To learn more about coaching athletes with an intellectual disability, please go to <http://www.specialolympics.ca/>.

Below is a quick description of the two streams of NCCP courses offered by Special Olympics Canada.

Community Stream

Coaches who enjoy working with athletes at a community level and who play sport for personal enjoyment will accomplish these goals in the Community Sport Coaching stream. This one-day course focuses on helping volunteers foster a love of sport, promote participation, and teach basic skills to beginners of all ages through a variety of activities.

This is accomplished by covering;

- safety,
- fun,
- ethics,
- teamwork,
- values beyond the game