




THE ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUNDS FOR PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES PROJECT



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Increasing Adaptive Babycare Resources and Intervention Supports with Parents and Caregivers with Physical or Vision Disabilities (NIDILRR 90IFDV0021; 2021-2024)





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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the developmental and relationship benefits of outdoor play.
2. Participants will identify public playground accessibility features and barriers for parents and caregivers with physical and vision disabilities.
3. Participants will learn how they can assess local playgrounds and contribute to increased access for parents and caregivers with physical and vision disabilities.



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OUTDOOR PLAY

Benefits of outdoor play

- Increased amounts of moderate to vigorous physical activity
- Increased diversity of opportunities for play
- Creativity and problem solving
- Risk-taking/challenge
- Sensory experiences
- Social contacts with peers

Playgrounds an important environment for outdoor play.

(Boxberger & Reimers, 2019; Loebach & Cox, 2020)




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PARENT ROLE IN OUTDOOR PLAY

- Parents can restrict or facilitate outdoor play
- Children value adults playing with child
- Children value adults watching and encouraging play
- Children feel connected to playground when caring adults are available – feel safe
- Playgrounds are family spaces – also provide social opportunities for parents

(Boxberger & Reimers, 2019; Morgenthaler, Schulze, Pentland, & Lynch, 2023)



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PARENTING WITH A DISABILITY

Accessibility of community spaces

- Little attention in the literature around park and playground accessibility for parents with disabilities.
- Little attention in park and playground design to accessibility for parents with disabilities – focus tends to be on the child.
- Parents with vision disabilities typically not considered




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DOCTORAL CAPSTONE

Does the built environment act as a barrier to parents with lower extremity disability performing their role as parents?

Single subject design – parent with SCI

- Observation – 2 playgrounds
- Interview
- Parenting Sense of Competence scale (PSOC)
- Parks for Activities and Recreation in our Communities "Evaluation Tool for Assessing the Accessibility and Usability of Community Parks and Playgrounds" (PARCs Tool)



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RESEARCH RESULTS

Observation

- At accessible park parent's physical and social interactions were high and the family moved through the park as a unit
- At the typical park observation data was limited as parent remained stationary

PSOC

- At accessible park – confident/competent and decreased stress
- At typical park – increased anxiety/frustration and decreased satisfaction



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RESEARCH RESULTS

Interview

- Plans to return to accessible park and felt part of park community rather than 'in the way'
- Lack of motivation to facilitate interaction with children; only there to watch

PARCs Tool

- Access around and THROUGH play elements
- Key design elements made largely inaccessible



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INFO ON ACCESSIBILITY

How do you find out if a playground is accessible?

- Accessibility features at a park or playground are clear determinants of whether an individual with a disability will visit the space.
- Information about features like location of accessible bathrooms, seating, available shelter and shade, and transportation access, make decisions about whether to go to a park easier.
- Information is often difficult to find for neighborhood (non-destination) parks.

(Jacob et al., 2017; Perry et al., 2021; Perry et al., 2018)




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DEC AT TLG

Through the Looking Glass and Adaptive Babycare

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MODIFIED PARCS ASSESSMENT

ADA REGULATIONS

- Connected routes
- Number of parking spaces
- Accessible bus stops
- Routes and doorways with width minimums
- Slope/grade

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- Placement of routes, i.e. through play structures
- Decoration around spaces accommodating adults with disabilities as drivers
- Bus stops nearby parks
- Routes allowing rest along travel and space for passing/movement at different speeds



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GRANT SURVEY LINKS

Survey of occupational therapy practitioners:
<https://redcap.link/TLGOTSurvey>

Survey of parents with disabilities:
<https://redcap.link/TLGParentSurvey>



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THANK YOU!

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