

# Quality Participation in Sport for Canadians with a Disability

## Our Partnership

We are research, practice and policy partners. Our partnership includes:

### The Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability

ALACD provides nationally coordinated leadership, support, encouragement, promotion and information that facilitates healthy, active living opportunities for Canadians of all abilities across all settings, environments, and age groups.

Contact: Jane Arkell – jarkell@ala.ca

### Canadian Disability Participation Project

The CDPP is an alliance of university, public, private and government sector partners working together to enhance community participation among Canadians with disabilities.

Contact: Amy Latimer – amy.Latimer@queensu.ca

## Background

The Canadian Survey of Disability revealed 15% of Canadians have a disability.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities mandates persons with a disability have opportunity for full and effective participation in sport.

## The Problem

Statistics from a recent survey conducted by researchers at the University of Toronto in partnership with AthletesCAN shows that more than 25% of disabled athletes have negative sport experiences, and are disproportionately subject to abuse and discrimination.

## The solution

Researchers from the Canadian Disability Participation ([www.cdpp.ca](http://www.cdpp.ca)) offer a new way of thinking about creating Quality Sport Experiences for all athletes, but particularly for those with a disability.

The CDPP has developed a simple, evidence-informed definition for athlete experience:

Quality Sport Experience = Autonomy, Belonging, Challenge, Engagement, Mastery & Meaning.

<b>Belonging</b> Being 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> In-the-moment; focused; absorbed	<b>Meaning</b> Making it matter
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This definition is accompanied by a measure that evaluates sport programs and experiences to ascertain the extent to which they demonstrate these six criteria.

The criteria are not simply a checklist, but rather form the basis for a systemic approach to creating quality sport experiences, from recreational to high performance sport, for all athletes, especially those with a disability.

**We respectfully recommend these evidence-based Quality Sport Experience criteria be the incorporated into the Canadian Sport Policy and included in the next round of Innovation Grants and other programming decisions.**