

# Strategies for Fostering Quality Participation Among Persons with Disabilities in Community-Based Exercise Programs



cdpp

Canadian Disability Participation Project

Le projet canadien sur la participation sociale  
des personnes en situation de handicap

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# PREFACE

## OVERVIEW

*Strategies for Fostering Quality Participation Among Persons with Disabilities in Community-Based Exercise Programs* is a tool that guides program providers through the content of a strategy matrix that can be used “on-the-ground” in community-based exercise programs to help foster quality participation among persons with disabilities. This tool can be used in the development of new exercise programs, to assess how existing programming may be altered to promote quality experiences, and to train program staff or volunteers.

This tool is based on findings from an accompanying scientific paper: Tomasone JR, Man KE, Sartor JD, Andrusko KE, Martin Ginis KA, & Latimer-Cheung AE, 'On-the ground' strategy matrix for fostering quality participation experiences among persons with disabilities in community-based exercise programs, *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2023.102469>

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This tool is available at [www.cdpp.ca](http://www.cdpp.ca)

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# WHY WE MADE THIS TOOL

## Community-based exercise programs...

Community-based exercise programs typically provide community-dwelling individuals with an opportunity to engage in leisure-focused (i.e., rather than rehabilitation-focused) physical activity. Programs for persons with disabilities include accessible exercise equipment and knowledgeable exercise professionals, both of which contribute to developing exercise routines tailored to the needs of each participant. Community-based exercise programs are a means to enhance full and effective participation in physical activity among persons with disabilities.

## Full and effective participation...

Full and effective participation is possible when a person with a disability is participating to the extent that they choose, and that they have a positive subjective experience when participating. That is, both quantity and quality of participation must be considered.

## Quality Participation...

Quality participation can be conceptualized as one's subjective participatory experience and is the result of repeated and sustained quality experiences. Quality participation is achieved when individuals with a disability view their involvement in exercise as satisfying and enjoyable, and experience outcomes that they consider important.

**Figure 1.** A framework for building quality participation for persons with disabilities in a community-based exercise program.



Seven building blocks contribute to a positive quality experience for persons with disabilities in community-based exercise programs:

**AUTONOMY**

*Having independence, choice, control*

**ENGAGEMENT**

*Being in-the-moment, focused, absorbed, fascinated*

**BELONGINGNESS**

*Feeling included, accepted, respected, part of the group*

**MASTERY**

*Feeling a sense of achievement, accomplishment, competence*

**CHALLENGE**

*Feeling appropriately tested*

**MEANING**

*Contributing toward obtaining a personal or socially meaningful goal; feeling a sense of responsibility to others*

**VALIDATION**

*Feeling important, valued, supported and worthy of experiencing a high level of service in an exercise program*

*Validation is a new building block that was added to the quality participation framework in the exercise context.*

The environment within which the building blocks are fostered matters too. The three conditions necessary for fostering quality participation are:

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*Physical and structural components of the immediate and surrounding setting*

**ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENT**

*Nature of the activity itself*

**SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

*Relationships formed within the setting, as well as societal attitudes towards the activity*

## Quality experience is individual and dynamic:

- Participants will place different values on the building blocks and conditions; the way one participant experiences quality may not be exactly the same as another participant.
- The value participants place on each building block and condition may change over time. For example, a sense of belonging may be important at the start of an individual's participation, but challenge and meaning may be more important later on in their participation.
- How one participant experiences the building blocks and conditions may be different from how another participant experiences the building blocks and conditions.

## Different strategies can be used to foster quality experience among persons with disability in community-based exercise programs. Some key considerations when selecting strategies to foster quality experience include:

- Utilize strategies that align with your program's priorities and participants' needs. It is critical to consider your specific program's priorities and ask your participants why they are participating. Understanding your program's and participants' unique needs will help you identify which building blocks and conditions you should focus on and, ultimately, help you to prioritize your strategies.
- Consider that one strategy could influence numerous building blocks and conditions of quality participation, as many strategies target multiple building blocks and conditions of quality participation.
- Recognize that it may not be possible or necessary to use all the strategies; however, implementing more strategies will likely increase the potential for creating a quality experience.

## HOW WE MADE THIS TOOL

This tool is the product of a multi-step research process (Tomasone et al., 2023). First, we surveyed and talked to providers from community-based exercise programs to identify strategies used to foster quality experience in their programs. Next, experts from the fields of adapted physical activity, health behaviour change, disability, and exercise programming assessed the strategies and offered their input on the quality experience building block and conditions that each strategy targets. We then organized the strategies, building blocks, and conditions into a matrix. Finally, we sought feedback from providers to understand how a tool would be most useful “on-the-ground” in community-based exercise programs. We designed the tool based on providers' input.

## WHAT IS IN THE TOOL?

This tool includes strategies for fostering quality exercise experiences in community-based exercise programs for persons with disabilities. In this tool, the strategies are presented in three different formats that may have unique utility for readers:

### 1 Strategies with Expert Agreement

“Strategies with Expert Agreement” is a table that presents a selection of the strategies for each building block and condition of quality participation, all of which reflect agreement by the engaged experts. For each quality participation building block/condition and selected strategies, there is an example of a community-based exercise program that excels at fostering that building block/condition.

### 2 High-Yield Strategies

“High-Yield Strategies” is a table that presents 14 strategies that target 4 or more building blocks and conditions of quality participation. Thus, these strategies are high-yield in that fostering them targets many building blocks and conditions of quality participation.

### 3 Full Strategy Matrix

The “Full Strategy Matrix” that was synthesized in the accompanying scientific paper for this tool (Tomasone et al., 2023). This matrix maps each strategy onto the quality participation building blocks and conditions and indicates experts’ level of agreement with the mapping. The matrix also provides “on-the-ground” examples of how each strategy can be fostered in community-based exercise programs.

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Providers from community-based exercise programs suggest that you can use this tool in several ways:

- To develop new exercise programs that foster quality participation.
- To assess the feasibility of implementing a strategy within your program’s context before tailoring the strategy to your program.
- To identify which quality participation building blocks and conditions are primarily targeted by the strategies currently implemented in your program.
- To assess where and how existing programming may be altered to further promote quality experiences.
- To train new program staff or volunteers. Specifically, the strategies can be used to offer providers guidance about how to foster positive exercise experiences for persons with disability, and to justify why certain features of the program exist.



# Strategies with Expert Agreement

The following table presents a selection of strategies for each building block and condition of quality participation, all of which reflect agreement by the experts engaged in, and programs who contributed to, our research study (Tomasone et al., 2023). For each quality participation building block, condition, and selected strategies, there is an example of a community-based exercise program that excels at fostering the given building block or condition. Note that the details about the community-based exercise programs featured in this tool were accurate prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the specifics of program operations may have changed due to COVID-19, the strategies are still relevant for creating quality experiences in programs as we navigate pandemic recovery.

For each building block and condition of quality participation, the table contains:

Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<i>Presented strategies reflect high level of agreement and high program use.</i>	<i>Presented strategies reflect moderate-to-high levels of agreement and moderate-to-high program use.</i>	<i>Program that fosters the given construct. For more information about the featured programs, see this tool's Appendix.</i>





# Autonomy *Having independence, choice, control*

Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<p><b>1. Invite participants to give their input on the development of their exercise routine</b></p> <p>Example: Allow participants to have input in determining the frequency, intensity, duration, and type of exercise; Participants have the option to select from a variety of structured physical activity options</p> <p><b>2. Allow participants to determine their own exercise goals in collaboration with a qualified trainer</b></p> <p>Example: In a preliminary meeting, the participant identifies their personal goals and the trainer provides feedback, subsequently helping to build a program to achieve these goals</p> <p><b>3. Allow participants to set their own goals for changes they would like to see in their daily lives</b></p> <p>Example: When performing exercises, try to relate movements to functional activities so participants can identify goals for their daily lives</p>	<p><b>4. Transfer physical activity knowledge pertaining to exercise methods and skills, so that participants can exercise independently outside of the exercise program</b></p> <p>Example: Provide online links and videos for at home workouts; Provide participants with their programs so they can perform them individually</p> <p><b>5. Provide participants with the option to fundraise for their own membership fees</b></p> <p>Example: Participants collect pledges for the program's special events in order to subsidize their own participation fees</p> <p><b>6. Provide continued exercise opportunities to participants after they have graduated from or completed the program</b></p> <p>Example: Offer another exercise program that helps transition participants to mainstream gyms</p> <p><b>7. Provide opportunities for participants to engage in physical activity outside of the program session</b></p> <p>Example: Include a voluntary option to drop-in to the gym outside of program session time</p> <p><b>8. Support participants' mastery perceptions by demonstrating an understanding and acceptance of all participant abilities</b></p> <p>Example: Respect participants' personal preferences and decisions for how they want to exercise</p>	<p><b>Power Cord</b> St. Catharine's, ON</p> <p><b>Program Description</b> Power Cord offers wheelchair accessible exercise programming to individuals with spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and lower limb amputations. The goal of Power Cord is to improve physical fitness, functional independence, and psychosocial well-being.</p> <p><b>Program Structure</b> Power Cord offers individual sessions in an open gym environment. Participants choose which exercises to focus on; common types of training include aerobic exercise, resistance exercise, circuit training, locomotor training, functional electrical stimulation, hand cycle exercise, stretching, balance, tilt table, and standing frame training.</p> <p><b>How Power Cord fosters Autonomy</b> At Power Cord, participants are involved in the goal setting process and provide input into their exercise programs based on their goals. Since participants can choose which exercise to focus on during their session, they have control over the duration and amount of exercise they participate in.</p>

Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<p><b>1. Engage in communication with the program participants outside of the program hours/sessions</b></p> <p>Example: Circulate monthly newsletters about the program community, upcoming events, etc.</p> <p><b>2. Provide opportunities for participants to socialize</b></p> <p>Example: Provide opportunities for participant socialization during exercises, between exercises, and outside of program times</p> <p><b>3. Allow participants to continually re-enroll in the program, after they have graduated from or completed the program.</b></p> <p>Example: Structure the program to be on-going; do not limit enrolment to only new participants</p>	<p><b>4. Group together participants with similar abilities and needs (for group-based exercise program)</b></p> <p>Example: For circuit-based exercise, divide participants into groups based on similar mobility impairments, so the exercises can be tailored and adapted to the participants' abilities</p> <p><b>5. Encourage participants to provide peer-based motivation for one another.</b></p> <p>Example: Volunteer provides positive reinforcement when participants motivate one another</p> <p><b>6. Include activities where participants may work together (for group-based exercise program)</b></p> <p>Example: Partner ball tosses, battle ropes, etc.</p> <p><b>7. Orient the participant when they first join the program</b></p> <p>Example: Introduce them to program leaders, staff members, and volunteers, as well as any other individuals they will be working with directly</p> <p><b>8. Create opportunities to get to know the participants beyond their identity in the program as an exerciser</b></p> <p>Example: Ask participants about their lifestyle and interests; Host social sessions after weekly exercise sessions to get to know participants</p> <p><b>9. Have program characteristics that promote acceptance and inclusion from the general public</b></p> <p>Example: Advertise the facility as an all-inclusive, safe space for persons with and without mobility impairment</p>	<p><b>Walk it Off Recovery</b> Newmarket, ON</p> <p><b>Program Description</b> Walk it Off Recovery provides exercise-based recovery, education, and support to those who are living with spinal cord injury, neurological dysfunction, stroke, acquired brain injury, and/or limited mobility. The goal of Walk It Off Recovery is to improve the quality of life of participants and increase independence by maximizing recovery.</p> <p><b>Program Structure</b> At Walk it Off Recovery, one-on-one sessions are offered with a physiotherapist or kinesiologist. Sessions are 1 hour or 3 hours and often begin with Nervous System Activation Technique. Exercises typically focus on strength and conditioning through repetitive load-bearing exercise for the body, and passive range of motion exercises.</p> <p><b>How Walk it Off Recovery fosters Belongingness</b> Working one-on-one with a staff member/volunteer provides participants with the opportunity for socialization. At Walk it Off Recovery, participants can also engage in and develop camaraderie with other members in between exercises. Walk it Off Recovery provides even further opportunity to develop camaraderie at social events outside of exercise sessions.</p>

## Strategies and Examples

### 1. Create individualized exercise programs to suit the current needs of the participant

Example: Integrate add-ons or variations to exercises to increase difficulty at a participant's discretion (for group-based exercise program)

### 2. Intermittently conduct a formal reassessment and update a participant's exercise program

Example: Create and monitor a timeline for all participants to be re-assessed every 6 months

### 3. Prescribe exercises that push participants to their comfortable limit

Example: Be willing to respectfully challenge the participant to improve, instead of being complacent about improvements regarding exercise

## Other Strategies and Examples

### 4. Create voluntary friendly competition between participants on a voluntary basis

Example: Plan monthly 'challenges' such as throwing competitions, obstacle courses, etc.; Recognize individuals who succeed in program competitions

### 5. Provide cues or reminders to ensure that participants are working hard to complete their exercises

Example: Providers count participant's repetitions out loud; visually indicates movement start and end points



## Featured Program

### Neuro Fit

Kitchener and Cambridge, ON

### Program Description

Neuro Fit is a customized exercise program for individuals who have neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, stroke, spinal cord injury, and/or limited mobility. This program is supported by the YMCA and seeks to strengthen the continuum of care from health care settings to the community.


### Program Structure

The program supervisor (R.Kin) and instructors create exercise routines tailored to the individual and their goals. Neuro Fit focuses on strength, balance, and mobility through a circuit-based program. Participants attend 2 workout sessions per week.

### How Neuro Fit fosters Challenge:

Neuro Fit creates individualized exercise programs tailored to meet the physical needs of each participant. While group programming occurs during warm-up and cool-down, the participant completes their workout session independently in order to suit their current needs. Program instructors monitor participants' progress for the conduction of reassessments.



Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<p><b>1. Provide participants with educational opportunities relevant to physical activity</b></p> <p>Example: Provide informal education regarding the benefits of exercise during the exercise session; Provide the opportunity for participants to learn more about the benefits of exercise specific to their condition(s)</p>	<p>Only one strategy was agreed upon by experts to target Engagement.</p> 	<p><b>Harmony In Action</b> Windsor, ON</p> <p><b>Program Description</b> Harmony In Action seeks to enrich the lives of adults with developmental and/or physical disabilities by providing opportunities to succeed through positive social inclusion, individual choice, independence, and rights.</p> <p><b>Program Structure</b> Harmony In Action offers group-based sessions with specialized exercise equipment. The program focuses on strength and mobility and utilizes specialized exercise equipment and outdoor exercise facilities specialized for adults with disabilities.</p> <p><b>How Harmony In Action fosters Engagement</b> Harmony In Action provides educational opportunities relevant to physical activity such as teaching participants about healthy eating and the effects of exercise.</p>

Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<p><b>1. Provide cues or reminders to ensure that participants maintain proper technique when exercising</b></p> <p>Example: Count sets and repetitions with the participant; Place hands at the start and end points of movements, etc.</p> <p><b>2. Provide constructive feedback to participants</b></p> <p>Example: Correct a participant's technique if they are performing the exercise incorrectly</p> <p><b>3. Use verbal persuasion to increase a participant's confidence in their ability to perform the activity</b></p> <p>Example: Provide the participant with feedback on their performance, and emphasize what they're doing correctly</p>	<p><b>4. Gradually provide less direct support for the participant, when appropriate (for individual-based exercise program)</b></p> <p>Example: As participants gain confidence and improve at their exercises, provide hands-off support or support only when it is needed</p> <p><b>5. Use a stepped approach to increase the complexity of a participant's exercises</b></p> <p>Example: Start with a basic, simplistic exercise and slowly introduce components to add difficulty such as weights, therabands, added movements, etc.</p> <p><b>6. Record or log exercises performed</b></p> <p>Example: Have participants or staff members/ volunteers write down the amount of time, weight, sets and repetitions of exercises that are completed</p> <p><b>7. Demonstrate the proper technique for exercises</b></p> <p>Example: Model the exercise before instructing the participants to follow; Allow participants to observe other members completing a task</p> <p><b>8. Show participants their progressions between assessments using quantitative analysis</b></p> <p>Example: Use machines that can display/ show percentages of improvement in range of motion, weight, etc. to participants</p> <p><b>9. Have health professionals (physiotherapist, trainer, etc.) provide advice and guidance to participants during the session</b></p> <p>Example: A physiotherapist is on site, trains staff members/ volunteers, or works directly with a participant at each session</p> <p><b>10. Provide clear instructions with adequate detail for performing exercises</b></p> <p>Example: Use straight forward language, demonstrate exercises, and identify range of motion of movements before the participant tries the exercise</p>	<p><b>MacWheelers</b> Hamilton, ON</p> <p><b>Program Description</b> MacWheelers is an exercise program for adults with spinal cord injury offered at the McMaster Physical Activity Centre of Excellence. The MacWheelers program provides an inclusive and accessible opportunity for adults living with spinal cord injury to engage in regular community exercise.</p> <p><b>Program Structure</b> MacWheelers offers both individual and group sessions, and the program focuses on helping participants increase strength and aerobic capacity. Registered physiotherapists, kinesiologists, and exercise physiologists work together with the participant to create individualized exercise programs based on the participant's goals.</p> <p><b>How MacWheelers fosters Mastery</b> At MacWheelers, constructive feedback and instruction on how to perform the exercise is provided to participants, and exercise changes, improvements, and physical indicators of health are documented as a means for the participant to recognize their own improvement.</p>

### Strategies and Examples

**1. Encourage participant self-reflection, and examination of personal goals and how exercise is making them feel**

Example: Have participants fill out a short journal entry each session

**2. Encourage participants to voluntarily get involved in physical activity research studies**

Example: If the program has received flyers or information about research studies, the staff members/ volunteers will mention them to participants and post the information in the facility

**3. Post research findings of site-specific studies in the facility**

Example: Communicate study results through word of mouth of staff members/ volunteers; Put up posters of study results in the facility

### Other Strategies and Examples

Only three strategies were agreed upon by experts to target Meaning.



### Featured Program

**ICAN / CERD**  
Sudbury, ON

**Program Description**

The Independence Centre and Network (ICAN) is a program that aims to help persons with physical disabilities live independently and inclusively in the community through individualized support and rehabilitation services. ICAN serves individuals with spinal cord injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, and/or limited mobility.


**Program Structure**

Program sessions are one-on-one and 45 minutes. Physiotherapists and occupational therapists perform assessments on the abilities of the participants and identify exercises that are needed to improve mobility and function. Active and passive range of motion is emphasized at ICAN.

**How ICAN fosters Meaning**

ICAN encourages self-identification and self-reflection of the physical benefits of exercise and provides formal opportunities for participants to learn about the benefits of their behaviour through a discussion-based format.



Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<p><b>1. Follow up with participants after they graduate out of the program</b></p> <p>Example: Follow up with participants at 3 months post program completion via a phone call or personal meeting</p> <p><b>2. Set up feedback opportunities on an ongoing basis for participants to offer personal suggestions and input on the program</b></p> <p>Example: Use a comment box so participants can voice their opinions; Create a participant representative role on the organizing board</p> <p><b>3. Provide adequate training to staff members/ volunteers to ensure a high level of service in the program</b></p> <p>Example: Ensure that staff members/ volunteers have specific training in physical activity for the population</p>	<p>Only three strategies were agreed upon by experts to target Validation.</p> 	<p><b>Revved Up</b> Kingston, ON</p> <p><b>Program Description</b> Revved Up provides an accessible place for persons with physical and developmental disabilities to exercise and enhance their quality of life.</p> <p><b>Program Structure</b> Program sessions are 1 hour in length and are offered twice weekly on an individual basis. Exercises focus on strength, balance, and mobility with cardio training and strength training.</p> <p><b>How Revved Up fosters Validation</b> Revved Up strives to provide a high-level of service in the program by ensuring that volunteers undergo extensive training; this includes online modules with a required quiz and in-person training. Furthermore, Revved Up follows up with graduated participants by allowing them to continually re-enroll in the program.</p>

Strategies and Examples	Other Strategies and Examples	Featured Program
<p><b>1. Offer the program out of an inclusive and safe facility such as a community centre or private facility</b></p> <p>Example: Ensure the space has accessible doorways and elevators, or ramps; that the equipment is accessible and set up to allow for the use of mobility aids</p> <p><b>2. Monitor facility temperature to ensure participants are exercising in the optimal environment</b></p> <p>Example: Always make sure that the facility temperature is the same, and check it around 30 minutes prior to participants arriving</p> <p><b>3. Arrange equipment within space to optimize ease of movement for participants</b></p> <p>Example: Adopt an open gym concept; Ensure there is enough space for movement between areas with assistive devices</p>	<p><b>4. Provide access to clean drinking water for program participants</b></p> <p>Example: Have an accessible water fountain inside the gym</p> <p><b>5. Have accessible washrooms on site</b></p> <p>Example: The stalls have enough room for a wheelchair and service dog (in some cases both), as well as handles near the toilet. Accessible showers are also recommended</p> <p><b>6. Ensure that the exercise setting is reserved during each session for program members only</b></p> <p>Example: Book a space in a gym or exercise facility that can only be accessed with membership to the program</p> <p><b>7. Acquire intuitive, easy-to-use exercise equipment</b></p> <p>Example: Use a Nu-Step machine, which guides stepping movement and is easily accessible with a swivel seat</p> <p><b>8. Provide close parking in reserved spots for program participants</b></p> <p>Example: Provide parking passes to participants who drive themselves, and ensure accessible parking is on-site or in a nearby accessible location</p> <p><b>9. Limit enrolment in sessions to ensure equal access to equipment</b></p> <p>Example: Avoid accepting new participants into sessions where current participants are often waiting to use the equipment</p> <p><b>10. Increase financial accessibility to the program</b></p> <p>Example: Create new and different payment schedules or offer membership subsidies</p>	<p><b>TIME at the Abilities Centre</b> Whitby, ON</p> <p><b>Program Description</b> The Together in Movement and Exercise (TIME) program is an evidence-based and task-related exercise program that seeks to enhance the quality of life and citizenship for people of all ages and abilities by providing inclusive programs and services of the highest quality and values. TIME serves populations with neurological conditions, those who are coping with the effects of aging, and those who experience weakness after an operation or extended hospital stay.</p> <p><b>Program Structure</b> Sessions are 1 hour and are offered in a small group exercise format. TIME focuses on weight shifting, stepping, and aerobics. The program offers exercises such as balance and core training, squatting, leg lifts, side steps, step ups, walking around the track, and aerobic machines.</p> <p><b>How TIME fosters Physical Environment:</b> TIME is offered out of the Abilities Centre, which is a state-of-the-art facility for providing a welcoming, positive, and energized environment for exercise. The Abilities Centre is specifically designed to be an optimal environment for exercise programming for persons with disabilities.</p>

## Social Environment *Relationships formed within the setting, as well as societal attitudes towards the activity*

### Strategies and Examples

#### 1. Have staff members/ volunteers provide one-on-one social support for the participants (for individual-based exercise program)

Example: Engage in conversation with the participant; Have staff members/ volunteers show interest in participants and their lives (i.e., ask about how they have been since they last came to the program)

#### 2. Have staff members/ volunteers provide encouragement and motivation

Example: Verbal persuasion to continue with the exercise, and comments such as "You can do it!"

#### 3. Have staff members/ volunteers float or circulate constantly

Example: Monitor participants to ensure that they are performing their exercises; Provide positive feedback to individuals who are struggling or have negative attitudes

### Other Strategies and Examples

#### 4. Keep the same staff members/ volunteers working with the same participant during exercise sessions (for individual-based exercise program)

Example: Designate a specific volunteer to introduce the participant to the exercise facility upon entry to the program, and ensure the same volunteer/staff member is consistently working with that participant

#### 5. Recruit staff members/ volunteers with diverse personalities

Example: Recruit volunteers of various ages, personality traits, and educational backgrounds

#### 6. Allow past program participants to return, volunteer at the program, and act as role models to current participants

Example: Graduates come back to socialize, interact, and speak with current participants; Graduates from the program volunteer to hold discussions/ focus groups on relevant topics

#### 7. Practice open and continuous communication with the participant

Example: Ask questions to see how the participant is doing; Have staff members/ volunteers be genuine, friendly, and warm when interacting with participants so they feel comfortable

#### 8. Train staff members/ volunteers to be sensitive to the social, accessibility, and physical activity needs of the population participating in the program

Example: Make suggestions for participant progression, rather than dictating or pushing progression on the participant; Ask a participant if they require assistance with mobility and ambulation

### Featured Program

#### Level Up Fitness Academy Toronto, ON

##### Program Description

Level Up Fitness Academy aims to build healthier bodies, minds, and lives by bringing fitness to adults and youth with special needs, including autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, brain injury, and pervasive developmental disorder.

##### Program Structure

Level Up Fitness Academy offers private sessions and small sessions, the latter being free of charge to the client. The program focuses on strength, weight loss, balance, and mobility. Typical exercises include strength training (with weights) and functional training (sled pulls and sandbag carry).

##### How Level Up Fitness Academy fosters Social Environment

Level Up Fitness Academy provides one-on-one social support during private sessions, and staff provide encouragement and motivation to participants throughout these sessions. Staff members/volunteers work with the same participant during exercise sessions to ensure continuity. Staff members/volunteers with diverse personalities are recruited to Level Up Fitness Academy.



**9. Enforce a zero-tolerance rule for inappropriate behaviour**

Example: Gently remind participants to minimize disruptions during group exercise; Privately speak to participants who behave inappropriately and communicate the consequences of continued behaviour

**10. Create an open, honest and supportive environment where differences are accepted rather than frowned upon**

Example: Inform volunteers from the beginning (their orientation session) that the welcoming atmosphere is one of the most important parts of the program

## Strategies and Examples

### 1. Provide variation in the modality of exercise instruction, according to the needs of the participant

Example: Instructors demonstrate exercises themselves, explain the exercise verbally, physically provide start and end points for movements, help participants move their bodies with the correct form, etc.

### 2. Perform prescribed exercises in an alternative format, if the machine or equipment that is needed is being used

Example: Suggest using a theraband for a chest press; Rotate the order of exercises in the participant's routine to use a free machine

### 3. Separate a participant's exercises by providing the option for intermittent breaks

Example: Indicate in a participant's exercise routine when breaks should be taken

## Other Strategies and Examples

### 4. Offer modifications for exercises

Example: Have extra equipment (such as different weights, therabands, bosu balls, etc.) close by for adaptations to the chosen exercise

### 5. Ensure that the ratio of staff members/ volunteers to participants is low

Example: Book appointments for exercise sessions for adequate support and personnel to help during a participant's attendance; for individual-based exercise: 1:1; for group-based exercise, 1:4

## Canucks Autism Network British Columbia

### Program Description

Canucks Autism Network provides year-round sports and recreation programs for individuals and families living with autism while increasing awareness and providing training in communities across British Columbia.

### Program Structure

Programming occurs after school, on evenings, and on weekends. Skating, basic swimming, physical literacy, multisport programs, biking, and fitness programs are offered. For children, the program focus is on FUNdamental experiences, and for youth and young adults, the focus is on being "Active and Fit for Life."

### How Canucks Autism Network fosters Activity Environment:

The Canucks Autism Network offers a widespread number of activities that can be varied according to the needs of the participant. Furthermore, participants have the option to take intermittent breaks between exercise activities. The participant-to-staff ratio at Canucks Autism Network is low (1:1).

# High-Yield Strategies

The following table presents 14 strategies that target 4 or more building blocks and conditions of quality participation. Thus, these strategies are high-yield in that using them can target multiple building blocks and conditions of quality participation. Strategies are only included if the experts had High/Moderate Agreement that they fostered a given building block or condition. The condition “Physical Environment” was not targeted by any of these high-yield strategies.

*Note.* An more accessible version of this table is presented on page 28.

Strategy	Example	A	B	C	E	M	Me	V	PE	SE	AE
<b>Support participants' mastery perceptions by demonstrating an understanding and acceptance of all participant abilities</b>	Respect participants' personal preferences and decisions for how they want to exercise	X*				X		X		X	
<b>Include activities where participants may work together (for group-based exercise program)</b>	Partner ball tosses, battle ropes, etc.		X*		X					X	X
<b>Provide opportunities for participants to socialize</b>	Provide opportunities for participant socialization during exercises, between exercises, and outside of program times		X*		X		X			X	
<b>Group together participants with similar abilities and needs (for group-based exercise program)</b>	For circuit-based exercise, divide participants into groups based on similar mobility impairments, so the exercises can be tailored and adapted to the participants' abilities		X*	X						X	X
<b>Encourage participants to provide peer-based motivation for one another</b>	Volunteer provides positive reinforcement when participants motivate one another		X*		X		X	X			
<b>Create individualized exercise programs to suit the current needs of the participant</b>	Integrate add-ons or variations to exercises to increase difficulty at a participant's discretion (for group-based exercise program)			X*		X		X			X
<b>Provide cues or reminders to ensure that participants are working hard to complete their exercises</b>	Providers count participant's repetitions out loud; visually indicates movement start and end points			X*	X	X				X	

\*Primarily identified with indicated building block or condition, but also fosters other building blocks and/or conditions

**Table continued:** The following table presents 14 strategies that target 4 or more building blocks and conditions of quality participation. Thus, these strategies are high-yield in that using them can target multiple building blocks and conditions of quality participation. Strategies are only included if the experts had High/Moderate Agreement that they fostered a given building block or condition. The condition “Physical Environment” was not targeted by any of these high-yield strategies.

Strategy	Example	A	B	C	E	M	Me	V	PE	SE	AE
<b>Gradually provide less direct support for the participant, when appropriate (for individual-based exercise program)</b>	As participants gain confidence and improve at their exercises, provide hands-off support or support only when it is needed	X		X		X*					X
<b>Have staff members/ volunteers provide encouragement and motivation</b>	Verbal persuasion to continue with the exercise, and comments such as "You can do it!"		X		X			X		X*	
<b>Model/ demonstrate persistence in exercise through group taught sessions, pamphlets, stories, and workshops, etc.</b>	Invite a graduate of the program to speak about their exercise journey and the challenges they overcame while being a part of the program				X	X	X			X*	
<b>Allow past program participants to return, volunteer at the program, and act as role models to current participants</b>	Graduates come back to socialize, interact, and speak with current participants; Graduates from the program volunteer to hold discussions/ focus groups on relevant topics		X				X	X		X*	
<b>Practice open and continuous communication with the participant</b>	Ask questions to see how the participant is doing; Have staff members/ volunteers be genuine, friendly, and warm when interacting with participants so they feel comfortable		X		X			X		X*	
<b>Encourage the staff members/ volunteers to be eager and have positive attitudes while at the program</b>	Instruct staff members/ volunteers to be friendly and welcome each member when they enter the gym		X		X			X		X*	
<b>Provide variation in the modality of exercise instruction, according to the needs of the participant</b>	Instructors demonstrate exercises themselves, explain the exercise verbally, physically provide start and end points for movements, help participants move their bodies with the correct form, etc.			X	X	X					X*

\*Primarily identified with indicated building block or condition, but also fosters other building blocks and/or conditions



# Full Strategy Matrix

Below is the full Strategy Matrix synthesized in the accompanying scientific paper for this tool (Tomasone et al., 2023). This matrix maps each strategy onto the quality participation building blocks and conditions and indicates experts' level of agreement with the mapping. The matrix also provides "on-the-ground" examples of how each strategy can be fostered in community-based exercise programs.

*Note.* An accessible version of this table is available on page 32

Aspect Fostered	Strategy	Example	Aspects of Quality Participation									
			A	B	C	E	M	Me	V	PE	SE	AE
Autonomy	Invite participants to give their input on the development of their exercise routine	Allow participants to have input in determining the frequency, intensity, duration, and type of exercise; Participants have the option to select from a variety of structured physical activity options										
	Allow participants to determine their own exercise goals in collaboration with a qualified trainer	In a preliminary meeting, the participant identifies their personal goals and the trainer provides feedback, subsequently helping to build a program to achieve these goals										
	Provide participants with the option to fundraise for their own membership fees	Participants collect pledges for the program's special events in order to subsidize their own participation fees										
	Transfer physical activity knowledge pertaining to exercise methods and skills, so that participants can exercise independently outside of the exercise program	Provide online links and videos for at home workouts; Provide participants with their programs so they can perform them individually										
	*Provide continued exercise opportunities to participants after they have graduated from or completed the program	Offer another exercise program that helps transition participants to mainstream gyms										
	Provide opportunities for participant to engage in physical activity outside of the program session	Include a voluntary option to drop-in to the gym outside of program session time										
	Allow participants to set their own goals for changes they would like to see in their daily lives	When performing exercises, try to relate movements to functional activities so participants can identify goals for their daily lives										
	Support participants' mastery perceptions by demonstrating an understanding and acceptance of all participant abilities	Respect participants' personal preferences and decisions for how they want to exercise										
Belongingness	Engage in communication with the program participants outside of the program hours/sessions	Circulate monthly newsletters about the program community, upcoming events, etc.										
	Include activities where participants may work together (for group-based exercise program)	Partner ball tosses, battle ropes, etc.										
	Provide opportunities for participants to socialize	Provide opportunities for participant socialization during exercises, between exercises, and outside of program times										
	Group together participants with similar abilities and needs (for group-based exercise program)	For circuit-based exercise, divide participants into groups based on similar mobility impairments, so the exercises can be tailored and adapted to the participants' abilities										
	Encourage participants to provide peer-based motivation for one another.	Volunteer provides positive reinforcement when participants motivate one another										















KEY:

	High Agreement (75-100%)
	Moderate Agreement (50-74%)
	Low Agreement (25-49%)
	No Agreement (0-24%)

**Aspects of Quality Participation**

<b>A</b>	Autonomy
<b>B</b>	Belongingness
<b>C</b>	Challenge
<b>M</b>	Mastery
<b>Me</b>	Meaning
<b>V</b>	Validation
<b>PE</b>	Physical Environment
<b>SE</b>	Social Environment
<b>AE</b>	Activity Environment

\*Strategy was agreed upon to best foster two or more building blocks/conditions of quality participation. \*\*Strategy only exhibited low agreement.

# High-Yield Strategies– Accessible Version

The following table presents 14 strategies that target 4 or more constructs of quality participation. Thus, these strategies are high-yield in that using them can target multiple constructs of quality participation. Strategies are only included if the experts had High/Moderate Agreement that they fostered a given construct. The construct “Physical Environment” was not targeted by any of these high-yield strategies.

\*Primarily identified with indicated building block or condition, but also fosters other building blocks and/or conditions

**Strategy:** Support participants' mastery perceptions by demonstrating an understanding and acceptance of all participant abilities

**Example(s):** Respect participants' personal preferences and decisions for how they want to exercise

Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy\*
- Meaning
- Validation
- Social Environment

**Strategy:** Include activities where participants may work together (for group-based exercise program)

**Example(s):** Partner ball tosses, battle ropes, etc.

Aspects of Quality Participation

- Belongingness\*
- Engagement
- Social Environment
- Activity Environment

**Strategy:** Provide opportunities for participants to socialize

**Example(s):** Provide opportunities for participant socialization during exercises, between exercises, and outside of program times

Aspects of Quality Participation

- Belongingness\*
- Engagement
- Meaning
- Social Environment

**Strategy:** Group together participants with similar abilities and needs (for group-based exercise program)

**Example(s):** For circuit-based exercise, divide participants into groups based on similar mobility impairments, so the exercises can be tailored and adapted to the participants' abilities

Aspects of Quality Participation

- Belongingness\*
- Challenge

Social Environment  
Activity Environment

**Strategy:** Encourage participants to provide peer-based motivation for one another

**Example(s):** Volunteer provides positive reinforcement when participants motivate one another

Aspects of Quality Participation

Belongingness\*  
Engagement  
Meaning  
Validation

**Strategy:** Create individualized exercise programs to suit the current needs of the participant

**Example(s):** Integrate add-ons or variations to exercises to increase difficulty at a participant's discretion (for group-based exercise program)

Aspects of Quality Participation

Challenge\*  
Mastery  
Validation  
Activity Environment

**Strategy:** Provide cues or reminders to ensure that participants are working hard to complete their exercises

**Example(s):** Providers counts participant's repetitions out loud; visually indicates movement start and end points

Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy  
Belongingness  
Challenge  
Engagement  
Mastery  
Meaning  
Validation  
Physical Environment  
Social Environment  
Activity Environment

**Strategy:** Gradually provide less direct support for the participant, when appropriate (for individual-based exercise program)

**Example(s):** As participants gain confidence and improve at their exercises, provide hands-off support or support only when it is needed

Aspects of Quality Participation

Challenge\*  
Engagement  
Mastery  
Social Environment



**Strategy:** Have staff members/ volunteers provide encouragement and motivation

**Example(s):** Verbal persuasion to continue with the exercise, and comments such as "You can do it!"

Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy

Challenge

Mastery\*

Activity Environment

**Strategy:** Model/ demonstrate persistence in exercise through group taught sessions, pamphlets, stories, and workshops, etc.

**Example(s):** Invite a graduate of the program to speak about their exercise journey and the challenges they overcame while being a part of the program

Aspects of Quality Participation

Belongingness

Engagement

Validation

Social Environment\*

**Strategy:** Allow past program participants to return, volunteer at the program, and act as role models to current participants

**Example(s):** Graduates come back to socialize, interact, and speak with current participants; Graduates from the program volunteer to hold discussions/ focus groups on relevant topics

Aspects of Quality Participation

Belongingness

Meaning

Validation

Social Environment\*

**Strategy:** Practice open and continuous communication with the participant

**Example(s):** Ask questions to see how the participant is doing; Have staff members/ volunteers be genuine, friendly, and warm when interacting with participants so they feel comfortable

Aspects of Quality Participation

Belongingness

Engagement

Validation

Social Environment\*

**Strategy:** Encourage the staff members/ volunteers to be eager and have positive attitudes while at the program

**Example(s):** Instruct staff members/ volunteers to be friendly and welcome each member when they enter the gym

Aspects of Quality Participation

Belongingness

Engagement

Validation

Social Environment\*

**Strategy:** Provide variation in the modality of exercise instruction, according to the needs of the participant

**Example(s):** Instructors demonstrate exercises themselves, explain the exercise verbally, physically provide start and end points for movements, help participants move their bodies with the correct form, etc.

Aspects of Quality Participation

Challenge

Engagement

Mastery

Activity Environment\*

# Full Strategy Matrix – Accessible Version

Below is the full Strategy Matrix synthesized in the accompanying scientific paper for this tool: Tomasone JR, Man KE, Sartor JD, Andrusko KE, Martin Ginis KA, & Latimer-Cheung AE. (2023). This matrix maps each strategy onto the quality participation constructs and indicates experts' level of agreement with the mapping. The matrix also provides "on-the-ground" examples of how each strategy can be fostered in community-based exercise programs.

\*Strategy was agreed upon to best foster two or more aspects of quality participation.

\*\*Strategy only exhibited low agreement.

## Aspect Fostered: Autonomy

### Strategy Fostered:

Invite participants to give their input on the development of their exercise routine

Example(s): Allow participants to have input in determining the frequency, intensity, duration, and type of exercise; Participants have the option to select from a variety of structured physical activity options

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: high agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Allow participants to determine their own exercise goals in collaboration with a qualified trainer

Example(s): In a preliminary meeting, the participant identifies their personal goals and the trainer provides feedback, subsequently helping to build a program to achieve these goals

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: high agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement

Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide participants with the option to fundraise for their own membership fees

Example(s): Participants collect pledges for the program's special events in order to subsidize their own participation fees

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: moderate agreement

Belongingness: no agreement

Challenge: no agreement

Engagement: no agreement

Mastery: no agreement

Meaning: low agreement

Validation: low agreement

Physical Environment: no agreement

Social Environment: no agreement

Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Transfer physical activity knowledge pertaining to exercise methods and skills, so that participants can exercise independently outside of the exercise program

Example(s): Provide online links and videos for at home workouts; Provide participants with their programs so they can perform them individually

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: high agreement

Belongingness: no agreement

Challenge: low agreement

Engagement: low agreement

Mastery: moderate agreement

Meaning: no agreement

Validation: no agreement

Physical Environment: low agreement

Social Environment: no agreement

Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

\*Provide continued exercise opportunities to participants after they have graduated from or completed the program

Example(s): Offer another exercise program that helps transition participants to mainstream gyms

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: moderate agreement

Belongingness: no agreement

Challenge: low agreement

Engagement: moderate agreement

Mastery: moderate agreement

Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide opportunities for participant to engage in physical activity outside of the program session

Example(s): include a voluntary option to drop-in to the gym outside of program session time

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: moderate agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Allow participants to set their own goals for changes they would like to see in their daily lives

Example(s): When performing exercises, try to relate movements to functional activities so participants can identify goals for their daily lives

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: high agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: moderate agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Support participants' mastery perceptions by demonstrating an understanding and acceptance of all participant abilities

Example(s): Respect participants' personal preferences and decisions for how they want to exercise

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: moderate agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement



Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

## Aspect Fostered: Belongingness

### Strategy Fostered:

Engage in communication with the program participants outside of the program hours/sessions

Example(s): Circulate monthly newsletters about the program community, upcoming events, etc.

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Include activities where participants may work together (for group-based exercise program)

Example(s): Partner ball tosses, battle ropes, etc.

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: high agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Provide opportunities for participants to socialize

Example(s): Provide opportunities for participant socialization during exercises, between exercises, and outside of program times

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: moderate agreement  
Validation: low agreement

Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Group together participants with similar abilities and needs (for group-based exercise program)

Example(s): For circuit-based exercise, divide participants into groups based on similar mobility impairments, so the exercises can be tailored and adapted to the participants' abilities

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Encourage participants to provide peer-based motivation for one another.

Example(s): For circuit-based exercise, divide participants into groups based on similar mobility impairments, so the exercises can be tailored and adapted to the participants' abilities

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: moderate agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Allow participants to continually re-enroll in the program, after they have graduated from or completed the program.

Example(s): Structure the program to be on-going; do not limit enrolment to only new participants

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement

Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Orient the participant when they first join the program

Example(s): Introduce them to program leaders, staff members, and volunteers, as well as any other individuals they will be working with directly

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Create opportunities to get to know the participants beyond their identity in the program as an exerciser

Example(s): Ask participants about their lifestyle and interests; Host social sessions after weekly exercise sessions to get to know participants

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have program characteristics that promote acceptance and inclusion from the general public

Example(s): Advertise the facility as an all-inclusive, safe space for persons with and without mobility impairment

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement

Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: low agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement



## Aspect Fostered: Challenge

### Strategy Fostered:

Create individualized exercise programs to suit the current needs of the participant

Example(s): Integrate add-ons or variations to exercises to increase difficulty at a participant's discretion (for group-based exercise program).

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: high agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Provide cues or reminders to ensure that participants are working hard to complete their exercises Example(s): Providers counts participant's repetitions out loud; visually indicates movement start and end points

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Create voluntary friendly competition between participants on a voluntary basis.

Example(s): Plan monthly 'challenges' such as throwing competitions, obstacle courses, etc.;

Recognize individuals who succeed in program competitions

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: high agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement

Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Prescribe exercises that push participants to their comfortable limit

Example(s): Be willing to respectfully challenge the participant to improve, instead of being complacent about improvements regarding exercise

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: high agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Intermittently conduct a formal reassessment and update a participant's exercise program

Example(s): Create and monitor a timeline for all participants to be re-assessed every 6 months

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: high agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

**\*\*Ensure staff members/ volunteers are knowledgeable about making appropriate exercise adaptations** Example(s): Recruit staff members/ volunteers who have a health sciences, exercise, and disability, etc. background; Educate staff members/ volunteers on contraindications for exercise and safety in the gym

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: no agreement

Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

## Aspect Fostered: Engagement

### Strategy Fostered:

Provide participants with educational opportunities relevant to physical activity

Example(s): Provide informal education regarding the benefits of exercise during the exercise session; Provide the opportunity for participants to learn more about the benefits of exercise specific to their condition(s)

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

\*Be willing to make new times and dates available for program sessions to offer variety in scheduling and accommodate participants

Example(s): If a program session is full, open up a new session time to take in more participants; Offer program sessions at multiple time points in the day to accommodate different participant preferences

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: low agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

## Aspect Fostered: Mastery

### Strategy Fostered:

Gradually provide less direct support for the participant, when appropriate (for individual-based exercise program)

Example(s): As participants gain confidence and improve at their exercises, provide hands-off support or support only when it is needed

### Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy: high agreement
- Belongingness: no agreement
- Challenge: moderate agreement
- Engagement: low agreement
- Mastery: high agreement
- Meaning: no agreement
- Validation: no agreement
- Physical Environment: no agreement
- Social Environment: low agreement
- Activity Environment: moderate agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Provide cues or reminders to ensure that participants maintain proper technique when exercising.

Example(s): Count sets and repetitions with the participant; Place hands at the start and end points of movements, etc.

### Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy: no agreement
- Belongingness: no agreement
- Challenge: moderate agreement
- Engagement: low agreement
- Mastery: high agreement
- Meaning: no agreement
- Validation: no agreement
- Physical Environment: no agreement
- Social Environment: no agreement
- Activity Environment: moderate agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Encourage participants to report back their action plans and progress to staff members/volunteers

Example(s): Volunteers ask participants if they have noticed changes in their strength and endurance.

### Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy: low agreement
- Belongingness: no agreement
- Challenge: low agreement



Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

\*Use a stepped approach to increase the complexity of a participant's exercises

Example(s): Start with a basic, simplistic exercise and slowly introduce components to add difficulty such as weights, therabands, added movements, etc.

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: high agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide clear instructions with adequate detail for performing exercises

Example(s): Use straight forward language, demonstrate exercises, and identify range of motion of movements before the participant tries the exercise

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Demonstrate the proper technique for exercises

Example(s): Model the exercise before instructing the participants to follow; Allow participants to observe other members completing a task

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement

Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: high agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide constructive feedback to participants.

Example(s): Correct a participant's technique if they are performing the exercise incorrectly

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Use verbal persuasion to increase a participant's confidence in their ability to perform the activity

Example(s): Provide the participant with feedback on their performance, and emphasize what they're doing correctly

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Record or log exercises performed

Example(s): Have participants or staff members/ volunteers write down the amount of time, weight, sets and repetitions of exercises that are completed

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Show participants their progressions between assessments using quantitative analysis

Example(s): Use machines that can display/ show percentages of improvement in range of motion, weight, etc. to participants

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: high agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have health professionals (physiotherapist, trainer, etc.) provide advice and guidance to participants during the session

Example(s): A physiotherapist is on site, trains staff members/ volunteers, or works directly with a participant at each session

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

## Aspect Fostered: Meaning

### Strategy Fostered:

**\*\*Encourage participants to voluntarily get involved in physical activity research studies.**

Example(s): If the program has received flyers or information about research studies, the staff members/ volunteers will mention them to participants and post the information in the facility

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

**\*\*Post research findings of site-specific studies in the facility**

Example(s): Communicate study results through word of mouth of staff members/ volunteers;  
Put up posters of study results in the facility

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: low agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Encourage participant self-reflection, and examination of personal goals and how exercise is making them feel

Example(s): Have participants fill out a short journal entry each session

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: high agreement

Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement



## Aspect Fostered: Validation

### Strategy Fostered:

Follow up with participants after they graduate out of the program

Example(s): Follow up with participants at 3 months post program completion via a phone call or personal meeting

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Set up feedback opportunities on an ongoing basis for participants to offer personal suggestions and input on the program

Example(s): Use a comment box so participants can voice their opinions; Create a participant representative role on the organizing board

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

**\*\*Provide adequate training to staff members/ volunteers to ensure a high level of service in the program**

Example(s): Ensure that staff members/ volunteers have specific training in physical activity for the population

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement

Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

## Aspect Fostered: Physical Environment

### Strategy Fostered:

Ensure that the exercise setting is reserved during each session for program members only

### Examples(s):

Book a space in a gym or exercise facility that can only be accessed with membership to the program

### Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy: no agreement
- Belongingness: no agreement
- Challenge: no agreement
- Engagement: low agreement
- Mastery: no agreement
- Meaning: no agreement
- Validation: low agreement
- Physical Environment: moderate agreement
- Social Environment: low agreement
- Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Incorporate the latest evidence-based training techniques and exercise machines.

### Example(s):

Taping muscles, using electric stimulation, use of mirrors; ZeroG treadmills, functional electric stimulation bicycles

### Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy: no agreement
- Belongingness: no agreement
- Challenge: low agreement
- Engagement: no agreement
- Mastery: low agreement
- Meaning: no agreement
- Validation: no agreement
- Physical Environment: moderate agreement
- Social Environment: no agreement
- Activity Environment: moderate agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Offer the program out of an inclusive and safe facility such as a community centre or private facility

Example(s): Ensure the space has accessible doorways and elevators, or ramps; that the equipment is accessible and set up to allow for the use of mobility aids.

### Aspects of Quality Participation

- Autonomy: no agreement
- Belongingness: no agreement
- Challenge: no agreement

Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: high agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Acquire intuitive, easy-to-use exercise equipment

Example(s): Use a Nu-Step machine, which guides stepping movement and is easily accessible with a swivel seat

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: moderate agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Monitor facility temperature to ensure participants are exercising in the optimal environment

Example(s): Always make sure that the facility temperature is the same, and check it around 30 minutes prior to participants arriving

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: high agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have accessible washrooms on site

Example(s): The stalls have enough room for a wheelchair and service dog (in some cases both), as well as handles near the toilet. Accessible showers are also recommended

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement

Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: high agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide access to clean drinking water for program participants

Example(s): Have an accessible water fountain inside the gym

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: high agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Arrange equipment within space to optimize ease of movement for participants

Example(s): Adopt an open gym concept; Ensure there is enough space for movement between areas with assistive devices

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: high agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide close parking in reserved spots for program participants

Example(s): Provide parking passes to participants who drive themselves, and ensure accessible parking is on-site or in a nearby accessible location

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: moderate agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Limit enrolment in sessions to ensure equal access to equipment

Example(s): Avoid accepting new participants into sessions where current participants are often waiting to use the equipment

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: moderate agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Increase financial accessibility to the program

Example(s): Create new and different payment schedules or offer membership subsidies

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: moderate agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement



## Aspect Fostered: Social Environment

### Strategy Fostered:

Recruit staff members/ volunteers with diverse personalities

Examples(s): Recruit volunteers of various ages, personality traits, and educational backgrounds

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Facilitate interaction between participants, individuals who are involved in different programs, and other staff at the facility

Example(s): Begin the exercise session with a group meeting; Include activities where participants may work together (for group-based exercise program)

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Have staff members/ volunteers provide one-on-one social support for the participants (for individual-based exercise program)

Example(s): Engage in conversation with the participant; Have staff members/ volunteers show interest in participants and their lives (i.e. ask about how they have been since they last came to the program)

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement

Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Keep the same staff members/ volunteers working with the same participant during exercise sessions (for individual-based exercise program)

Example(s): Designate a specific volunteer to introduce the participant to the exercise facility upon entry to the program, and ensure the same volunteer/staff member is consistently working with that participant

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Welcome a family member or caregiver to be present (but not participate) at the program

Example(s): Family members can join other community exercise programs at the facility

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have staff members/ volunteers float or circulate constantly

Example(s): Monitor participants to ensure that they are performing their exercises; Provide positive feedback to individuals who are struggling or have negative attitudes

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement

Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: high agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have staff members/ volunteers provide encouragement and motivation

Example(s): Verbal persuasion to continue with the exercise, and comments such as "You can do it!"

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: high agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Practice problem solving together with the participant

Example(s): Provider works with the participant to adapt exercises based on participants' concerns about an exercise

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Model/ demonstrate persistence in exercise through group taught sessions, pamphlets, stories, and workshops, etc.

Example(s): Invite a graduate of the program to speak about their exercise journey and the challenges they overcame while being a part of the program

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: moderate agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Utilize social media to facilitate the sharing of program participants' successes

Example(s): Tag participants in posts where they achieve their goals; Send videos and photos to participants so they can share them with their own followers

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Allow past program participants to return, volunteer at the program, and act as role models to current participants

Example(s): Graduates come back to socialize, interact, and speak with current participants; Graduates from the program volunteer to hold discussions/ focus groups on relevant topics

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: moderate agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement

Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Practice active listening to help the participants to feel supported and heard

Examples(s): Instruct staff members/ volunteers to validate the concerns of the participant;  
Instruct staff members/ volunteers to listen instead of providing advice to the participant

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Practice individualized consideration, where staff members/ volunteers address unique participant needs with compassion and empathy

Example(s): Treat all participants as individuals; Ask participants about the way that they would most like to be supported

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: high agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Provide access to experts and services who can give the necessary emotional, tangible, and informational support for participants

Example(s): Refer participants to online regional platforms to find personal resources; have contact information of relevant experts and services

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement

Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Practice open and continuous communication with the participant

Example(s): Ask questions to see how the participant is doing; Have staff members/ volunteers be genuine, friendly, and warm when interacting with participants so they feel comfortable

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have program leaders engage in community outreach to spread awareness of opportunities for persons with disability

Example(s): Program leaders continually seek out partnerships with relevant stakeholders; Program leaders take part in community events and fundraisers

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Encourage the staff members/ volunteers to be eager and have positive attitudes while at the program Example(s): Instruct staff members/ volunteers to be friendly and welcome each member when they enter the gym

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement



Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Train staff members/ volunteers to be sensitive to the social, accessibility, and physical activity needs of the population participating in the program

Example(s): Make suggestions for participant progression, rather than dictating or pushing progression on the participant; Ask a participant if they require assistance with mobility and ambulation

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Enforce a zero tolerance rule for inappropriate behaviour

Example(s): Gently remind participants to minimize disruptions during group exercise; Privately speak to participants who behave inappropriately and communicate the consequences of continued behaviour

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Ensure staff members/ volunteers are knowledgeable about the specific impairments or symptoms of the participants (in a confidential way)

Example(s): Only provide non-identifying, relevant information about a participant's contraindications to exercise so that the staff member/ volunteer can properly support the participant

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Create an open, honest and supportive environment where differences are accepted rather than frowned upon

Example(s): Inform volunteers from the beginning (their orientation session) that the welcoming atmosphere is one of the most important parts of the program

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: high agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Have staff members/ volunteers encourage participants to build and utilize their own support networks Example(s): Encourage participants to create/initiate or join common-interest groups together that are outside of the exercise program

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: moderate agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement

Meaning: low agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Practice caring attitudes and be non-judgmental and empathetic during interactions with participants  
Example(s): Focus on participants' interests and their participation in the exercise program, rather than their impairment

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: moderate agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Expand the inclusion criteria for the population eligible to sign up for the program  
Example(s): A program that normally works with individuals with cerebral palsy could expand its network to work with stroke victims

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: moderate agreement  
Activity Environment: low agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Ensure that the program leaders are present at the program  
Example(s): Have the program leaders and directors drop in to the program sessions from time to time to meet and interact with participants

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement

Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: moderate agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Have an experienced staff member/ volunteer present to provide support to junior staff members/ volunteers

Example(s): Internship students or older volunteers self-identify at the beginning of the session, and can answer the questions of new volunteers

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: low agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: no agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: high agreement  
Activity Environment: no agreement

## Aspect Fostered: Activity Environment

### Strategy Fostered:

Offer modifications for exercises

Examples(s): Have extra equipment (such as different weights, therabands, bosu balls, etc.) close by for adaptations to the chosen exercise

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: moderate agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Provide variation in the modality of exercise instruction, according to the needs of the participant Example(s): Instructors demonstrate exercises themselves, explain the exercise verbally, physically provide start and end points for movements, help participants move their bodies with the correct form, etc.

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: moderate agreement  
Engagement: moderate agreement  
Mastery: moderate agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: high agreement

### Strategy Fostered:

Ensure that the ratio of staff members/ volunteers to participants is low

Example(s): Book appointments for exercise sessions for adequate support and personnel to help during a participant's attendance; For Individual-based exercise: 1:1; For group-based exercise, 1:4

### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: no agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: low agreement

Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: low agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: low agreement  
Activity Environment: moderate agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Perform prescribed exercises in an alternative format, if the machine or equipment that is needed is being used

Example(s): Suggest using a theraband for a chest press; Rotate the order of exercises in the participant's routine to use a free machine

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: low agreement  
Engagement: low agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: low agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: high agreement

#### Strategy Fostered:

Separate a participant's exercises by providing the option for intermittent breaks

Example(s): Indicate in a participant's exercise routine when breaks should be taken

#### Aspects of Quality Participation

Autonomy: low agreement  
Belongingness: no agreement  
Challenge: no agreement  
Engagement: no agreement  
Mastery: low agreement  
Meaning: no agreement  
Validation: no agreement  
Physical Environment: no agreement  
Social Environment: no agreement  
Activity Environment: high agreement