

LACROSSE CANADA STEPS TO REMOVING BARRIERS IN LACROSSE

REMOVING BARRIERS TO SPORT PARTICIPATION IN LACROSSE IS CRUCIAL FOR CREATING AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT WHERE EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR BACKGROUND, ABILITY, OR CIRCUMSTANCES, CAN ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. HERE ARE SEVERAL KEY STRATEGIES FOR REMOVING BARRIERS TO LACROSSE:

1. INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS

- **ADAPT FOR DISABILITIES:** DEVELOP LACROSSE PROGRAMS THAT ACCOMMODATE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (E.G., WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL, ADAPTIVE SWIMMING), ENSURING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL.
- **CULTURALLY RELEVANT PROGRAMS:** OFFER PROGRAMS THAT RESONATE WITH DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS. TAILOR ACTIVITIES TO LOCAL CUSTOMS AND LANGUAGES TO MAKE PARTICIPATION MORE INVITING.
- **GENDER EQUALITY:** PROMOTE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL GENDERS IN LACROSSE, FROM GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S TEAMS TO BREAKING DOWN STEREOTYPES ABOUT WHO CAN PARTICIPATE. CREATE LEAGUES FOR ONLY WOMEN.

2. ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS

- **TRANSPORTATION:** ENSURE LACROSSE FACILITIES ARE LOCATED IN AREAS THAT ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT. PROVIDE TRANSPORT OPTIONS OR SUBSIDIES FOR THOSE LIVING IN AREAS WITH LIMITED ACCESS.
- **ACCESSIBLE VENUES:** SPORTS VENUES SHOULD BE PHYSICALLY ACCESSIBLE, WITH RAMPS, WHEELCHAIR ACCESS, AND FACILITIES LIKE ACCESSIBLE CHANGING ROOMS OR PARKING SPACES.

3. EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- **EDUCATE COMMUNITIES:** RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF LACROSSE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE. SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY GROUPS, AND MEDIA CAN BE POWERFUL TOOLS FOR SPREADING KNOWLEDGE (LAUNCH SCHOOL PROGRAMS)
- **COACHING TRAINING:** TRAIN COACHES AND STAFF TO RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS THE BARRIERS PARTICIPANTS MAY FACE. THIS COULD INCLUDE UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES, DISABILITY AWARENESS, AND HOW TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT.
- **PROMOTE ROLE MODELS:** HIGHLIGHT ATHLETES FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, GENDERS, AND ABILITIES TO INSPIRE OTHERS TO TAKE PART.

4. FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

- **SUBSIDIZE COSTS: SCALE FEES FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD THE COSTS OF EQUIPMENT, COACHING, OR FACILITY ACCESS.**
- **FREE PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY SPORTS: CREATE FREE OR LOW-COST COMMUNITY PROGRAMS TO MAKE PARTICIPATION MORE AFFORDABLE (TRY LACROSSE-LACROSSE CANADA)**
- **DONATED EQUIPMENT: ESTABLISH PROGRAMS WHERE EQUIPMENT IS DONATED OR RECYCLED, SO PARTICIPANTS DON'T HAVE TO PURCHASE COSTLY GEAR (LOCAL/CLUB LEVEL)**

5. SOCIAL SUPPORT

- **BUILD COMMUNITY: CREATE SOCIAL SPACES AROUND LACROSSE ACTIVITIES TO FOSTER A SENSE OF BELONGING. ENCOURAGEMENT FROM FAMILY, PEERS, AND MENTORS CAN MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATION.**
- **PEER SUPPORT: ENCOURAGE PEER GROUPS OR MENTORS TO GUIDE NEW PARTICIPANTS, MAKING THEM FEEL SUPPORTED AND LESS INTIMIDATED BY TRYING SOMETHING NEW.**

6. ADDRESSING SAFETY CONCERNS

- **SAFE ENVIRONMENT: ENSURE THAT FACILITIES ARE SAFE, SECURE, AND WELL-MAINTAINED. ADDRESS CONCERNS ABOUT BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION, SO EVERYONE FEELS WELCOME.**
- **PROTECTION FROM INJURY: PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TO PREVENT INJURIES AND ENSURE THAT SPORTS ARE CONDUCTED IN SAFE ENVIRONMENTS WITH PROPER SUPERVISION (INTRODUCTION TO SIXES GAME).**

7. MENTAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

- **BUILD CONFIDENCE: MANY PEOPLE MAY BE HESITANT TO PARTICIPATE DUE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM OR PAST NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES. PROVIDING A SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENT CAN HELP BUILD CONFIDENCE. CREATE A SAFE SPACE IN A SKILL BASED SPORT.**
- **MENTAL HEALTH: ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH AS PART OF SPORTS PARTICIPATION, RECOGNIZING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SPORT/LACROSSE ON MENTAL WELL-BEING AND OFFERING SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO MAY NEED IT.**



8. LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY

- **DIGITAL ACCESS: USE ONLINE PLATFORMS TO PROMOTE SPORTS PROGRAMS, PROVIDE VIRTUAL COACHING (PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT), OR EVEN OFFER REMOTE PARTICIPATION FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT ATTEND IN PERSON.**
- **SOCIAL MEDIA: ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION BY INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY, SHOWING YOUNG PERSPECTIVE ATHLETES THE OPPORTUNITIES AND ALSO DISPLAYING ATHLETES OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS TO ENTICE THEM AND ALLOW THEM TO IDENTIFY WITH OTHERS LIKE THEMSELVES.**

BY ADDRESSING THESE BARRIERS SYSTEMATICALLY, SPORTS CAN BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION, PHYSICAL ABILITY, OR OTHER CHALLENGES THEY MIGHT FACE.

