

# Accessible Leisure for Individuals with Physical Disabilities

## Executive Summary

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### Abstract

Individuals with physical disabilities may experience decreased quality of life and impaired occupational justice due to a lack of accessibility to outdoor leisure activities. Development and implementation of the ‘Try Para Trap’ experience with the Disabled Athlete Sports Association provided individuals with physical disabilities the opportunity to participate in an outdoor leisure sport they had not had access to prior to this capstone. This project effectively provided outdoor leisure opportunities while improving occupational justice and quality of life across three trap-shooting experiences. Outcomes of the project highlight the role of OT in leisure activities and improving the accessibility of outdoor leisure activities.

### Explanation of Brief

This executive summary reports the outcomes of the capstone project, Accessible Leisure for Individuals with Physical Disabilities, and provides implications for occupational therapy practice.

### Background

Individuals with physical disabilities experience limitations in opportunities to participate in leisure activities, leading to decreased involvement compared to individuals without physical disabilities. The lack of access can impact quality of life, social inclusion, and overall participation. Peer-reviewed literature from the last 10 years highlighted a lack of resources, difficulty navigating the environment, and insufficient funding, resulting in reduced access to leisure activities.

### Problem Statement

In individuals with physical disabilities, there is decreased accessibility to leisure participation and leisure activities in outdoor natural environments, resulting in decreased occupational justice and diminished quality of life (Bonnell et al., 2021; Derakhshan et al., 2024; Dorsch et al., 2016).

### Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Program development and evaluation type capstone project is to increase accessibility for individuals with physical disabilities for improved leisure participation and leisure activities within outdoor natural environments. This capstone will result in increased program opportunities to improve access for individuals with physical disabilities. This capstone aims to improve occupational justice and the quality of life for individuals with physical disabilities. This capstone was reviewed and approved by Cox Health.

### Project Results

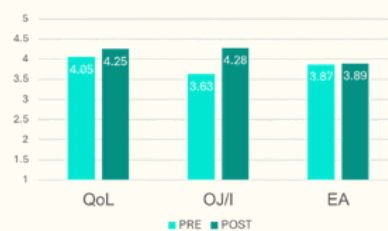
Three group sessions of the ‘Try Para Trap’ experience were hosted from February 21<sup>st</sup> to March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026. A total of 13 participants registered and participated across the three events. Both project and experience learning objectives were initiated, tracked, and completed across the 14-week experience.

### Outcomes

Participants in the ‘Try Para Trap’ experience had an overall positive impact across the identified domains of occupational justice, quality of life, and environmental accessibility (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Pre and Post Survey Mean Item Scores for Multi-Item Composite Categories*



*Note.* Pre = before participation (n = 10); Post = 7 - 14 days after participation (n = 6); total program participants (N = 13; samples partially overlapping). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1–5; higher = better). Bars represent mean item scores for multi-item composites, calculated by dividing total points by total responses.

QoL = Quality of Life, (4 items): PRE 162/40, M = 4.05; POST 102/24, M = 4.25.

OJ/I = Occupational Justice/Inclusion, (3 items): PRE 109/30, M = 3.63; POST 77/18, M = 4.28.

EA = Environmental Adaptation (3 items): PRE 116/30, M = 3.87; POST 70/18, M = 3.89.

Differences in sample size should be considered when interpreting changes.



## Key Findings

This capstone project found that individuals who are provided access to leisure opportunities experience improved quality of life and occupational justice/inclusion. By participating in this program, individuals identified other areas of occupations that were positively impacted, such as ADLs and IADLs.

## Implications for OT

AOTA Vision 2030 is as follows: “Enriching life for ALL individuals and society through meaningful engagement in everyday activities.” (AOTA, 2025, para. 5).

The following are implications for OT that reflect AOTA Vision 2030:

- Implement adaptive leisure activity programs to create more inclusive opportunities for the community
- Program development and implementation in leisure highlights OTs’ value in improving the overall quality of life.
- Promote Activity adaptation. Allow occupational therapists to pursue innovation to improve athletes’ participation.
- Advocate for non-traditional OT roles. The ‘Try Para Trap’ experience highlights OT’s role in niche occupations.

## Experience Outcomes

The in-depth immersion with the population of my capstone project and experience resulted in these outcomes

- Resource development for accessible outdoor leisure
- Improvements in daily occupations outside of leisure
- Increased knowledge of indoor and outdoor leisure activities
- Interdisciplinary collaboration between PT, OT, and Recreational therapy

## Limitations

Limitations were identified in the sample size, participants’ involvement with a Paralympic sport club, and prior knowledge of shooting sports. The sample reflects a niche population and cannot represent the entire population of individuals with physical disabilities.

## Clinical Bottom Line

The development and implementation of the ‘Try Para Trap’ program highlights that, by fulfilling rights to participation, all populations have improved access to daily occupations. Individuals with physical disabilities don’t lack the ability to participate; they just learn to participate differently. Occupational therapists can promote inclusive adaptive leisure programming and enhance the availability of resources to optimize participation for all.

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