

CARVING THE FUTURE



BECOMING PARA READY

A GUIDE TO INCLUSION
AND INTEGRATION IN SKI RACING



CARVING THE FUTURE

BECOMING PARA READY

IS DESIGNED TO HELP SKI CLUBS DO INCLUSION BETTER.

Alpine Canada Alpin believes in a model of inclusion and integration within local ski clubs as participants move through the long-term athlete development model (LTAD).

Integration is the process of combining or bringing together two things to create a whole.

Integration in ski racing brings para athletes into already established race clubs and programs. Traditionally ACA has worked directly with individuals and clubs to help promote and facilitate integration of para athletes across Canada.

Carving the Future: Becoming Para Ready should be considered a baseline: a starting point and guide to making ski racing integrated and inclusive.

Carving the Future: Becoming Para Ready is informed by Becoming Para Ready: Version 2.0 (The Steadward Centre, 2023) - A Guidebook for Sports Organizations, Leaders, Teachers, Coaches and Administrators. This resource is also inspired by Becoming Para Ready: Resource Guide for Para Athletics Inclusion and Integration in Canada (Athletics Canada, 2021).

This Resource is designed primarily for coaches, ski clubs, and program administrations who support Para Alpine Racing in Canada; however, useful information is included to anyone who supports or engages with para alpine programs. This resource is intended to support organizations and programs to become more inclusive and develop a better understanding of the sport of Para Alpine and how to best support athletes with a disability.



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PART 1: PARA PROFICIENCY

SPORT LEADERS ARE OFTEN PROFICIENT IN COACHING, POLICIES, RULES, AND REGULATIONS. THIS COMES WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, TRAINING, AND PRACTICE. THE SAME GOES FOR WORKING WITH ATHLETES WITH A DISABILITY AND PARA SPORT, WHICH PRESENTS A UNIQUE CONTEXT. TO BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND DISABILITY SPORT CONTEXTS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO FIRST EXAMINE HOW DISABILITY IS UNDERSTOOD IN OUR SOCIETY. ANOTHER WAY TO THINK ABOUT THIS IS UNDERSTANDING ONE'S LENS OR PERSPECTIVE OF DISABILITY MORE BROADLY THAN JUST IN A SPORT CONTEXT.

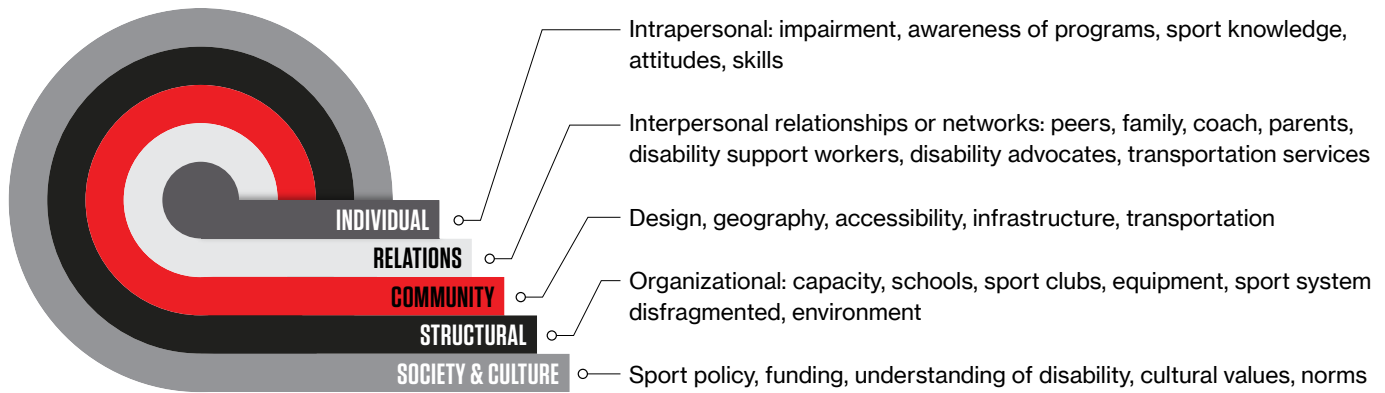
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES BY UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY

There are many ways to understand disability in society. Three models of disability are discussed further.

1. **The Medical Model of Disability** puts the emphasis on the person's disability and links the body to a diagnosis and places emphasis on medical intervention as a way of solving or eliminating the impairment or condition (Leduc, Disfigured, 2020). The impairment is seen as the problem and something that needs to be fixed rather than finding ways to break down barriers and looking to make society more accessible. This could present itself in Para Alpine with misconceptions around what an athlete can or cannot do because of their disability or diagnosis and wanting to fit them into a mold that currently exists.
2. **The Social Model of Disability** challenges the medical model and shifts our lens on the disability of individuals being maintained by systemic barriers, exclusion, and discrimination toward disabilities more than the functional limitations of the impairment. For example, becoming a sit skier and succeeding in the sport of Para Alpine could be limited to someone not because this person uses a wheelchair, but because of a barrier in accessibility, or lack of access to equipment. The social model of disability looks at working to improve upon barriers to access, outside of the individual.
3. **The Social Relational Model of Disability** aims to find a middle ground (i.e. relational) between impairment effects and how social structures can limit the impact of full inclusion. In moving too far towards a social model, an individual's view of disability can disregard the 'lived experiences' of people with a disability. The lived experience of disability is critical to acknowledge and understand. It's also not always possible to remove a barrier in a social environment. However, a conversation with the individual, coming from a place of trust, will help educate on what barriers can be removed and what can be done to improve their training and competition experience. In moving too far towards a medical model, too much emphasis is put on how the disability impacts an individual or what they can't accomplish in training or competition because of the condition. Finding the balance between the two is important in order to best support an athlete along their pathway. **Removing barriers for an athlete while considering how their disability might impact their training occurs through open conversation and co-planning.**

Understanding disability also means understanding ableism and disablism. "Ableism is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. At its heart, ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require 'fixing' and defines people by their disability. Like racism and sexism, ableism classifies entire groups of people as 'less than,' and includes harmful stereotypes, misconceptions, and generalizations of people with disabilities." <https://www.accessliving.org/newsroom/blog/ableism-101/>

Now that you have more information about how disability is positioned in society; it is important to acknowledge how disability sport fits within other social institutions.



Research in disability sport contexts has clearly shown that there are numerous social, cultural, organizational, economic, community, interpersonal and intrapersonal factors that clubs, managers, and coaches need to consider.

Building a more “Para Ready” ski racing community in Canada requires looking at our policies, program structures and environmental (including virtual) settings to break down barriers (and develop holistic solutions) to participation, development, and performance. The term “people or persons with disabilities” is used to refer to a group or population, it’s important to remember that they are not a monolith but a diverse group with different needs and wants. Two people with the same type of disability and/or impairment may experience different barriers and have different needs. Some disabilities are invisible or harder to see. Communication is key to fully understand every individual’s needs. New findings from the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD) showed that 27% of Canadians aged 15 years and older, or 8.0 million people, had one or more disabilities that limited them in their daily activities. The rate of disability in Canada has increased by 5 percentage points since 2017, when 22% of Canadians, or 6.2 million people, had one or more disabilities. (Statistics Canada, 2022).

LANGUAGE AND INTERACTIONS

Words matter and language is an important part of inclusion, in the disability spheres as well as other areas of diversity and inclusion. Using derogatory, outdated terms and ableist language to describe or interact with athletes with disabilities reinforces disrespectful stereotypes.

There are individual preferences on how one self-identifies and some athletes may prefer an identity-first language (i.e., deaf or Deaf, autistic, disabled, blind). This preference is emerging more and more but how one identifies is personal and will differ from one person to another.

Person-first language emphasizes the person and not the disability.

Examples: Athlete with a disability, individual with a vision impairment, etc.

It is recommended to start with person-first language, followed by having a conversation with the individual about their preference. It’s important to respect this and follow an individual’s preference. Disability is not a bad word and it doesn’t need to be avoided.

Other guidelines to consider adapted from the National Center for Disability & Journalism, 2021:

Refer to a disability only when it’s relevant. Consider if referring to someone including their disability as a descriptor is needed.

When possible, ask the athlete how they would like to be described. Remember to ensure trust and rapport are present before. You can also ask a trusted family member or relevant organization that works with them or has more knowledge.

Avoid made-up words like “diversability” and “handicapable” unless using them in direct quotes or to refer to a movement or organization. In addition, colloquialisms like “special needs”, challenged, handicapped, etc. are not recommended.

Avoid comparisons that refer to people without disabilities as “normal” or able-bodied sports as “normal” sports. Using people with disabilities vs able-bodied or people without disabilities is appropriate.

Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their companion, training partner or guide, parent, or sign language interpreter. A lack of immediate response does not indicate that the person can’t or won’t respond.

If you are unsure of how you should interact with a person with a disability, just ask them. Just because someone has a disability, do not assume they need help. Do not give assistance without asking first if they want it. You can ask if the person would like help, but don’t ask repeatedly or qualify their response with “are you sure?” Respect someone’s choice even if it looks like they’re struggling. If there is a dangerous situation, help just as you would help someone without a disability.

When introduced to a person with a disability, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can usually shake hands. (Shaking hands with the left hand is an acceptable greeting.) You can also offer a fist or an elbow.

When meeting a person who is visually impaired, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. When conversing in a group, remember to identify the person to whom you are speaking.

Do not be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions like “See you later” or “Got to be running along” that seem to relate to the person’s disability.

A person’s mobility equipment, such as a wheelchair, scooter, or cane, is part of their personal space. Do not touch or move it without permission, even if someone puts it down or chooses to leave it somewhere. Leaning on someone’s wheelchair is like leaning on their shoulder. Don’t sit or use someone’s wheelchair or mobility device. It is vital that the owner knows where their equipment is always.

Listen attentively when you are talking with a person who has difficulty speaking. Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person. If necessary, ask short or closed-ended questions that require short answers, a nod or shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you in and guide your understanding.

A reminder that it’s okay to not fully understand the nuances. Do not pretend that you do.

Building a relationship and trust with the participant or athlete is the best place to start. Once trust has been established, be open and honest in conversations and ask permission to seek more information by asking them questions.

Do not make assumptions.

DISABILITY GROUPS

Categorizing disability can be difficult, as language around it changes frequently and evolves. When putting a specific number of disability types, something is bound to be forgotten or missed. The Coaching Association of Canada breaks disabilities and impairments down into five different categories in their module Coaching Athletes with a Disability. It’s important to note that this is a general model of categorizing disabilities and that the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) uses different terminologies and definitions as it relates to classification categories as noted in the classification section.

Content adapted from Coaches Association of Canada’s Coaching Athletes with a Disability

Sensory impairment

- Visual impairment: Including blind, visually impaired, deafblind, and blind with additional disabilities.
- Hearing impairment: Limited or complete hearing loss
- Multisensory impairment: A diagnosed visual and hearing impairment with at least a mild loss in each modality or deaf blindness.

Behavioral disability is an emotional disability characterized by one or more of the following:

- Challenges in or difficulties with building or maintaining satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers or supervisory adults
- Challenges or difficulties to learn that cannot be adequately explained by intellectual, sensory and/or health factors
- A consistent or chronic inappropriate type of behaviour or feelings under normal conditions
- A displayed pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- A displayed tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains and/or unreasonable fears associated with personal problems

Learning disability affects a person’s ability to understand written or spoken language. The person may have difficulty reading, writing, listening and/or speaking despite having an IQ level that is average or above average. Remember, challenges with verbal communication are not an indicator of intellect or ability.

Intellectual disability affects a person’s ability to think, problem-solve and/or take care of him/herself/themselves. A person with an intellectual disability has a below average IQ.

Physical disability impacts a person’s muscle function, mobility, physical capacity, coordination, stamina, dexterity and/or other movements. It may be visible or invisible. It may be permanent or fluctuating, congenital (at birth) or acquired (as the result of an illness or injury). Physical disabilities may include but are not limited to spinal cord





injuries, spina bifida, amputees, short stature, cerebral palsy, and limb differences. Physical disabilities can include impairments to different parts of the nervous system (both somatic (voluntary- muscle and sensory) and autonomic nervous systems (mainly unconscious- heart, respiratory, bladder/bowel, sexual function etc.) Some physical disabilities might include impairments to their autonomic system but not their somatic (muscle function).

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DISABILITY AND IMPAIRMENT?

According to the World Health Organization, Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual during involvement in life situations.

Disability can be related to conditions that are present at birth or acquired later in life and may affect functions later in life, including cognition (memory, learning, and understanding), mobility (moving around in the environment), vision, hearing, behavior, and other areas. An impairment in body structures and functions impacts one's ability or function in sport-related movements.



IMPORTANCE OF SPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People with a disability get involved in sport for the same reasons most athletes do. The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) identifies four reasons all people participate in sport.

- **Achievement:** A wish to improve, master new skills and pursue excellence
- **Affiliation:** A desire to have positive and friendly relations with others
- **Self-direction:** A wish to feel a sense of control, to feel in charge
- **Sensation:** A desire to experience the sights, sounds and physical feelings surrounding a sport or the excitement in a sport

In addition, the Canadian Disability Participation Project (CDPP) in their Quality of Participation Blueprint, speaks to six building blocks that lead to positive sport experiences for people with disabilities:

- **Belonging:** Feeling part of a group, included, accepted, and/or respected by others
- **Autonomy:** Having independence, choice, and control
- **Mastery:** Experiencing achievement, competence; having a sense of accomplishment
- **Challenge:** Feeling appropriately tested
- **Engagement:** Feeling focused, in-the-moment, and absorbed; experiencing flow
- **Meaning:** Contributing toward obtaining a personal or socially meaningful goal; feeling a sense of responsibility to others.

What makes a positive experience for one athlete is unique and individuals will place importance on different areas.

INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION MODELS

There are few differences with the general approach of supporting athletes with a disability compared to able-bodied athletes.

Para athletes want access to the same opportunities as their non-disabled counterparts, with the focus on their abilities. That said, taking the time to learn more about each athlete as an individual, while including their unique needs, will help you support them in a safe, inclusive, and effective way. Although each athlete is different, there are some general considerations to be aware of for different impairment types.

Integrated (Open): Training/Programming takes place within a ski club without modification or Para-specific coaching

Included (Modified): Training/Programming takes place within a ski club with modifications and coaching specific to your needs

Parallel: Training/Programming takes place alongside the ski club (same time and place), but with modification and a dedicated Para Coach

Separate: Training takes place and is supported by the ski club but is Para focused and takes place at a different time and place

Disability Sport: Training/Programming is supported entirely by a Disability Sport Organization



IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS AND FIRST INVOLVEMENT

Being aware of opportunities to participate in sport is crucial to the process of getting involved in that sport. The first few introductions to the sport are also very important to determining whether someone will stay involved. For individuals with a disability, we need to consider additional barriers that may exist for a person with a disability. Barriers start with trying to find information on programs, transportation to that program, having access to facilities, having appropriate equipment, the opportunity to connect with a trained and supportive leader or coach, and finding a sport they enjoy. If all these barriers are not addressed and they try the sport, a negative experience may quickly turn them off and they may give up sport all together.

Sport for Life offers some additional information on the importance of these two stages and checklists to address Awareness and First Involvement. www.sportforlife.ca

Supporting athletes with a disability at all levels of your organization, at the core, is the same: Focus on their abilities but understand their unique needs; provide a safe and supportive environment to train, compete and flourish as an athlete; guide them along the pathway to the level they want to reach.



PART 2: BECOMING PARA READY

The Steadward Centre's original version of 'Becoming Para Ready' (BPR) was developed in collaboration with the Athletics community in Alberta. It was developed as an introductory guide that could provide coaches and club administrators with knowledge, confidence, and tools to be more proactive – or “ready” – to do inclusion better.

This updated version of BPR (BPR 2.0) has been developed to be more user friendly, to reach a broader audience, and to be used across any sport. The 3 main categories (i.e., perspective, planning and programming) can be viewed as steps on your journey towards building an environment that is inclusive to athletes experiencing disability.

Organizations should take the key principles and P's from this guide and adapt them to ways that can best support the community they serve.

THE BPR PRINCIPLES:

The 5 BPR principles were created to support all stakeholders in the sport ecosystem (sport leaders, clubs, coaches, parents, athletes) to think about how they can collectively provide quality and safe experiences for all athletes with a disability. The principles are high level common threads that should be (re)considered when you are working through the entire BPR framework.

- 1. Be proactive.**
 - Plan for inclusion. **Take initiative** to improve inclusion and integration for your program and anticipate the needs of others.
 - All people benefit from an inclusive approach.
- 2. Include the voices and choices of people experiencing disability**
 - Center the disability community in the creation of inclusive programs
 - **Include people with lived experience at all stages** of your program and practice development.
- 3. Be reflective and purposeful in your actions**
 - You can have a positive impact; it takes **time and continued commitment** to improve inclusion and integration.
 - Your attitudes and behaviours set the tone for disability inclusion in your context.
- 4. Disability is one facet of identity**
 - Consider intersectionality: people experiencing disability have diverse backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives.
- 5. Disability is a social construct and impairment is experienced on a continuum**
 - People experience impairments, that may seem similar, very differently.
 - **Disability has been created through social understandings** and it may vary by social, cultural, and individual interpretations.

STEP # 1 REFLECT ON THE BPR PRINCIPLES

A first step is to gain a sound understanding of the 5 BPR principles on the next page. These common threads will help you situate the BPR framework more effectively.

STEP # 2 UNDERSTAND THE P'S OF PARA READINESS

Go through each of three main P categories (perspective, planning, programming) in the BPR framework in order and consider which ones are most relevant to you and your unique sporting context.

STEP # 3 TAKE ACTION TOWARDS BPR

The BPR framework is to be used as a starting point. Some of the P's require relatively simple tasks (these can be done quickly or with few resources) and some require more complex tasks (these might take more time or resources). Decide on some actions you can take on to get started today.



BPR FRAMEWORK 2.0

The BPR framework (2.0) was created to simplify the P's into a more workable format. The hope is that the three main categories will make it easier to use across sports and all levels of stakeholders.

1 PERSPECTIVE: CHALLENGE YOUR PERSONAL PARADIGM

<p>Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding your views on disability, sport, and society 	<p>Challenge: Create a personal statement about how you view and how you will implement an inclusive approach into your practice.</p>
<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion can only be effective if everyone is on board with a common vision or understanding. 	<p>Challenge: Plan meetings to bring your personal inclusion philosophy or statement to all the key stakeholders within the club or program and encourage them to do the same!</p>
<p>Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After reflecting on various perspectives, it is time to write a Club/Coach Inclusion Commitment Statement, which should be made public and posted wherever possible: Club, social media, integrated in Code of Conduct, etc. 	<p>Challenge: Work with the club's board or management team to create an inclusion commitment statement</p>

2 PLANNING: PLAN FOR QUALITY AND SAFE EXPERIENCES FOR ALL

<p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities, parking, and accommodation (accessibility checklist) 	<p>Challenge: Conduct an accessibility review of your facilities to identify any potential barriers.</p>
<p>Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not say you are inclusive if you are not Let people know who you are, what programs you have, and how your programs are inclusive (or not) and to whom. Communicate this messaging in person, through physical media, and online/digitally. 	<p>Challenge: Review your current promotional materials (brochures, website, social media accounts, etc.) and identify areas in which you could include wording or pictures that would help an individual recognize that your club/program is open to individuals with disabilities. Don't assume athletes will just show up!</p>
<p>Partnership(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create your network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability/disability sport community Health and rehabilitation centres Parents and support workers 	<p>Challenge: Contact at least 3 organizations in your community who could help your club identify and/or support athletes with disabilities.</p>

<p>Price</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is a barrier for many people experiencing disability. • Consider various/variable fee structures and pay what you can. 	<p>Challenge: Discuss possible methods of reducing costs for athletes with disabilities with your board and/or research grants and other funding sources that may assist with the reducing the cost for athletes with disabilities.</p>
<p>Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all athletes will want to be Paralympians • Have multiple programming pathways to cater for different skill levels 	<p>Challenge: Review the Long Term Development model and identify how and when athletes with disabilities may enter and leave your sport. Then, review your programs to identify gaps in addressing the potential entry and exit points for athletes with disabilities.</p>

3 PROGRAMMING: EMPHASIZE COLLABORATION, VARIETY, AND CHOICE THROUGH PRACTICE

<p>Preference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure your programs offer different levels of integration and inclusion is important to give new (and existing) athletes choice 	<p>Challenge: Look at your programs and make sure you have offerings that reflect different levels of the inclusion spectrum.</p>
<p>Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality parasport experiences should be at the forefront of all programming decisions (i.e., belonging, autonomy, mastery, challenge, engagement, meaning) • Have a broad understanding of athlete classification for competition, if applicable 	<p>Challenge: Review your programming to identify strengths and areas of improvement for addressing the 6 areas of Quality Participation. Or, learn about the classification process for your sport (your national sport organization would be a good place to start when looking for information).</p>
<p>Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocal mentorship (work in collaboration with athletes) is the cornerstone to coaching for parasport 	<p>Challenge: Familiarize yourself with practice adaptation frameworks (e.g., TREE, STEP, CHANGE IT) to (re)consider your practice design</p>
<p>Pedagogy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athlete centred coaching is critical when working with para athletes to ensure you are co-creating practices and sport experiences in partnership 'with' them (e.g., reciprocal coaching) • A coach's pedagogy should be focused on creating quality experiences through close athlete collaboration and the consideration of professional, sport and disability knowledge. 	<p>Challenge: Practice listening and co-creating practices with your athletes.</p>

For the full Becoming Para Ready Version 2.0 Resource created by The Steadward Centre, please visit <https://www.ualberta.ca/steadward-centre/resources/becoming-para-ready.html>



PART 3: PARA ALPINE IN CANADA

THE FIRST PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES WERE HELD IN ÖRNSKÖLDSVIK, SWEDEN, IN 1976 AND HAD TWO PARA ALPINE EVENTS: SLALOM AND GIANT SLALOM. WITH SUPPORT FROM CADS (CANADIAN ADAPTIVE SNOWSPORTS) CANADA SENT SIX ATHLETES TO THESE GAMES, WINNING FOUR MEDALS (TWO GOLD AND TWO BRONZE)

In 2002, Alpine Canada, the national sport organization for Ski Racing in Canada, took on the high-performance programming of the Canadian Para Alpine Ski Team (CPAST) and over the last two decades the Canadian Para Alpine Ski Team, has evolved into a world-leading sports organization, with the same support and prestige of their alpine counterparts.

Today, athletes with a physical disability compete in five alpine events: downhill, alpine combined, super G, slalom, and giant slalom.

CLASSIFICATION

In order to safeguard the integrity of fair competition, all Para sports have a system in place which aims to ensure that winning is determined by sporting factors such as skill, fitness, power, endurance, tactical ability and mental focus, the same factors that account for success in sport for able bodied athletes.

This system is called classification.

Through classification, it is determined which athletes are eligible to compete in a sport and how those athletes are then grouped together for competition, to minimise the impact of those athletes' impairments on sport performance.

Classification is sport-specific because an impairment affects the ability to perform in different sports to a different extent. Therefore, an athlete may meet the criteria to compete in one sport but may not meet the criteria in another sport. Having an impairment is thus not sufficient for an athlete to compete in Para sport.

The groupings of athletes by the degree of activity limitation resulting from their impairments are called 'Sport Classes'. This, to a certain extent, is like grouping athletes by age, gender, or weight.

Classification across the Paralympic Movement is governed by the IPC Athlete Classification Code and Standards.

Classification is required to compete in Para Alpine at certain levels of competition, including National Championships and International competitions; however, people who may not classify can still enjoy Ski racing as well experience the benefits of participating in sport and staying active.

CLASSIFICATION IN PARA ALPINE SKIING

The details of classification in Para Alpine Skiing are set out in the classification rules.

Athletes must have one of the eligible impairments and meet the minimum impairment criteria for the sport, as set out in those rules, in order to be eligible to compete.

ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS FOR PARA ALPINE SKIING

All athletes in Para Alpine Skiing have one or more of the following impairments:

- Impaired Muscle Power
- Limb Deficiency
- Leg Length Difference
- Hypertonia
- Ataxia
- Athetosis
- Impaired Passive Range of Movement
- Vision Impairment

A person may have a disability but not be eligible to compete in Paralympic Sport, including Para Alpine Ski Racing.



Current information on Para Alpine Classification and sport classes can be found on the Federation of Alpine Skiing (FIS) Website. FIS is the governing body for alpine and para alpine skiing globally.

<https://www.fis-ski.com/en/para-snowsports/para-alpine/about-para-classification>

THE ALPINE ADAPTIVE PATHWAY

Prior to becoming classified, or for skiers who are not eligible for classification, CADS Adaptive clubs and ski schools with certified CADS instructors provide recreational non-competitive options for those who wish to enjoy skiing as a lifelong sport.

CADS Clubs offer programming and instruction to guide athletes to be independent skiers.

Independence is vital step towards integration.

The CADS instructor training and certification curriculum, is designed to teach and empower beginner, intermediate and expert level skiers across four disciplines:

1. The CADS ASD/CI module certification is for instructors wishing to focus on teaching skiers with Cognitive Impairments including autism spectrum disorders. Instructors learn tools and skills to support neuro-diverse skiers who have social, sensory, communication and processing challenges.
2. The CADS Sitski module certification is for instructors wishing to focus on teaching skiers who are best suited to using a sitski. Instructors will learn tools and skills to support skiers to use a sitski.
3. The CADS VI module certification is for instructors wishing to focus on teaching skiers with visual impairments. Instructors will learn tools and skills to best support skiers who experience blindness or low vision.
4. The CADS 3-4 Track module certification is for instructors wishing to focus on teaching skiers with balance and mobility challenges. Instructors will learn tools and skills to best support skiers who require outriggers.



The CADS Instructor Certification program encompasses CSIA & CASI teaching methodologies and

the Alpine Canada Long-Term Skier Development recommendations. It also Encourages succession planning for Course Conductors, and senior Examiners, while fostering continued development.

CADS certification levels and course information can be found at https://cads.ski/en/evaluation_registrations.

CADS – CANADIAN ADAPTIVE SNOWSPORTS

In 2016 Alpine Canada Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CADS to make CADS an official provider of development programs for the Canadian Para Alpine Ski Team.

CADS is committed to breaking down barriers for individuals with disabilities, so they can experience the joy and freedom of Snowsports. It is comprised of a network of over 60 clubs, with 3100 volunteers across 11 provincial divisions and territories. This network supports and encourages over 2100 participants living with physical, visual and cognitive impairments to ski & snowboard, from beginner to expert abilities.

CADS also has a comprehensive ski and snowboard instructor certification program that trains and certifies over 1,000 instructors yearly.

More information on CADS development, education and sport can be found at <https://cads.ski/en>.



THE PARA ALPINE PERFORMANCE PATHWAY



AWARENESS

Athlete learns that skiing is available for people with disabilities, they find a club and also learn about the Paralympics.

INVOLVEMENT

Athlete gets involved with skiing. Depending on their situation this could be with an adaptive club, ski school, family or local race club.



INDEPENDENCE

Once an athlete is an independent skier, they may be ready for integration into a race program or carving the future event.

CARVING THE FUTURE

Carving the future events are an introduction to racing. For independent skiers, athletes may attend as many "CTF" events as they wish. The primary goal of these camps is to help athletes integrate into either an adaptive program or a local ski club.

INTEGRATION

Participants join others of the same skill level and proceed through the "LTAD" within that program.



PROSPECT

Athletes attend ACA training camps throughout the season. ACA takes on the role of program advisor and assists with coach education, integration support and long-term planning.



NEXT-GEN

Next-Gen athletes are dedicated to ski races, have demonstrated sufficient ability and a desire to race at a high level. Programming is provided by ACA with the goals of Qualifying athletes to the we and Paralympic Games.

WORLD CUP

There is full time summer and winter programming provided by ACA. The goal for athletes at this level is to medal in World Cups, World Champions and the Paralympic Games.

THE PARA ALPINE PERFORMANCE PATHWAY IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR COACHES AND ATHLETES AT ALL LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT FROM AWARENESS TO WORLD CUP AND PARALYMPIC SUCCESS.

More information on the performance pathway as well as the Para Alpine Long Term Athlete Development Plan Can be found on the ACA website.

<https://alpinecanada.org/community/carving-the-future>



For current ski coaches looking for more training within a Para Alpine context ACA offers a Para Alpine coaching eModule through the Coaching Association of Canada "The Locker"

Access to the module is available under the eLearning tab of the Locker by selecting alpine skiing on the left-hand side.

<https://thelocker.coach.ca/>

More information on Para Alpine coaching and the coaching pathway can be found on the ACA Website.

<https://ltad.alpinecanada.org/coaches/coach-education>



PART 4: CARVING THE FUTURE, PARA ALPINE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

THE CARVING THE FUTURE PROGRAM STARTED AS A CHANCE TO PROVIDE SKIERS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY SKI RACING FOR THE FIRST TIME AND HAVE A CHANCE TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH NATIONAL TEAM COACHES. THE PROGRAM NOW PROVIDES SUPPORT TO PROGRAMS AT ALL LEVELS ALONG THE PARALYMPIC PATHWAY

The Carving the Future program is a multidimensional approach to athlete development and focuses on three main pillars:

1. **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Integration:**

Carving the Future provides opportunities for Canadians with a disability to try ski racing with a national team coach and helps the facilitation of athlete development at all levels. It aims to break down barriers of participation for all levels of sport, from grassroots to High Performance.

2. **Alignment of the Para Alpine system:**

Carving the Future aims to bring together ski hills, ski clubs and adaptive ski programs from Coast to Coast to Coast with Alpine Canada, to introduce racing to athletes, coaches, volunteers, and families.

3. **Athlete Identification:**

Carving the Future works closely with Para Alpine stakeholders across Canada to identify potential next-generation Paralympic Winter Games Athletes, and to provide support to those athletes in their development.



CARVING THE FUTURE EVENTS

These events are offered in conjunction with a local ski hill, ski clubs, and adaptive organizations. By partnering with these organizations, ACA can give participants at all levels a chance to interact and ski with national team athletes and coaches. For independent skiers, there is also an opportunity to be coached directly by members of the CFAST coaching staff, and next to national team athletes.

These camps also play a role in helping to evaluate a participant's readiness for **integration** into a full-time race program.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Able-bodied: Used to describe non-disabled persons or may be used in reference to an Olympic-stream sport (i.e., able-bodied club, able-bodied Ski Club). Avoid using words like mainstream or normal when referring to the counterpart of Para sport.

Ableism / Disablism: Disablism and ableism are words that are used to describe disability discrimination and prejudice. Like sexism and racism being used to describe discrimination against women and different races or ethnic groups, respectively. Both terms describe disability discrimination, but the emphasis is different. Disablism emphasizes discrimination against disabled people. Ableism emphasizes discrimination in favour of non-disabled people.

Athletes / participants: "Athlete(s)" is used most frequently within this resource. Not everyone may consider themselves an athlete and some grassroots sport programs may refer to their members as participants. For the purpose of this resource, they are interchangeable.

Athlete with a disability / Para athletes: These are used interchangeably. Para athletes is commonly used in reference to athletes who partake in sports that are part of the Paralympic program such as Para Alpine

Disability: Implies a social component and is a general umbrella term. A person's disability may or may not be caused by an impairment.

Impairment: Refers more to the medical condition that affects one's function and ability to do certain activities or how they interact with the world around them.

Disability Sport Organizations (DSO) or Adaptive Sport Organizations (ASO): Organizations in some Provinces and Territories that manage the development of single or multiple sports specific to athletes with disabilities.

CADS: Canadian Adaptive Snowsports. CADS is a volunteer based organization that provides opportunities for people with physical and cognitive impairments to experience the joy of participating and competing in adaptive snowsports. CADS is an official feeder into the competition stream in para alpine skiing.

Disability sport: Is most often used in reference to sport or recreational activities for people with disabilities that may or may not be part of the Paralympic program or involve a competition component.

Para sport: Means any sport in which people with a disability participate and which has classification rules compliant with the IPC Athlete Classification Code.

People / Persons with a disability: When speaking generally, person-first language is preferred and will be addressed earlier in the document.

LTAD: Long Term Athlete Development Model

ACA LTAD: Alpine Canada Alpin Long Term Athlete Development Model. A sport specific LTAD model formulated by Alpine Canada Alpin to guide coaches, administrators, program directors, and parents on the scientific and holistic approach to long term athlete development within alpine ski racing, para alpine, and ski-cross

Physical Literacy: Refers to the mastering of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills.

PSO: Provincial Sport Organization

Stages of development: Refers to the various stages within the LTAD in which a participant progresses.

IPC: International Paralympic Committee

ACA: Alpine Canada Alpin

Acquired Physical Impairment: Refers to an individual who has been physically impaired through injury or illness. These and individuals who prior to injury or illness were considered able bodied participants.

Adaptive Equipment: A mobility device which assists in the performance of physical activities.

Age of experience: Refers to the number of years a participant has been exposed to a ski training environment.

Congenital Impairment: Refers to a person who has had an impairment since birth, but is not necessarily hereditary.

CPAST: Canadian Para Alpine Ski Team



ALPINE CANADA IS THE NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY FOR ALPINE, PARA-ALPINE AND SKI CROSS RACING IN CANADA. WITH THE SUPPORT OF VALUED CORPORATE PARTNERS ALONG WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, OWN THE PODIUM AND THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE, ALPINE CANADA DEVELOPS OLYMPIC, PARALYMPIC, WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AND WORLD CUP MEDALLISTS TO STIMULATE VISIBILITY, INSPIRATION AND GROWTH IN THE SKI COMMUNITY.

