

SAHK

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Introduction: One of the ultimate goals of Conductive Education (CE) is to cultivate positive personality characterized by an “I CAN” attitude for community participation. Under the government’s promotion on “Sports for All”, distance-running races are increasingly popular in Hong Kong. Benefited from the relatively low required skills while excellent for nurturing stamina and perseverance, we developed a program under the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) framework to prepare students with multiple disabilities to participate in the race at the community level.

Aim: To promote self-initiation, perseverance and community-living skills through participating in open races.

Materials and Methods: Students with cerebral palsy, Prader-Willi Syndrome and intellectual disabilities were recruited for various open distance-running and wheelchair (2-10 km) races. The environmental and personal motivational factors were addressed by creating an invitational atmosphere of distance-running in our schools (e.g., exhibiting races information and souvenirs; organizing motivational talks and coaching by elite disabled sportsmen). The personal factor was further enhanced by involving respectful figures (e.g., parents, teachers) as the partner runners. At the activity level, a whole-day approach by integrating daily-routine and classroom times for the running trainings. At the body level, specific trainings on core muscle strength, flexibility and endurance were organized. The public events provided a natural context for instrumental self-care training including use of public transportation and public toilet facilities.

Results: All participants exploited their potentials to the full, demonstrated perseverance to overcome personal obstacles and external adversities, and displayed courage in completing the seemingly impossible but rewarding tasks. Improvements in endurance and community-living skills were observed. Most showed self-initiation in completing the trainings.

Conclusion: Participation in open races provides an excellent means for cultivating positive personality and promoting community participation among these students. Trans-disciplinary and whole-day approach under the ICF framework is crucial for a successful outcome.



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