



Inclusive Play: Inclusivity Training for Educators, Coaches and Trainers in Sports

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D2.2 Inclusive Sports Training Programme

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Executive Summary

The **Inclusive Sports Training Programme** has been developed within the Erasmus+ Sport project *Inclusive Play – Inclusivity Training for Educators, Coaches and Trainers in Sports*. It provides a practical training framework for coaches, educators, trainers and grassroots sport organisations working with children with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**.

The programme is based on the project's Inception Meetings, which highlighted the need for more structured and confident inclusive coaching practice. Many children with SEND already take part in grassroots sport, but their participation is not always fully supported, adapted or meaningful. Coaches and parents identified recurring challenges related to attention, communication, sensory overload, anxiety, frustration, peer interaction, group participation, activity adaptation and cooperation between coaches and families. The central message is that inclusive sport is not only about access. A child may be present in a session but still feel confused, isolated, overwhelmed or unable to participate. Meaningful inclusion depends on the quality of participation: whether children feel safe, respected, supported, understood and able to take part according to their needs, strengths and abilities.

In response, the Training Programme is organised around **seven interconnected modules**. These support coaches to recognise participation barriers, understand SEND-related needs in sport contexts, create safer and more predictable environments, design inclusive activities, organise sessions clearly, support motivation and emotional safety, manage group dynamics and communicate effectively with parents and caregivers. The programme is deliberately practical. It is not a theoretical handbook, but a working resource for training, reflection and adaptation. Its methodology combines short inputs, realistic scenarios, practical exercises, peer exchange and guided reflection. Each module is built around a central coaching question, helping participants move from general awareness to concrete decisions in everyday sport settings.

A key component is the **Inclusive Play Training Tool Pack**, included in Annex I. It brings together checklists, reflection sheets, scenario cards, activity adaptation templates, session planning tools, communication guides and feedback forms. These materials are short, realistic and adaptable, supporting coaches without adding unnecessary administrative burden.

The Training Programme will guide the Training of Trainers, Local Workshops and piloting activities across partner countries. These phases will test the modules, activities, scenarios and tools in different sports and organisational settings, with feedback informing the later **Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers**.

Overall, the programme supports a shift from improvisation towards more structured, reflective and confident inclusive coaching, offering a shared framework for making grassroots sport more accessible, supportive and meaningful for children with SEND.

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1 Introduction

Inclusive Play – Inclusivity Training for Educators, Coaches and Trainers in Sports is an Erasmus+ Sport project that aims to support more inclusive, accessible and meaningful sport participation for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The project focuses on grassroots sport environments, where coaches, educators and trainers play a central role in shaping children's everyday experiences of participation, belonging and development.

Sport can support children's confidence, wellbeing, social interaction, cooperation, physical activity and sense of belonging. For children and young people with SEND, these benefits can be especially important. However, participation is not always easy or straightforward. Children may face barriers related to communication, attention, sensory needs, emotional responses, peer interaction, confidence, accessibility, session structure or the preparedness of sport organisations. For this reason, inclusive sport cannot be understood only as access to an activity. A child may attend a session regularly but still feel confused, isolated, overwhelmed or unable to participate meaningfully. Inclusion depends on the quality of the experience: whether the child feels safe, respected, supported and able to take part according to their needs, strengths and abilities.

The **Inclusive Sports Training Programme** is based on the idea that inclusion is created through everyday coaching practice. It is shaped by how sessions are planned, how instructions are given, how activities are adapted, how groups are organised, how emotions are supported and how relationships are built between coaches, children, parents and peers. Small changes can make a significant difference. A clearer instruction, a predictable routine, a visual cue, a calmer transition, a flexible activity or a respectful conversation with parents can help a child participate with more confidence.

The first phase of the Inclusive Play project showed that many coaches and trainers are willing to support children with diverse needs, but often lack structured training, practical tools and confidence. In many grassroots sport settings, inclusion depends on personal motivation, informal experience or individual improvisation rather than on shared methods and consistent support. Coaches may want to adapt their practice but feel uncertain about how to do so.

Across the partner countries, coaches and parents highlighted recurring challenges. These included difficulties with attention and concentration, understanding instructions, sensory overload, frustration, anxiety, withdrawal, peer interaction, group participation, activity adaptation and communication between coaches and families. Parents also emphasised the importance of emotional safety, belonging and being listened to by coaches and sport organisations.

The Training Programme responds to these findings by translating them into a structured and practical learning pathway. It is designed for coaches, educators, trainers, sport practitioners and grassroots organisations that want to strengthen inclusive practice in everyday sport settings. The programme combines basic understanding with practical strategies, reflective learning, realistic scenarios and tools that can be adapted to different sports, age groups and organisational contexts.

The programme is not designed as a theoretical handbook to be read passively from beginning to end. It is a working resource for training, reflection and practical adaptation. Trainers can use it to prepare workshops, coaches can use it to reflect on their own sessions, and sport organisations can use it to strengthen inclusive practice in everyday settings. Its main users are coaches, educators and trainers who plan and deliver sport or physical activity sessions. These practitioners have a direct influence on children's everyday sport experience:

How activities are introduced, how groups are organised, how instructions are given, how difficulties are interpreted and how children are supported when participation becomes difficult.

The programme is also relevant for grassroots sport clubs, youth workers, physical activity providers and organisations involved in inclusive or adapted sport. For these users, it offers a practical framework for thinking about

how inclusion is embedded in everyday practice: how staff are supported, how families are involved, how activities are designed and how children with diverse participation needs are welcomed, supported and included.

The Training Programme will support the next implementation phases of Inclusive Play, including the Training of Trainers, Local Workshops and piloting activities. Feedback from these phases will help refine the material and inform the later **Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers**. In this way, this programme provides a bridge between the project's needs assessment and practical action in grassroots sport settings.

2 From Needs Assessment to Training Design

The Inclusive Sports Training Programme was developed from the needs, experiences and challenges identified during the first phase of the Inclusive Play project. The needs assessment and Inception Meetings provided important insights into how children and young people with SEND participate in grassroots sport, what barriers they face, what coaches already do in practice and where further support is needed.

The purpose of this chapter is to show how these findings informed the design of the Training Programme. It does not repeat the full needs assessment. Instead, it summarises the main training needs that emerged and explains how they were translated into module content, training activities, scenarios and practical tools.

What the findings mean for inclusive coaching practice

The first phase of the project confirmed that inclusive sport cannot be understood only as access to an activity. Many children with SEND may already be present in sport environments, but their participation is not always fully supported, structured or meaningful. A child may attend a session but still experience confusion, anxiety, sensory overload, frustration, isolation, peer exclusion or limited involvement in the activity.

For this reason, the Training Programme focuses on the quality of participation. It asks how everyday coaching practice can make sport more accessible, supportive and meaningful. This includes how coaches explain activities, organise groups, adapt exercises, structure sessions, respond to emotional needs, shape peer relationships and communicate with families.

Across the partner countries, coaches, parents and stakeholders identified recurring challenges. These challenges were not limited to one sport, one country or one type of organisation. They reflected wider issues in grassroots sport, where coaches often want to support children with diverse needs but may lack structured training, practical tools or confidence. At the same time, the findings showed that inclusive practice already exists in many settings. Coaches and families often make small adaptations, use personal experience and respond creatively to children's needs. The Training Programme does not aim to replace this experience. Its purpose is to organise, strengthen and make it easier to share, adapt and apply in different sport settings.

Main training needs identified

The needs assessment pointed to **seven main training needs**.

The first need concerns **recognising participation barriers**. Coaches often notice when a child loses attention, withdraws, becomes frustrated, struggles to follow instructions or finds it difficult to interact with peers. However, these situations are not always easy to interpret. Behaviour may be understood as lack of motivation or discipline, when it may actually be linked to unclear instructions, sensory overload, anxiety, task difficulty, peer pressure or lack of structure.

The second need concerns **practical understanding of SEND**. Coaches do not need to become clinical specialists, but they do need accessible knowledge about how different needs may affect participation in sport. The key question is not only what diagnosis or profile a child may have, but how the child participates in a specific activity, group and environment.

The third need concerns **the sport environment**. Participation is shaped not only by the child's individual needs, but also by the conditions of the session. Noise, crowding, unclear routines, fast transitions, long waiting times, competitive pressure or lack of peer support can create barriers. Predictable routines, calm communication, visual support, organised space and positive relationships can help children feel safer and more confident.

The fourth need concerns **activity design**. Coaches often adapt activities during sessions, but these adaptations may happen only after a difficulty has already appeared. The findings point to the need for more proactive planning, where coaches think in advance about how rules, equipment, space, instructions, group size, timing and levels of difficulty can be adjusted without separating children from the group.

The fifth need concerns **session structure and engagement**. Participation often becomes more difficult during transitions, long explanations, waiting time, unclear sequencing or unstructured moments. For many children with SEND, a clear session rhythm can reduce anxiety, support attention and make expectations easier to understand.

The sixth need concerns **emotional responses and group dynamics**. Coaches and parents reported situations involving frustration, anxiety, withdrawal, overexcitement, low confidence, conflict or peer exclusion. These are not only individual issues. They are often shaped by communication, activity demands, peer relations, competitive pressure and the emotional climate of the group.

The seventh need concerns **communication with parents and caregivers**. Parents often hold important knowledge about a child's strengths, preferences, triggers, communication style and support strategies. However, this knowledge is not always gathered or used in a structured way. Coaches may be unsure how to ask for information, how to manage sensitive conversations or how to maintain appropriate boundaries while building trust.

From needs to training responses

The Training Programme translates these needs into practical training responses. These responses shaped the module structure, the learning outcomes, the training activities, the scenarios and the tools linked to each module.

Need identified	Training response
Coaches need support in recognising why participation becomes difficult.	Use observation, reflection and scenario-based activities that help coaches identify barriers in context rather than judge behaviour too quickly.
Coaches need practical understanding of SEND in sport settings.	Present SEND-related needs through their effect on participation, communication, attention, sensory experience, movement, confidence and emotional responses.
Children may face barriers created by the sport environment.	Support coaches in reviewing space, noise, routines, transitions, sensory demands, emotional safety and peer relations.
Activities are often adapted reactively.	Encourage proactive activity design, with flexible rules, equipment, space, timing, instructions and levels of challenge.
Session flow can affect attention, confidence and engagement.	Help coaches plan clearer openings, transitions, group organisation, active waiting time and predictable routines.

Need identified	Training response
Emotional responses and peer dynamics can be difficult to manage.	Provide strategies for calm communication, emotional safety, motivation, positive feedback, peer inclusion and group culture.
Communication with parents is important but often informal.	Offer practical guidance for first conversations, information gathering, respectful communication and cooperation with families.
Coaches need tools they can use in real settings.	Link each module to simple checklists, reflection sheets, templates, scenario cards and planning tools gathered in the Training Tool Pack.
Partner organisations work in different national and sport contexts.	Keep the programme flexible, so that trainers can adapt examples, activities and tools to local needs.

This translation from needs to training responses is central to the programme. The Training Programme is not built around abstract inclusion principles alone. It is organised around practical situations that coaches face in everyday sport environments and around the types of support that can help them respond more confidently.

Training design principles

The Training Programme is based on **five design principles**.

First, it is **practice-oriented**. The programme focuses on what coaches, trainers and sport practitioners can realistically do during training sessions. It supports them in observing participation, identifying barriers and adapting their practice.

Second, it is **participation-focused**. SEND is approached through the question of participation: what helps or prevents a child from taking part meaningfully in a specific sport activity, group and environment? This keeps the focus on coaching decisions and practical support.

Third, it is **preventive rather than only reactive**. Coaches are encouraged to plan in ways that reduce barriers before difficulties escalate. Clear instructions, predictable routines, adapted activities and supportive group structures can prevent many participation difficulties from becoming major problems.

Fourth, it is **strengths-based**. Children with SEND should not be defined only by what they find difficult. The programme encourages coaches to recognise strengths, interests, preferences, motivations and moments of successful participation.

Fifth, it is **adaptable**. Grassroots sport environments differ across countries, sports, clubs and communities. The programme therefore provides a shared framework, while allowing trainers and partners to adapt examples, activities and tools according to local needs, available time and organisational capacity.

Programme structure and learning pathway

Based on the needs and training responses described above, the programme is organised into seven interconnected modules. The modules are not separate topics placed next to one another. They form a progressive learning pathway that moves from understanding participation barriers, to adapting coaching practice, to strengthening the wider relationships and environments that support inclusion.

The structure follows one central educational movement: coaches first learn to observe participation more carefully; then they learn how different needs, environments, activities and session structures shape participation; finally, they focus on emotional safety, group dynamics and cooperation with families.

Module	Title	Main focus
1	Understanding SEND and Recognising Children's Needs in Training Contexts	Recognising participation needs and barriers during training.
2	Linking Specific SEND Profiles to Participation Mechanisms	Understanding how different needs may influence participation in sport.
3	Creating Safe and Supportive Environments	Building sport environments that support safety, confidence and belonging.
4	Designing Inclusive Activities and Exercises	Adapting activities, rules, equipment, space, instructions and levels of difficulty.
5	Structuring Session Flow, Engagement and Working with Diverse Groups	Planning session rhythm, transitions, group organisation and engagement.
6	Managing Motivation, Emotional Responses and Group Dynamics	Supporting confidence, emotional safety, peer relations and positive group culture.
7	Communication and Collaboration with Parents	Building trust, gathering useful information and working with families.

The first two modules establish the foundation of the programme.

Module 1 helps coaches recognise participation needs as they appear in everyday training situations: when a child loses attention, becomes overwhelmed, struggles to follow instructions, withdraws from an activity or finds it difficult to interact with peers. **Module 2** builds on this foundation by linking SEND-related profiles to participation mechanisms. It translates basic understanding of needs into coaching decisions, showing how attention, communication, sensory experience, movement, confidence and emotional responses may affect participation in sport.

The next three modules focus on the practical conditions that make participation possible.

Module 3 shifts attention to the environment, helping coaches understand how space, noise, routines, transitions, communication and group atmosphere can either support or restrict participation. **Module 4** focuses on activity design and helps coaches adapt sport activities without isolating children from their peers. **Module 5** then looks at the structure of the whole session, including clear openings, smooth transitions, visible routines, active waiting time and purposeful group organisation.

The final two modules address the emotional, social and relational dimensions of inclusive sport.

Module 6 helps coaches understand motivation, frustration, anxiety, withdrawal, low confidence and peer conflict as situations that are often shaped by the activity, the environment, communication and group expectations. **Module 7** focuses on communication and collaboration with parents and caregivers, helping coaches gather useful information respectfully, build trust and use parent input to support participation.

This progression is important because inclusive coaching is not one single technique. It is a combination of observation, planning, communication, adaptation, emotional awareness, group management and

cooperation. Each module focuses on one part of this process, while remaining connected to the wider aim of the programme: helping coaches create sport environments where children with SEND can participate more confidently, safely and meaningfully.

The modules can be used as a complete training pathway or selected according to local needs. For example, one Local Workshop may focus mainly on activity adaptation and session structure, while another may focus on emotional responses and communication with parents. Even when modules are used selectively, the overall logic should remain clear: inclusive coaching begins with understanding participation and develops through practical changes in how sport sessions are planned, delivered and reflected upon.

3 Pedagogical Approach & Training Methodology

The Inclusive Sports Training Programme is designed as a practical and participatory learning framework for coaches, educators, trainers and sport practitioners. Its purpose is not only to provide information about SEND and inclusive sport, but to support changes in everyday coaching practice. For this reason, the programme should not be delivered mainly through long theoretical presentations. Short conceptual input is useful, especially when introducing key ideas, but each session should quickly connect these ideas with real coaching situations.

The central question guiding the methodology is:

“How can this help a coach act differently in a real training session?”

This question keeps the training focused on practical application. It encourages trainers and participants to move from general awareness to concrete decisions: how to explain an activity, how to organise a group, how to adapt an exercise, how to respond to frustration, how to support transitions or how to communicate with parents.

❖ **Active and practice-oriented learning**

The Training Programme is based on active learning. Participants should not only listen to information; they should discuss, practise, compare possible responses and reflect on their own coaching situations.

A balanced training session should include:

1. a short introduction to the topic;
2. one practical example or scenario;
3. one activity, exercise or group task;
4. one reflection question;
5. one tool or practical takeaway that participants can use in their own context.

This structure helps keep the training focused and accessible. It also supports participants with different levels of experience. Some coaches may already use inclusive strategies, while others may be new to SEND or adapted sport. Active learning allows both groups to participate, share experience and develop their practice.

❖ **Scenario-based learning**

Scenario-based learning is central to the programme. Coaches often learn best when they work with situations that feel familiar. A short scenario can help participants analyse what is happening, identify possible barriers and discuss what the coach could change.

Scenarios may involve, for example, a child who becomes overwhelmed by noise, struggles to follow multi-step instructions, withdraws after repeated mistakes, becomes frustrated during a competitive activity, or is excluded by peers during group work. The purpose of scenarios is not to judge children, parents or coaches. Their purpose is to create a safe space for reflection and problem-solving. Participants can explore different responses without needing to find one perfect answer. The value of the discussion lies in helping coaches practise inclusive thinking and develop a wider range of possible responses.

❖ Reflection and inclusive thinking

Reflection is an essential part of inclusive coaching. Coaches are encouraged to examine how they interpret behaviour, how they organise sessions and how their own responses may support or limit participation.

A key shift in the programme is from asking:

What is wrong with this child?

to asking:

What is happening here, and what might support participation?

This shift helps coaches look beyond immediate behaviour and consider the wider context: the activity, the environment, the instruction, the group dynamic, the emotional climate and the child's previous experiences. It also helps coaches recognise strengths, not only difficulties. Reflection should remain practical. It should help participants identify one small change they can try in their next session, such as shortening an instruction, reducing waiting time, adapting equipment, preparing a transition more clearly or using a calmer form of feedback.

❖ Practical exercises and demonstrations

The Training Programme uses practical exercises and demonstrations to help participants turn ideas into action. These may include adapting a sport activity, simplifying instructions, planning a predictable session flow, identifying environmental barriers, role-playing a conversation with parents or designing a short inclusive session plan.

The value of these activities is not in producing perfect solutions during training. Their value lies in helping participants explore different options, practise inclusive thinking and become more confident in adapting their coaching decisions to real situations. For example, instead of only discussing "clear communication", participants may practise turning a long verbal instruction into three short steps with a demonstration. Instead of only discussing "activity adaptation", they may redesign a passing drill using different distances, ball sizes or support roles so that more children can participate in the same activity.

❖ Peer exchange and collaborative problem-solving

Peer exchange is another important element of the methodology. Coaches, trainers and educators often face similar challenges, but they may respond to them in different ways depending on their sport, country, organisation, facilities and group of children. Training sessions should therefore create space for participants to share experience, discuss difficulties and learn from one another. This is especially useful because inclusive practice rarely depends on one fixed method. It requires judgement, flexibility and adaptation. Some situations also require layered thinking. For example, supporting a child who becomes frustrated during a competitive activity may involve adapting the task, reducing pressure, changing peer groupings, giving clearer instructions, offering a different role and communicating with parents. The methodology should help participants think through these layers rather than search for a single quick solution.

❖ Use of practical tools

The Training Programme is supported by practical tools such as checklists, reflection sheets, planning templates, scenario cards, communication prompts and feedback forms. These tools help participants organise their thinking and apply the training content in real coaching situations. The tools should be used

actively during training. For example, an observation checklist can support scenario analysis, an activity adaptation template can help redesign an exercise, and a parent communication guide can support role-play. The purpose is not to create paperwork for coaches, but to make inclusive practice easier to plan, discuss and apply. The full set of tools is included in the **Inclusive Play Training Tool Pack**. The modules refer to the tools that are most relevant to each topic.

❖ **Flexibility across contexts**

The programme is designed for use across different national, organisational and sport contexts. Partners and trainers may adapt examples, scenarios, activities and tools according to local needs, participant profiles, age groups, available time and sport settings.

This flexibility is important, but it should not weaken the core learning objectives. Across all contexts, the programme should help coaches and trainers:

- recognise participation needs and barriers;
- understand how different needs may affect sport participation;
- create safer and more supportive environments;
- adapt activities and instructions;
- structure sessions more clearly;
- support motivation, emotional safety and group dynamics;
- communicate more effectively with parents and caregivers.

❖ **Core pedagogical message**

Inclusive coaching is a practical competence. It involves knowledge, but also observation, communication, planning, adaptation, emotional awareness and relationship-building. Coaches need more than information. They need opportunities to discuss real situations, practise responses, test strategies and reflect on what works in their own sport environment. The methodology of this Training Programme therefore combines short input with examples, scenarios, practical exercises, peer exchange and reflection. This approach helps participants move from inclusive intentions to more confident, realistic and adaptable coaching practice.

4 Training Modules

Module 1: Understanding SEND and Recognising Children's Needs in Training Contexts

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches recognise how SEND-related needs may appear during sport activities and training sessions
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short input, barrier-recognition scenarios, observation of training situations, behaviour-to-need reflection, small-group discussion and practical response planning
Key tools	Participation Barriers Observation Checklist; Behaviour-to-Need Reflection Sheet; Inclusive Observation Quick Checklist; Participation Barrier Scenario Cards; Simplified Coaching Communication Examples; Coach Reflection Worksheet; Case Study Template for Trainers
Practical outcome	Coaches become more confident in identifying participation barriers and responding in a supportive, flexible and non-stigmatising way

Insights from Coaches and Parents

The needs assessment showed that coaches often face situations where children lose attention, struggle to follow instructions, withdraw from activities, become overwhelmed or experience frustration during training. Parents also described moments where children found it difficult to cope with sensory demands, understand expectations, manage emotions or participate confidently within the group.

These situations are not always easy to interpret. They may be seen as lack of motivation, lack of discipline or refusal to participate, when they may actually be linked to unclear communication, task difficulty, sensory overload, anxiety, peer pressure or lack of structure. The findings also showed that many coaches rely on personal experience and quick judgement when responding to these challenges.

This experience is valuable, but it needs to be supported by clearer observation tools and a shared way of understanding participation barriers. This module helps coaches observe what is happening more carefully, interpret behaviour in context and identify practical changes that can support inclusion.

Why this module matters

Inclusive coaching begins with understanding participation. Before coaches can adapt an activity, structure a session or support a child emotionally, they need to recognise what may be making participation difficult.

In everyday sport environments, a child who appears disruptive may be confused or overloaded. A child who refuses an activity may not understand what is expected. A child who withdraws from the group may feel anxious, embarrassed or unable to cope with noise, movement or peer pressure.

This module helps coaches slow down their interpretation. Instead of reacting only to the behaviour, coaches are encouraged to look at the whole situation: the child, the instruction, the activity, the group, the space and the rhythm of the session.

The aim is not for coaches to diagnose children or replace specialist support. The aim is to help them become more attentive observers of children's needs, strengths and barriers, and more confident in choosing supportive responses.

What this module helps coaches do

This module supports coaches in developing a practical understanding of SEND within sport environments. The focus is not on medical or diagnostic classification, but on how SEND-related needs may influence participation, communication, attention, sensory processing, emotional regulation and social interaction during training.

It also helps coaches observe the whole training situation, not only the child. Participation is shaped by the interaction between the child, the activity, the group, the environment and the way the session is organised. A difficulty may emerge because an instruction is too long, a space is too noisy, a transition is unclear, an activity is too complex or the child does not feel safe within the group.

The central question of this module is:

What is happening here, and what might the child need in order to participate?

This question helps coaches move from quick judgement to practical support. It encourages them to look at the situation before deciding how to respond.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand how SEND-related needs may influence participation in sport activities;
- recognise participation barriers within training environments;
- identify situations where communication, attention, sensory processing or emotional regulation affect engagement;
- understand behaviour as a possible signal of unmet participation needs;
- observe the interaction between the child, the activity, the group and the environment;
- identify environmental and communication-related barriers;
- apply more flexible and inclusive responses during training;
- reflect on their own assumptions and coaching practices.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ SEND is diverse and may appear differently in sport

SEND includes a wide range of learning, developmental, behavioural, sensory, emotional and physical needs. These needs may appear differently depending on the sport, the activity, the group, the environment and the child's confidence on that day. The same child may participate well in one activity and struggle in another. Coaches should therefore avoid fixed assumptions and pay attention to what happens in each specific situation.

❖ Coaches should focus on participation

Coaches do not need to know every detail of a child's diagnosis in order to support participation. What they need is the ability to observe what helps or prevents the child from taking part. Useful questions

include: Does the child understand the instruction? Is the activity too complex? Is the space too noisy? Is the child waiting too long? Does the child know what comes next? What helps the child participate well?

❖ Behaviour can be a signal

A child who refuses, withdraws, becomes frustrated or loses attention may be showing that something in the session is difficult to manage. Distraction may be linked to long instructions or passive waiting time. Withdrawal may signal anxiety, sensory overload or fear of failure. Frustration may be linked to task difficulty, peer pressure or unclear expectations. Coaches should pause and consider what may be behind the behaviour before reacting.

❖ Barriers are often created by the situation

Participation barriers are not only inside the child. They may be created or intensified by the way the session is organised. Common barriers include long verbal instructions, fast transitions, unclear rules, noisy spaces, long waiting times, competitive pressure, unexpected changes, lack of visual support and peer exclusion. Recognising these barriers helps coaches understand that inclusion is also about adapting the context.

❖ Strengths matter

Children with SEND should not be defined only by what they find difficult. Coaches should also notice strengths, interests, motivation, preferences and moments when the child participates well. A strengths-based approach helps build confidence and positive relationships.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered as an interactive session. Trainers should avoid presenting SEND only through definitions or long theoretical explanations. Instead, the session should help participants practise observation, interpretation and practical response.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: inclusion begins with understanding participation
15 minutes	Group discussion: common challenges coaches see during training
20 minutes	Scenario analysis: “What is the barrier?”
15 minutes	Observation exercise using the Participation Barriers Observation Checklist
15 minutes	Reflection: from behaviour to need
10 minutes	Key takeaways and practical actions for coaches

The trainer should encourage participants to bring examples from their own sport settings. The discussion should remain practical and non-judgemental. The purpose is not to criticise coaches, but to help them develop more inclusive ways of seeing and responding.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: What is the barrier?

Purpose:

To help coaches identify participation barriers behind common behaviours

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Participation Barrier Scenario Cards or short written examples

Steps:

1. Divide participants into small groups
2. Give each group one scenario
3. Ask them to identify what the child is doing
4. Ask them to discuss what may be making participation difficult
5. Ask them to propose one or two inclusive coaching responses
6. Each group shares its response briefly

Example scenario:

During a team activity, a child repeatedly leaves the line and walks around the space. The coach first thinks the child is not listening. The group discusses whether the barrier may be waiting time, unclear instructions, sensory stimulation or lack of active involvement.

Reflection question:

What could the coach check before interpreting the child's behaviour as a problem?

Activity 2: Observation in context

Purpose:

To help coaches observe the child, activity, group and environment together

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Participation Barriers Observation Checklist; video clip, photo, or written training situation

Steps:

1. Participants watch or read a short training situation
2. They use a checklist to observe: communication, activity structure, sensory environment, peer interaction and emotional response
3. They identify where participation becomes difficult
4. They suggest one practical adaptation

Example:

A child loses focus during a long explanation before a passing drill. Instead of assuming the child is not interested, participants look at the length of the instruction, the waiting time, the noise in the space and whether the activity was demonstrated clearly.

Reflection question:

What did you notice when you looked beyond the child's behaviour?

Activity 3: From behaviour to need**Purpose:**

To help coaches move from quick judgement to supportive interpretation

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Behaviour-to-Need Reflection Sheet; flipchart or sticky notes

Steps:

1. The trainer writes common behaviours on a board: distraction, refusal, withdrawal, frustration, overexcitement, conflict
2. Participants suggest possible needs or barriers behind each behaviour
3. The group discusses possible coaching responses
4. The trainer highlights that the same behaviour may have different causes

Example:

“Refusal” may mean that a child does not understand the task, feels embarrassed, finds the movement too difficult or is anxious about being watched by peers.

Reflection question:

How can changing the activity, instruction or environment reduce the behaviour?

Activity 4: Adapting the coaching response**Purpose:**

To help coaches practise flexible and supportive responses

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Short scenarios; Simplified Coaching Communication Examples

Steps:

1. Participants choose a challenging situation
2. They write the coach's first possible reaction

3. They redesign the response using inclusive principles: clarity, calm communication, flexibility, emotional safety and participation
4. Groups compare responses

Example:

Instead of saying, “Stop disturbing the line”, the coach says, “You can help me by collecting the cones after each turn. Then you will know when your turn is next.”

Reflection question:

Which response is most likely to keep the child included in the activity?

Scenarios for discussion

Scenario 1: Long instructions

A child becomes distracted every time the coach gives instructions to the whole group. The child starts looking around, moving away or talking to others.

Discussion focus:

Could the instruction be shorter? Could the coach demonstrate instead of only explaining? Could visual cues help?

Scenario 2: Noisy activity

During a fast and noisy game, a child covers their ears and moves away from the group.

Discussion focus:

Is the child avoiding participation, or responding to sensory overload? Could the coach offer a quieter role, a short break or a calmer transition?

Scenario 3: Frustration after mistakes

A child becomes angry after making repeated mistakes and says they do not want to continue.

Discussion focus:

Is the task too difficult? Is there too much pressure? Could the activity be broken into smaller steps?

Scenario 4: Peer interaction

A child struggles to cooperate with peers during a group task. Other children become impatient.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach structure the group better? Could roles be clarified? Could cooperation be supported more actively?

Key takeaway for coaches

Inclusion begins with understanding participation.

Coaches do not need to become diagnostic experts. However, they do need to become attentive observers of children’s needs, barriers and strengths. When a child struggles, the first step is not to judge the behaviour, but to understand the situation. By asking what is happening and what the child may need in order to participate, coaches can respond more confidently and create sport environments where children with SEND are better supported, understood and included.

Module 2: Linking Specific SEND Profiles to Participation Mechanisms

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches understand how common SEND profiles may influence participation in sport activities
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short profile input, participation-mechanism scenarios, barrier–strategy matching, case-study analysis, instruction adaptation practice and strengths-based reflection
Key tools	SEND Profile Quick-Reference Sheets; Coaching Adaptation Checklist; Visual Communication Examples; Barrier–Strategy Matching Cards; Coaching Assumptions Reflection Worksheet; Strengths-Based Coaching Worksheet; Inclusive Communication Short Guide; Case Study Template for Trainers
Practical outcome	Coaches become more confident in linking children’s participation needs with practical coaching strategies, without relying on stereotypes or fixed assumptions

Insights from Coaches and Parents

The needs assessment showed that coaches often work with children who experience difficulties related to attention, communication, sensory processing, movement, confidence, emotional regulation and participation in group activities. Parents also reported that children may struggle to understand instructions, manage frustration or anxiety, cope with sensory demands, interact with peers or follow the rhythm of sport sessions.

At the same time, coaches expressed uncertainty about how specific SEND profiles may influence participation in sport. Many were familiar with terms such as ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia or anxiety, but they needed more practical guidance on what these needs may look like during training and how they can respond in inclusive ways.

This module responds to that need by linking SEND profiles to everyday coaching situations. It does not aim to provide medical knowledge. It helps coaches understand how different needs may affect participation and how coaching practice can be adapted.

Why this module matters

Understanding SEND profiles can help coaches make better decisions, but only when this knowledge is used carefully. A profile should never become a fixed label or a shortcut for judging what a child can or cannot do. The same profile may appear very differently from child to child, and the same child may participate differently depending on the activity, group, environment or day.

For this reason, this module does not present SEND profiles as categories to be memorised. Instead, it focuses on participation mechanisms: how different needs may affect attention, communication, sensory experience, movement, confidence, emotional responses and social interaction during sport.

This approach helps coaches ask more practical questions. What may be making participation difficult? What kind of support might help? What can be changed in the instruction, activity, environment, timing or group structure? How can the child remain part of the group while receiving the support they need?

What this module helps coaches do

This module helps coaches connect basic SEND awareness with practical coaching responses. It supports them in recognising how participation barriers may appear during sport activities and how these barriers can be reduced through small but meaningful adaptations.

For example, a child with attention-related needs may benefit from shorter instructions, active roles and reduced waiting time. An autistic child may benefit from predictability, visual support or reduced sensory overload. A child with dyslexia or related learning differences may need demonstrations and step-by-step guidance. A child with dyspraxia may need more time, repeated practice and reduced performance pressure. A child experiencing anxiety may need reassurance, clear expectations and emotionally safe opportunities to try.

The purpose is not to match every diagnosis with one fixed strategy but to help coaches think more flexibly and respond to the child, the activity and the context.

The central question of this module is:

How does this child participate in this activity, in this group, in this environment, today?

This question keeps the focus on the child's actual participation, not on assumptions about a profile or label.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand how common SEND profiles may influence participation in sport activities;
- recognise participation-related characteristics associated with ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, anxiety and related developmental differences;
- identify barriers affecting communication, attention, sensory processing, motor coordination, confidence and engagement;
- link participation barriers with suitable coaching responses;
- adapt communication, instructions, routines and training activities;
- apply strengths-based approaches that support confidence and meaningful participation;
- avoid stereotypes and deficit-based assumptions;
- reflect on how coaching decisions can reduce or intensify participation barriers.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ SEND profiles are useful only when they help participation

Knowing that a child has a specific SEND profile may help a coach understand possible needs. However, this knowledge should be used as a starting point for observation, not as a fixed explanation. A more useful question is not only "What profile does this child have?" but "How does this child participate in this activity, in this group, in this environment, today?"

❖ Attention-related needs may affect focus, impulse control and transitions

Children with attention-related needs may find it difficult to follow long explanations, wait passively, manage multi-step tasks or move smoothly between activities. They may appear restless, interrupt, lose

focus or disengage. Coaches can support participation by using short instructions, demonstrations, active roles, predictable routines, shorter tasks, reduced waiting time and specific positive feedback.

❖ **Autism may affect communication, sensory processing and predictability**

Autistic children may experience sport environments differently. Some may need clear routines, concrete instructions and advance warning before changes. Others may struggle with noise, physical contact, crowding, sudden transitions or unwritten social rules. Coaches can support participation by using visual structure, direct language, predictable routines, clear roles, sensory awareness and preparation before transitions.

❖ **Dyslexia and related learning differences may affect how information is processed**

Some children may find it difficult to process verbal or written information quickly, remember sequences or follow complex instructions. In sport, this may appear as confusion, delayed response or repeated mistakes. Coaches can help by demonstrating activities, using visual cues, breaking instructions into small steps, repeating key points, checking understanding calmly and allowing extra processing time.

❖ **Dyspraxia may affect movement, coordination and confidence**

Children with dyspraxia or motor coordination difficulties may find balance, rhythm, spatial awareness or complex movement patterns challenging. These difficulties can affect confidence, especially in competitive or performance-focused activities. Coaches can support participation by breaking movements into smaller steps, slowing down progression, adapting equipment or space, offering repeated practice and recognising effort as well as performance.

❖ **Anxiety and emotional regulation difficulties may affect confidence and willingness to try**

Some children may feel anxious about making mistakes, being watched, being compared with others or not understanding what is expected. Anxiety may appear as withdrawal, refusal, frustration, silence, avoidance or emotional escalation. Coaches can help by creating predictable routines, reducing fear of failure, offering achievable challenges, using calm reassurance, avoiding public criticism and supporting positive peer interaction.

❖ **Strengths should guide coaching decisions**

Children should not be defined only by difficulties. Each child has strengths, interests, motivations and preferred ways of participating. A child may respond well to visual cues, enjoy movement, remember routines, understand tactics, enjoy helping others or be motivated by teamwork. Coaches should use these strengths to build confidence and belonging.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered through practical examples rather than long theoretical explanations of SEND profiles. Trainers should introduce each profile briefly and then connect it immediately to participation in sport.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: from SEND profiles to participation mechanisms
15 minutes	Quick profile overview: attention-related needs, autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia and anxiety
20 minutes	Profile-based coaching scenarios
15 minutes	Barrier–strategy matching activity
20 minutes	Activity adaptation workshop
10 minutes	Strengths-based reflection and key takeaways

The trainer should remind participants that profiles are not fixed categories. The aim is not to memorise labels, but to understand how different needs may affect participation and how coaching practice can respond.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: Profile-based coaching scenarios

Purpose:

To help coaches connect SEND profiles with practical participation barriers and coaching responses

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Short module scenarios; SEND Profile Quick-Reference Sheets

Steps:

1. Divide participants into small groups
2. Give each group one scenario
3. Ask them to identify what may be affecting participation
4. Ask them to discuss possible barriers related to communication, attention, sensory processing, movement, confidence or emotional response
5. Ask them to propose two coaching adaptations
6. Groups share their responses

Example scenario:

A child finds it difficult to wait during a turn-taking drill. They start moving around, interrupting others and leaving the line. The group discusses whether the activity involves too much passive waiting and how the coach could give the child an active role, such as counting passes, helping with equipment or starting the next round.

Reflection question:

How does understanding the participation mechanism help the coach choose a better response?

Activity 2: Matching barriers to strategies

Purpose:

To help coaches connect common participation barriers with practical coaching strategies

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Barrier–Strategy Matching Cards

Steps:

1. Prepare cards with common barriers, such as attention loss, sensory overload, difficulty understanding instructions, low confidence, coordination difficulties or anxiety
2. Prepare cards with possible strategies, such as visual support, shorter instructions, reduced noise, step-by-step demonstration, active role, predictable routine or positive feedback
3. Participants match barriers with strategies
4. The group discusses why some strategies may work better in certain situations than others

Example:

“Difficulty following instructions” may be matched with demonstration, visual cues, fewer words and checking understanding calmly.

Reflection question:

Which strategies can be useful across more than one SEND profile?

Activity 3: Adapting instructions

Purpose:

To help coaches practise making instructions clearer and more accessible

Duration:

15 minutes

Materials:

Visual Communication Examples; examples of long or complex coaching instructions

Steps:

1. Give participants one long or complex instruction
2. Ask them to rewrite it using fewer words
3. Ask them to add one demonstration, visual cue or step-by-step sequence
4. Participants practise delivering the adapted instruction to the group

Example:

Instead of giving a long verbal explanation of a passing drill, the coach demonstrates the movement, gives three short steps and uses cones to show direction.

Reflection question:

How can clearer instructions support children with different participation needs?

Activity 4: Activity adaptation workshop**Purpose:**

To help coaches adapt one activity for different SEND-related participation needs

Duration:

20–25 minutes

Materials:

Coaching Adaptation Checklist

Steps:

1. Participants choose a common sport activity
2. They identify possible barriers for children with attention-related needs, sensory sensitivities, coordination difficulties or anxiety
3. They adapt the activity by changing rules, equipment, space, timing, instructions or group organisation
4. They present the adapted version to the group

Example:

A relay race can be adapted by reducing the distance, adding a visual start signal, allowing children to participate in pairs, or offering a role such as timekeeper or equipment helper.

Reflection question:

How can one activity include different levels of participation without separating children from the group?

Activity 5: Strengths-based reflection**Purpose:**

To help coaches focus on strengths, interests and motivation, not only difficulties

Duration:

10–15 minutes

Materials:

Strengths-Based Coaching Worksheet

Steps:

1. Participants think of a child they have coached or a fictional example
2. They write down three possible difficulties the child may experience
3. They then write down three strengths, interests or motivating factors
4. They discuss how the strengths could be used to support participation

Example:

A child who struggles with noisy group games may still enjoy routines, remember rules well or like

helping the coach organise equipment. These strengths can be used to support confidence and participation.

Reflection question:

How does the coaching response change when we begin with strengths?

Scenarios for discussion

Scenario 1: Attention-related needs and waiting time

During a fast-paced team training session, a child struggles to wait for their turn. They move around, interrupt other children and lose focus before the activity starts.

Discussion focus:

Is the barrier attention, waiting time, session rhythm or lack of active involvement? Could the coach reduce waiting time, give the child a role or use shorter activity rounds?

Scenario 2: Autism and sensory overload

During a noisy group exercise, an autistic participant becomes overwhelmed and moves away from the activity. The coach initially thinks the child does not want to join.

Discussion focus:

Could the barrier be sensory overload, unpredictability or unclear expectations? Could the coach prepare the child for the activity, reduce noise, offer a calmer role or use visual structure?

Scenario 3: Dyslexia and complex instructions

A child struggles to follow a drill that involves several steps. The coach explains the drill verbally, but the child repeatedly starts in the wrong direction.

Discussion focus:

Could the barrier be the way information is presented? Could demonstration, visual sequencing, cones or repeated key points help?

Scenario 4: Dyspraxia and skill acquisition

A child finds it difficult to learn a new movement pattern and becomes embarrassed when peers complete the task more quickly.

Discussion focus:

Could the coach slow down the progression, break the movement into smaller steps, adapt the equipment or recognise effort more explicitly?

Scenario 5: Anxiety and fear of failure

A child refuses to participate in a competitive activity after making a mistake in front of peers.

Discussion focus:

Could the barrier be fear of failure, peer pressure or low confidence? Could the coach offer an achievable challenge, reduce public comparison or create a supportive role?

Key takeaway for coaches

Understanding SEND profiles is useful only when it improves participation.

Coaches do not need to become diagnostic experts. They need to understand how different needs may affect attention, communication, sensory experience, movement, confidence and emotional responses in sport environments.

This understanding helps them respond more flexibly, avoid stereotypes and create training conditions where children can participate meaningfully alongside their peers.

Module 3: Creating Safe and Supportive Environments

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches create sport environments where children with SEND feel safe, respected, supported and able to participate meaningfully
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short input, environmental review, sensory awareness exercise, scenario analysis, inclusive communication role-play and safety/belonging action planning
Key tools	Inclusive Environment Checklist; Sensory-Friendly Sport Environment Guide; Environmental Adaptation Template; Visual Schedule / Routine Template; Communication Support Tools and Examples; Inclusive Team-Building Activity Examples; Transition Planning Checklist; Safety and Belonging Action Plan; Inclusive Observation Quick Checklist
Practical outcome	Coaches identify environmental barriers and develop realistic changes that improve safety, belonging, confidence and participation

Insights from Coaches and Parents

Coaches and parents highlighted that children's participation is strongly influenced by the conditions of the sport environment. Noise, crowding, unclear routines, unpredictable transitions, competitive pressure and negative peer interaction can make participation more difficult. Parents also emphasised the importance of emotional safety, belonging and being accepted by the group.

The findings showed that some participation barriers are not created by the activity itself, but by what surrounds it: the space, the rhythm of the session, the way instructions are given, the level of sensory stimulation, the behaviour of peers and the emotional climate created by the coach.

This module responds to these insights by helping coaches look at the training environment as an active part of inclusion. It encourages them to identify environmental barriers and make small, realistic changes that help children feel safer, calmer and more able to participate.

Why this module matters

Inclusive sport is not shaped only by the activity itself. It is also shaped by the environment in which the activity takes place.

A child may have the ability and motivation to participate, but still feel overwhelmed, anxious, excluded or unsafe if the training environment is too chaotic, noisy, unpredictable or socially demanding. For some children, the main barrier may not be the sport skill, but the conditions around the activity: unclear routines, fast transitions, long waiting time, crowded spaces, sensory overload, peer pressure or fear of embarrassment.

A safe and supportive environment does not only mean avoiding physical injury. It also means creating conditions where children feel respected, emotionally secure and able to participate without fear of rejection, ridicule or excessive pressure.

This module focuses on practical changes that coaches can make in everyday training settings, even when resources are limited.

What this module helps coaches do

This module helps coaches understand how psychological, emotional, physical, sensory and social conditions affect children's participation in sport. It encourages them to look beyond the individual child and examine the wider training context.

It supports coaches in identifying barriers such as noise, crowding, unclear instructions, unpredictable routines, unstructured waiting time, competitive pressure, confusing space or negative peer interaction. It also helps them develop strategies for creating safer and more supportive environments.

These strategies may include organising space more clearly, using predictable routines, preparing children for transitions, reducing unnecessary distractions, adapting communication, creating calmer moments and promoting positive peer relationships.

The central question of this module is:

What can I adjust in the environment to make participation safer, calmer and more predictable?

This question helps coaches see the environment as something they can shape, not simply as a fixed background to the activity.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand the role of physical, emotional, sensory and social safety in inclusive sport;
- identify environmental barriers that may affect engagement and confidence;
- recognise factors that contribute to safety, belonging and participation;
- use predictable routines and clearer structure to support children;
- adapt communication to make the environment more accessible;
- make simple environmental modifications that support participation;
- promote positive peer interaction and inclusive group culture;
- develop a realistic action plan for improving their own training environment.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ Safety is more than physical safety

Physical safety is essential in sport, but inclusive participation also depends on psychological and emotional safety. Children are more likely to participate when they know what is happening, understand what is expected, feel able to ask for help and experience mistakes as part of learning rather than as failure.

❖ Predictability supports participation

Many children with SEND benefit from knowing what will happen, what comes next and how the session will unfold. Predictability can reduce anxiety, improve attention and support confidence. Coaches can use clear opening routines, visual schedules, advance warnings before transitions and consistent session structures.

❖ Sensory awareness matters

Sport environments can be noisy, crowded, fast-moving and physically intense. Some children may become overwhelmed by whistles, shouting, physical contact, bright lights, rapid movement or too much verbal information. Coaches can support participation by reducing unnecessary stimulation, preparing children for noisy activities, offering short breaks or creating calmer waiting spaces.

❖ Space can support or restrict participation

The way space is organised affects how children understand and join the session. Clear boundaries, visual markers, organised equipment and defined areas for listening, waiting, resting and playing can reduce confusion and support independence.

❖ Communication shapes the emotional climate

Clear, calm and consistent communication helps children feel safe. Coaches should pay attention not only to what they say, but also to tone of voice, body language, timing, feedback and how correction is given. Supportive communication can reduce escalation and model respectful interaction for the group.

❖ Peer relationships are part of the environment

Children participate within a group, not only with the coach. Peer interaction can support belonging, but it can also create exclusion, embarrassment or pressure. Coaches can shape group culture by setting expectations for respect, using cooperative activities, rotating roles, recognising teamwork and responding clearly to teasing or exclusion.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered through practical reflection on real sport environments. Trainers should invite participants to think about the spaces, routines, communication methods and group cultures they already work with.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: the environment as part of inclusion
15 minutes	Group discussion: what makes children feel safe or unsafe in sport?
20 minutes	Environmental review using the Inclusive Environment Checklist
15 minutes	Sensory awareness exercise
15 minutes	Scenario analysis: “The child withdraws”
15 minutes	Safety and Belonging Action Plan

The focus should be on realistic changes. Inclusive environments do not always require expensive facilities. Many useful changes involve planning, awareness, communication and organisation.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: Environmental inclusion checklist

Purpose:

To help coaches identify environmental barriers and possible improvements in their own sport setting

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Inclusive Environment Checklist

Steps:

1. Participants think of a sport space they know well
2. They use a checklist to assess the environment
3. They consider space, noise, instructions, transitions, routines, waiting areas, sensory demands and peer interaction
4. They identify two barriers and two possible improvements
5. Participants share one practical change with the group

Example:

A coach realises that children wait in a crowded area near the door while equipment is being prepared. Moving the waiting area to a marked space with a simple warm-up task may reduce confusion and noise.

Reflection question:

What small change could make the environment easier for a child to understand or manage?

Activity 2: Sensory awareness exercise

Purpose:

To help coaches understand how sensory conditions may affect participation

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Sensory-Friendly Sport Environment Guide

Steps:

1. The trainer presents examples of sensory demands in sport: noise, whistles, shouting, crowding, physical contact, bright light or fast movement
2. Participants discuss how these may affect children with sensory sensitivities
3. In pairs, they choose one sport activity and identify possible sensory barriers
4. They suggest one or two simple adaptations

Example:

In a noisy hall, the coach reduces repeated whistle use, gives instructions before the game starts, creates a calm waiting area, offers a short break when needed and uses visuals instead of repeated verbal instruction.

Reflection question:

How can we reduce overload without excluding the child from the activity?

Activity 3: Scenario analysis – “The child withdraws”**Purpose:**

To help coaches analyse withdrawal as a possible response to environmental pressure

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Short written scenario; Inclusive Observation Quick Checklist

Steps:

1. Participants read the scenario
2. They identify what the child does
3. They discuss possible environmental triggers
4. They propose supportive coaching responses
5. They compare responses with the wider group

Example scenario:

During a noisy and fast-moving game, a child stops participating and moves to the side of the hall. The coach first thinks the child is not interested. The group explores whether the child may be overwhelmed by noise, speed, contact, unclear rules or fear of making mistakes.

Reflection question:

What could the coach adjust before asking the child to rejoin?

Activity 4: Role-play on inclusive communication**Purpose:**

To practise clear, calm and accessible communication

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Communication Support Tools and Examples

Steps:

1. Participants receive a long or unclear coaching instruction
2. They practise rewriting it as a short, concrete message

3. They add demonstration, visual cues or step-by-step guidance
4. In pairs, they practise delivering the instruction using calm tone and supportive body language
5. The group reflects on what changed

Reflection question:

How does the way we communicate affect children's sense of safety?

Activity 5: Safety and belonging action plan

Purpose:

To help coaches identify practical changes they can apply in their own context

Duration:

15 minutes

Materials:

Safety and Belonging Action Plan

Steps:

1. Participants choose one environment they work in
2. They identify one physical, one communication-related and one social barrier
3. They write one realistic action for each barrier
4. They identify what they can change immediately and what may require organisational support

Example:

A coach decides to mark a clear listening area with cones, introduce a two-minute arrival routine and set one group rule: "We help each other try again."

Reflection question:

Which change can you apply in your next training session?

Scenarios for discussion

Scenario 1: Noise and withdrawal

A child becomes overwhelmed by noise and movement during training and withdraws from participation.

Discussion focus:

Could noise, crowding, speed or unpredictability be affecting participation? Could the coach create a calmer space, prepare the child in advance or offer a short break?

Scenario 2: Visual schedules and routines

A coach introduces a simple visual schedule showing the order of activities. Over time, one child becomes less anxious during transitions and participates more consistently.

Discussion focus:

Why can visual routines support confidence? How could this be adapted in different sports?

Scenario 3: Reorganising the space

A training space is crowded and children often become confused about where to wait, where to move and where to listen to instructions. The coach reorganises the space using cones and clear areas.

Discussion focus:

How can spatial organisation reduce confusion and support independence?

Scenario 4: Team-building for belonging

A coach notices that a child is often left out during group activities. The coach introduces cooperative tasks where success depends on teamwork rather than speed or winning.

Discussion focus:

How can activity design and group culture promote belonging?

Scenario 5: Supporting transitions

A child becomes anxious every time the group moves from one activity to another. The coach begins giving advance warnings and using a clear transition routine.

Discussion focus:

How can predictable transitions reduce emotional stress?

Key takeaway for coaches

The training environment is a central part of inclusion.

Children do not participate in isolation. They participate within spaces, routines, relationships and group cultures. When sport environments are predictable, respectful, sensory-aware and emotionally supportive, children with SEND are more likely to feel safe, confident and included.

Coaches can make a significant difference by shaping these conditions intentionally and creating training settings where all children can participate with dignity and belonging.

Module 4: Designing Inclusive Activities and Exercises

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches design and adapt sport activities so that children with different participation needs can take part meaningfully alongside their peers
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short input, activity demand analysis, inclusion audit, activity redesign workshop, differentiation planning, sensory review and mini-session planning
Key tools	Activity Analysis Worksheet; Activity Adaptation Template; Inclusion Audit Template; Differentiation Planning Grid; Universal Design for Learning Sport Planning Template; Sensory Checklist for Activities; Mini-Session Planning Template; Adapted Sport Activity Examples
Practical outcome	Coaches learn how to review, adapt and redesign sport activities before barriers appear, while maintaining challenge, enjoyment and sport purpose

Insights from Coaches and Parents

Coaches and parents reported that children with SEND may face difficulties when activities involve complex instructions, fast pace, sensory overload, high performance pressure, unclear rules, competitive comparison or only one way to succeed. Coaches also reported that they often adapt activities during the session, once a child has already become confused, frustrated, overwhelmed or disengaged.

This flexibility is valuable, but the findings point to the need for more proactive planning. Inclusive practice becomes stronger when coaches think about possible barriers before the activity begins and design activities with more than one route to participation.

This module responds to that need by helping coaches analyse, adapt and redesign sport activities so that children with different needs can participate meaningfully alongside their peers.

Why this module matters

Inclusive coaching is not only about responding well when a child struggles. It is also about designing activities in ways that make participation easier from the beginning.

Designing inclusive activities does not mean removing challenges or lowering expectations. It means creating different ways for children to engage with the same activity, according to their needs, strengths, confidence and level of support. A well-designed inclusive activity can include variation in rules, equipment, space, timing, instructions, grouping and levels of difficulty, while still keeping the purpose and enjoyment of the sport.

The aim is not to separate children with SEND from the group. The aim is to create activities where children can participate alongside their peers with dignity, confidence and belonging.

This module helps coaches shift from last-minute adjustment to proactive inclusive activity design.

What this module helps coaches do

This module helps coaches review sport activities through an inclusion lens. Instead of asking only whether an activity works for the majority of the group, coaches are encouraged to ask who may be left out by the way the activity is designed and what can be changed to improve participation.

The module supports coaches in identifying activity-related barriers, such as complex instructions, limited movement options, strict rules, inappropriate equipment, excessive waiting time, unclear success criteria, high competitive pressure or activities that offer only one level of difficulty.

It also helps coaches adapt activities without losing their sport purpose. Coaches learn to adjust space, task, equipment, people, rules, timing, communication and levels of challenge so that more children can participate meaningfully within the same group.

The central question of this module is:

How can I design this activity so that different children can participate, learn and succeed?

This question helps coaches look at the design of the activity before assuming that the child is the problem.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand the importance of proactive inclusive activity design;
- identify barriers created by rules, equipment, space, instructions, timing or group organisation;
- adapt activities without isolating children from the group;
- provide different levels of challenge and support within the same activity;
- use flexible strategies to support mixed-ability participation;
- maintain the purpose, enjoyment and learning value of sport activities;
- design short inclusive activity plans;
- reflect on who may be excluded by an activity and what can be changed.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ Inclusion should be designed from the beginning

Coaches do not need to wait until a child struggles before adapting an activity. By thinking in advance about possible barriers, they can reduce confusion, anxiety and disengagement before they appear.

❖ Adaptation does not mean lowering expectations

Inclusive activity design keeps challenge and learning in place. The aim is to adjust how children access the activity, not to remove the purpose of the activity. Children can be challenged in different ways and still work towards shared goals.

❖ Activities can offer different ways to succeed

A child may participate by using adapted equipment, working in a smaller group, following visual instructions, having more time, choosing a role, or completing the same task at a different level of difficulty. These options allow children to remain part of the group while receiving support.

❖ The activity should be analysed before the child

When participation becomes difficult, coaches should look at the design of the activity. Are the rules too complex? Is the space too crowded? Is the pace too fast? Is the equipment appropriate? Is there too much waiting? Is success defined too narrowly?

❖ Small changes can have a large effect

A shorter instruction, clearer visual cue, smaller playing area, softer ball, adjusted rule, cooperative role or alternative success criterion can make an activity more accessible without changing its core purpose.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered through practical design and adaptation tasks. Trainers should invite participants to bring familiar activities from their own sport and examine them through an inclusion lens.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: designing inclusion from the beginning
15 minutes	Group discussion: when activities create barriers
20 minutes	Activity analysis exercise
20 minutes	Redesign workshop using an adaptation template
15 minutes	Mini-presentation of adapted activities
10 minutes	Reflection and key takeaways

The trainer should emphasise that inclusive design is not about creating separate activities for children with SEND. It is about designing flexible activities that allow different children to participate within the group.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: Activity analysis

Purpose:

To help coaches identify hidden barriers in common sport activities

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Activity Analysis Worksheet

Steps:

1. Participants choose a familiar sport activity
2. They identify the main demands of the activity: physical, cognitive, sensory, social and emotional
3. They discuss which children may find the activity difficult and why

4. They identify one or two barriers created by the activity design
5. They suggest possible adaptations

Example:

In a passing drill, children must listen to a long explanation, wait in line, move quickly, remember the sequence and pass accurately. The group identifies that the barrier may not be the passing skill itself, but the waiting time, the number of steps or the pressure to perform quickly.

Reflection question:

What did you notice when you analysed the activity rather than the child?

Activity 2: Redesign the activity

Purpose:

To help coaches practise adapting activities while keeping the sport purpose

Duration:

20–25 minutes

Materials:

Activity Adaptation Template

Steps:

1. Participants select one exercise from their own sport
2. They identify one barrier that may prevent participation
3. They redesign the activity by changing one or more elements: rules, equipment, space, timing, grouping, instruction or level of challenge
4. They explain how the redesigned version still keeps the purpose of the activity
5. Groups briefly present their adapted version

Example:

A passing drill can be redesigned by using two ball sizes, shorter and longer passing distances, and an optional peer-support role. Children still practise passing, but they do so with different levels of support and challenge.

Reflection question:

How can an activity change without losing its purpose?

Activity 3: Inclusion audit

Purpose:

To help coaches review whether an activity may unintentionally exclude some children

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Inclusion Audit Template

Steps:

1. Participants review a planned activity using the audit template
2. They identify where children might struggle: instructions, equipment, pace, rules, space, social pressure or success criteria
3. They choose one issue to improve
4. They propose one practical change

Example:

A competitive elimination game may exclude children quickly and increase pressure. The coach can redesign it so that children who are “out” take on an active role, such as assistant coach, scorer, defender or equipment helper, before rejoining.

Reflection question:

Who might be left out by this activity, and what can be changed?

Activity 4: Differentiation planning

Purpose:

To help coaches create different levels of challenge within one shared activity

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Differentiation Planning Grid

Steps:

1. Participants choose one skill or activity
2. They design three levels of challenge: easier access, standard version and increased challenge
3. They identify how children can move between levels without stigma
4. They discuss how the coach can present this as choice and progression

Example:

In a throwing activity, children can choose to throw from three distances. The coach presents this as “choose your challenge”, not as “easy group” and “hard group”.

Reflection question:

How can different levels of challenge be offered without labelling children?

Activity 5: Mini-session planning

Purpose:

To help coaches connect inclusive activity design with a short training sequence

Duration:

20-25 minutes

Materials:

Mini-Session Planning Template

Steps:

1. Participants design a 15-minute mini-session
2. They include one clear instruction, one adapted activity and one way to support participation
3. They identify one possible barrier and one planned response
4. They share the mini-session with another group for feedback

Example:

A mini-session on dribbling may include a visual demonstration, two space options, softer balls for those who need them and a partner role for children who feel less confident.

Reflection question:

What adaptation would make this short session more accessible from the beginning?

Scenarios for discussion**Scenario 1: Complex rules**

A coach introduces a game with several rules and conditions. Some children become confused and stop participating.

Discussion focus:

Could the rules be introduced one at a time? Could the coach demonstrate the game before adding extra rules?

Scenario 2: Equipment creates a barrier

A child struggles to control a ball that is too hard, too fast or too heavy. The child becomes frustrated and avoids the activity.

Discussion focus:

Could a different ball, target size or distance help the child practise the same skill with more confidence?

Scenario 3: One way to succeed

An activity rewards only speed. Some children who move more slowly are always last and lose motivation.

Discussion focus:

Could success include accuracy, teamwork, effort, communication or improvement, not only speed?

Scenario 4: Competitive pressure

A child refuses to take part in a competitive game after making a mistake in front of peers.

Discussion focus:

Could the coach reduce public comparison, use smaller teams or create cooperative goals?

Scenario 5: Group size affects participation

A large group activity becomes noisy and confusing. Some children lose attention or withdraw.

Discussion focus:

Could the coach use smaller groups, clearer roles or parallel activity stations?

Key takeaway for coaches

Inclusion should be designed into activities from the beginning.

Coaches do not need to wait until a child struggles before adapting their practice. By reviewing activities through an inclusive lens and making small, realistic changes to instructions, rules, space, equipment, grouping and levels of difficulty, coaches can create sport activities where more children are able to participate confidently and meaningfully.

Inclusive activity design is an ongoing practice. It requires coaches to ask who may be left out by the way an activity is designed, and what can be changed to improve participation for everyone.

Module 5: Structuring Session Flow, Engagement and Working with Diverse Groups

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches plan clear, predictable and engaging sessions that support children with diverse participation needs
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short input, session flow analysis, multi-modal instruction practice, transition planning, waiting-time redesign, group composition planning, visual schedule design and inclusive participation observation
Key tools	Inclusive Session Planning Template; Session Flow and Engagement Observation Tool; Visual Schedule / Routine Template; Transition Planning Checklist; Waiting Time Redesign Worksheet; Group Composition Planning Tool; Multi-Modal Instruction Checklist; Sample 45-Minute and 60-Minute Session Plans
Practical outcome	Coaches learn how to structure sessions more intentionally, reduce confusion, maintain engagement and support cooperation in diverse groups

Insights from Coaches and Parents

Coaches and parents reported that participation difficulties often appear during moments of change or uncertainty: when children arrive at training, move between activities, wait too long, receive unclear instructions or are placed quickly into groups. These moments can create confusion, anxiety, loss of attention, frustration or withdrawal.

The findings showed that session structure matters. Children with SEND may participate more confidently when they know what is happening, what comes next, where they should go and what role they have in the group. Parents also highlighted that predictable routines and clear expectations can help children feel calmer and more prepared.

This module responds to these findings by helping coaches plan the flow of the whole session, not only individual exercises.

Why this module matters

Inclusive coaching is shaped not only by individual activities, but by how the whole session is planned and delivered.

A sport session has a rhythm. It has an opening, explanations, warm-up, activities, transitions, waiting moments, group work, feedback and closure. Each of these moments can either support participation or create barriers.

For children with SEND, unclear session flow may lead to confusion, anxiety, attention loss, frustration or withdrawal. In many grassroots sport settings, difficulties appear during transitions, long explanations, passive waiting time or rapid changes.

A clear structure does not remove creativity, movement or enjoyment from sport. It can make sessions calmer, more dynamic and more accessible. When children know what is happening, what comes next and what is expected, they are more likely to participate with confidence.

What this module helps coaches do

This module helps coaches understand how session structure, pacing and rhythm affect participation. It supports coaches in seeing the session as a whole, not only as a set of separate activities.

It helps coaches identify organisational barriers that may create confusion or exclusion. These may include long explanations, unclear transitions, passive waiting time, poorly planned grouping, lack of visual cues or too many activity changes.

The module also provides practical strategies for designing sessions that are predictable, flexible and engaging. Coaches learn how to plan clear openings, smooth transitions, balanced activity sequences, purposeful groupings and accessible communication.

The central question of this module is:

How can I organise the session so that more children understand, engage and participate confidently?

This question helps coaches think about session flow as part of inclusion, not only as time management.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand how session structure affects participation and engagement;
- identify moments where confusion, waiting time or unclear transitions create barriers;
- plan clearer openings, transitions and endings;
- use visual routines and multi-modal instructions;
- organise groups more intentionally;
- reduce passive waiting time and support active peer cooperation;
- support engagement in mixed-ability groups;
- design a short session plan that supports predictability, participation and flexibility.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ Session flow is part of inclusion

A sport session is more than a list of drills. It has a rhythm, with moments of explanation, movement, transition, waiting, group work and feedback. When this rhythm is clear, children are more likely to understand what is happening and remain engaged. When it is unclear, some children may become confused, anxious or overwhelmed.

❖ Clear communication supports understanding

Coaches should not assume that all children understand an activity in the same way. Short verbal instructions, demonstrations, visual cues and simple checks for understanding can make the task clearer for children with different participation needs. This helps reduce confusion before the activity starts.

❖ Transitions need to be planned

Transitions can be difficult moments because children have to stop, listen, move, understand a new task and join a new group. Coaches can support smoother transitions by giving advance warnings, using consistent cues, marking the next space and allowing a short pause before the next activity begins.

❖ Purposeful grouping supports participation

The way groups are formed can affect confidence, cooperation and belonging. Purposeful grouping can reduce pressure, prevent exclusion and help children take part with supportive peers. Coaches should think beyond random or purely performance-based grouping and consider roles, relationships and levels of support.

❖ Inclusive participation needs observation

Coaches can sometimes learn more by stepping back and observing the session flow. Looking at transitions, instructions, waiting time, grouping and peer interaction can reveal barriers that are easy to miss while leading the activity. Observation helps coaches adjust the session so that participation is better supported.

❖ Visual schedules can reduce anxiety

A simple visual schedule can make routines, transitions and expectations easier to understand. When children know what is coming next, they may feel calmer and more able to focus on the activity. Visual structure can support independence and reduce the need for repeated verbal explanations.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered through practical planning tasks. Trainers should invite participants to examine a real session and identify points where participation may break down.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: session flow as part of inclusion
15 minutes	Group discussion: where does participation break down?
20 minutes	Session flow analysis
15 minutes	Transition planning task
15 minutes	Waiting time redesign activity
15 minutes	Visual schedule or group organisation task

The trainer should keep the focus on simple, realistic changes that coaches can apply immediately in ordinary sport sessions.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: Session flow analysis

Purpose:

To help coaches map a sport session from arrival to closing, identify moments of high demand and improve the clarity and predictability of the session structure.

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Session Flow and Engagement Observation Tool; simple low, medium and high demand labels prepared by the trainer for cognitive, physical and social demand.

Steps:

1. Participants choose a real or example sport session.
2. They map the session from arrival to closing, identifying moments of explanation, warm-up, transition, waiting, grouping, activity, feedback and closure.
3. For each part of the session, participants consider its place in the sequence, its duration and the cognitive, physical or social demands it may create.
4. They examine the sequence: Are two demanding activities placed back to back? Is the most complex activity placed late in the session, when children may be tired? Where are the main transitions?
5. They mark where children may become confused, disengaged or anxious.
6. They suggest one practical improvement to the session flow.

Reflection question:

Where in the session are children most likely to lose attention, confidence or clarity, and what small change could make this moment more predictable?

Activity 2: Multi-modal instruction practice

Purpose:

To help coaches make instructions easier to understand by combining clear language, demonstration, visual support and simple checks for understanding.

Duration:

15 minutes

Materials:

Inclusive Session Planning Template; short activity descriptions prepared by the trainer; simple visual aid materials such as a whiteboard, paper or cones; Multi-Modal Instruction Checklist.

Steps:

1. Participants receive role cards representing different ways of processing information: one child follows verbal instructions well, one needs visual support, and one needs a demonstration.

2. One participant acts as the coach and explains an activity to the group. The group then discusses whether each “child” understood the instruction and what could be shown or repeated differently.
3. Participants rotate roles and repeat the activity with a new instruction card.

Example:

Participants work in groups of four: one coach and three children with different instruction needs. The coach receives an activity description card and must explain the activity using the sequence: say it, show it, check it.

Reflection question:

How often do you check real understanding before starting an activity?

What part of your usual instruction style might make it difficult for some children to understand the activity?

Activity 3: Transition planning

Purpose:

To help coaches plan clear and predictable transitions between activities.

Duration:

15-20 minutes

Materials:

Transition Planning Checklist; simple transition prompts prepared by the trainer, such as advance warning, visual cue, gathering point and short pause.

Steps:

1. Participants identify one transition that often becomes difficult in a sport session.
2. They compare two versions of the same transition: an unplanned version, where the activity ends suddenly and the coach starts explaining while the group is still dispersed, and a planned version, where the coach gives advance warning, uses a clear cue and prepares the next activity area.
3. In groups, participants design a transition sequence for one activity change.
4. They decide how to prepare the group before the transition starts.
5. They choose one cue, such as a visual sign, countdown, cone colour or short phrase.
6. They decide how to support children who may need more time to move, process information or join the next activity.

Example:

Before moving from warm-up to team activity, the coach says: “One more round, then blue cones.” The blue cones mark the next activity area.

Reflection question:

What can the coach do before the transition starts to reduce confusion and support children who need more predictability?

Activity 4: Group composition planning**Purpose:**

To help coaches organise groups in ways that support confidence, cooperation, inclusion and positive peer interaction.

Duration:

15-20 minutes

Materials:

Group Composition Planning Tool; Sample 45-Minute and 60-Minute Session Plans; simple coloured cards prepared by the trainer for role assignment practice.

Steps:

1. Participants choose a group activity.
2. They identify possible risks in group organisation, such as pressure, exclusion, imbalance, conflict or lack of support.
3. They plan grouping options, such as pairs, small groups, mixed roles or rotating teams.
4. They discuss how to explain grouping decisions without labelling children or drawing unnecessary attention to individual needs.

Example:

Instead of always grouping children by speed, the coach creates pairs where one child leads movement and another supports counting, equipment or encouragement.

Reflection question:

How can group organisation support cooperation instead of comparison?

Activity 5: Observing inclusive participation in the group**Purpose:**

To help coaches observe a session in progress and identify structural or organisational features that support or limit inclusive participation.

Duration:

30–40 minutes

Materials:

Session Flow and Engagement Observation Tool; Inclusive Observation Quick Checklist; Group Composition Planning Tool.

Steps:

1. Participants are briefly introduced to the Flow Checklist.

2. Individually, they identify two structural features that support participation and two features that may create barriers for children with diverse needs.
3. Participants share their observations in small groups. Each group prepares one realistic recommendation for improving the session flow and presents it to the wider group.

Example:

Participants observe a live session, video clip or written scenario and complete the checklist, noting specific examples for each item.

Reflection question:

As an observer, what do you notice about session flow, grouping, instructions or transitions that you might miss while leading the activity?

How could one recommendation improve participation for children who are most at risk of disengaging from the group?

Activity 6: Visual schedule design

Purpose:

To help coaches use visual structure to support predictability

Duration:

15 minutes

Materials:

Visual Schedule / Routine Template

Steps:

1. Participants design a simple visual schedule for a training session.
2. They include the opening, warm-up, main activity, transition, closing activity and end.
3. They decide where and how the schedule would be used.
4. They discuss how it could support independence and reduce anxiety.

Example:

A coach uses five simple cards: arrive, warm-up, skill game, team activity, goodbye circle. The coach removes each card as the session progresses.

Reflection question:

How can a visual schedule help children follow the session without constant verbal reminders?

Scenarios for discussion

Scenario 1: Too many activity changes

A coach plans many short activities in one session. Several children become confused during transitions and one child with SEND stops participating.

Discussion focus:

Could reducing the number of activity changes improve predictability? How can visual cues support the sequence?

Scenario 2: Turn-taking drill with long waiting time

A turn-taking drill leaves many children waiting passively. One child loses attention and begins distracting others.

Discussion focus:

Could the drill be reorganised into parallel streams? Could waiting children have an active observation or peer-support role?

Scenario 3: Unclear session opening

Children arrive at training and do not know what to do. The first ten minutes become noisy and disorganised.

Discussion focus:

Could a consistent opening routine, visual schedule and immediate arrival activity create a smoother start?

Scenario 4: Confusing movement between stations

Children move between several activity stations, but some do not know where to go next. The coach spends time repeating instructions.

Discussion focus:

Could colour-coded cones, signs or station cards help children move more independently?

Scenario 5: Grouping creates pressure

A child is placed in a group where peers are faster and more competitive. The child becomes quiet and avoids taking part.

Discussion focus:

How could the coach plan groups more intentionally to support cooperation and confidence?

Key takeaway for coaches

Session structure is a core element of inclusive coaching.

Every decision about sequencing, transitions, communication, waiting time and group organisation shapes children's experience of participation. When sessions are unclear or disorganised, children with SEND may be disproportionately affected. When sessions are intentionally structured, the whole group benefits.

By using visual schedules, clear routines, planned transitions, active waiting time and purposeful grouping, coaches can spend less time managing confusion and more time supporting learning, cooperation, confidence and enjoyment.

Module 6: Managing Motivation, Emotional Responses and Group Dynamics

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches support children's motivation, emotional safety and participation within group sport settings
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short input, emotional response mapping, motivation and confidence mapping, emotional escalation analysis, feedback redesign, peer dynamics mapping and supportive communication role-play
Key tools	Emotional Response Reflection Sheet; Motivation and Confidence Worksheet; Trigger and Support Strategy Worksheet; Emotional Escalation Reflection Sheet; Feedback Redesign Worksheet; Peer Inclusion / Group Dynamics Toolkit; Group Dynamics Problem-Solving Template; Group Dynamics Map; Role-Play Cards for Supportive Communication; Short Practical Examples for Trainers
Practical outcome	Coaches learn how to respond to frustration, anxiety, withdrawal, overexcitement, low confidence and peer exclusion in ways that support participation and belonging

Insights from Coaches and Parents

Coaches and parents reported that emotional responses often affect children's participation in sport. Children may become frustrated after mistakes, anxious before competitive activities, withdrawn when they feel exposed, overexcited during fast-paced games or discouraged when they compare themselves with peers.

Parents also highlighted the importance of emotional safety, encouragement and belonging. For many children with SEND, participation depends not only on whether they can perform a task, but also on whether they feel confident enough to try, make mistakes, ask for help and remain part of the group.

The findings showed that coaches often respond to these situations in the moment, using personal experience and judgement. However, coaches may also need more structured strategies for understanding emotional responses, supporting motivation, recognising early signs of escalation and managing group dynamics in inclusive ways.

This module responds to that need by helping coaches see motivation, emotional safety and group culture as central parts of inclusive coaching. It encourages coaches to understand emotional responses not simply as behaviours to be controlled, but as possible signals of pressure, uncertainty, fear of failure, overload or unmet participation needs.

Why this module matters

Sport can be a powerful space for confidence, friendship, enjoyment and belonging. However, it can also create pressure, comparison, embarrassment and frustration, especially when children feel that they cannot keep up with others, do not understand what is expected or are afraid of making mistakes in front of peers.

For children with SEND, emotional responses may appear more strongly when activities are too difficult, instructions are unclear, the environment is overwhelming, peer interaction is stressful or mistakes are

treated negatively. A child who refuses to continue may not be unwilling to participate. They may feel anxious, embarrassed, overloaded or afraid of failing again.

Emotional responses should therefore not be understood only as behaviours to be stopped. In many cases, behaviour is a form of communication. Frustration, withdrawal, refusal or overexcitement may show that a child feels overwhelmed, uncertain, excluded, under pressure or unable to cope with the current situation. This shift is important for coaches. Instead of asking only, “How do I stop this behaviour?”, coaches are encouraged to ask, “What might this behaviour be communicating, and what support could help the child remain involved?”

Motivation is also shaped by the coaching environment. Children are more likely to participate when they feel that they have some choice, when they believe they can succeed and when they feel accepted by the group. These three elements — choice, competence and belonging — are especially important for children who may have experienced repeated failure, exclusion or misunderstanding in sport or education settings.

Group dynamics also matter. Children participate within social environments. Peers can encourage, support and include, but they can also exclude, tease or create pressure. Coaches therefore play an important role in shaping the emotional climate of the group.

This module helps coaches move beyond managing behaviour towards supporting emotional safety, confidence, self-belief and positive group participation.

What this module helps coaches do

This module helps coaches understand how motivation, emotional responses and group dynamics influence participation. It supports them in recognising when frustration, anxiety, withdrawal or overexcitement may be connected to participation barriers.

It also helps coaches respond in ways that keep children included. This may involve reducing pressure, offering achievable challenges, using calm communication, changing the activity, giving meaningful feedback, supporting peer interaction or creating roles that help children experience success.

The module introduces a practical psychological basis for inclusive coaching. Children may avoid an activity not because they cannot do it, but because they believe they cannot do it. Coaches can therefore support participation not only by developing skills, but also by strengthening a child’s belief that progress is possible. This can be supported through smaller steps, encouragement, visible progress, effort-based feedback and opportunities to experience success.

The module also encourages coaches to think about their own emotional role. A coach’s tone of voice, pace, body language, frustration, patience or calmness can shape the emotional climate of the whole group. Coaches do not only give instructions. They also help regulate the session environment. Through calm, predictable and supportive responses, they can help children return to a more settled state and remain involved in the activity.

Finally, the module encourages coaches to think about the group as a learning community. Inclusion depends not only on how the coach supports one child, but also on how the whole group learns to cooperate, respect differences and value different contributions.

The central question of this module is:

How can I support emotional safety, motivation and belonging while keeping the child meaningfully involved?

This question helps coaches respond to emotion without removing the child from participation unnecessarily.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand how motivation and emotional safety affect participation;
- recognise frustration, anxiety, withdrawal or overexcitement as possible signals of participation barriers;
- understand behaviour as a possible form of communication;
- use calm and predictable responses to support emotional regulation;
- recognise how choice, competence and belonging can strengthen motivation;
- support children's confidence and self-efficacy through achievable challenges;
- use feedback that supports learning, effort and growth;
- reduce pressure and fear of failure during activities;
- support peer inclusion and positive group dynamics;
- identify triggers and supportive strategies for individual children;
- reflect on how the coach's own emotional state can affect the group climate;
- create group cultures that value cooperation, respect and belonging.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ Emotion is part of participation

Children do not participate only with their bodies. They also participate with confidence, motivation, trust and emotional readiness. A child may understand an activity but still feel too anxious to try. A child may have the skill but not the confidence to use it in front of others. Coaches should therefore treat emotion as part of participation, not as something separate from sport.

❖ Behaviour may be communication

Frustration, refusal, withdrawal or overexcitement may be signs that something in the session has become too difficult, too fast, too public, too noisy, too unpredictable or too socially demanding. Coaches should ask what the behaviour might be communicating before responding only to the behaviour itself. This does not mean ignoring behaviour. It means responding in a way that also addresses the need or pressure behind it.

❖ Emotional responses often have early signs

Frustration, withdrawal, overexcitement or avoidance often develop gradually. Coaches can learn to notice early signs, such as changes in body language, tone of voice, attention, movement, facial expression or willingness to join the activity. Recognising these signs early makes it easier to respond calmly and adjust the session before the situation escalates.

❖ **Coaches can support co-regulation**

Children often need support from adults before they can regulate emotions on their own. A calm, predictable and responsive coach can help a child settle, refocus and return to participation. This is sometimes called co-regulation. In practice, it means that the coach uses a calm tone, simple language, clear choices, predictable routines and supportive body language. The coach's response can either reduce emotional pressure or increase it.

❖ **Motivation grows through choice, competence and belonging**

Children are more likely to participate when they feel that they have some choice, when they believe they can succeed and when they feel connected to the group. Coaches can support choice by offering controlled options. They can support competence by using achievable steps and recognising progress. They can support belonging by creating cooperative roles and making sure that each child has a meaningful place in the group.

❖ **Confidence depends on self-belief**

Some children avoid activities not because they cannot succeed, but because they believe they cannot succeed. This belief can be shaped by previous failure, comparison, public correction or lack of positive experience. Coaches can strengthen confidence by setting small achievable goals, showing progress, giving specific encouragement and helping children experience success in manageable steps.

❖ **Psychological safety allows children to try**

Children are more likely to learn when they feel safe to try, make mistakes, ask for help and express difficulty without fear of embarrassment, rejection or punishment. Psychological safety does not mean avoiding challenge. It means creating a climate where challenge is possible because children know that mistakes will be treated as part of learning.

❖ **The coach's emotional state shapes the group climate**

Children notice the coach's tone, pace, body language and emotional response. A rushed, irritated or sarcastic response can increase tension. A calm, patient and respectful response can help the whole group feel safer. Coaches should develop awareness of their own emotional state and consider how their reactions influence children's confidence and behaviour.

❖ **Feedback shapes motivation and growth**

Feedback can either support participation or increase fear of failure. Clear, specific and encouraging feedback helps children understand what to try next without feeling embarrassed. Correction should guide learning, not shame the child. Growth-oriented feedback helps children understand that ability can develop through effort, practice, support and different strategies.

❖ **Belonging is created by the group**

Children need to feel that they are accepted by peers, not only tolerated by the coach. Coaches can build belonging by setting expectations for respect, using cooperative tasks, rotating roles and recognising different contributions. A child's participation improves when the group learns to value effort, support and cooperation, not only speed, accuracy or winning.

❖ Strengths should guide motivation and participation

Children should not be seen only through difficulties, triggers or behaviours. Coaches should also identify strengths, interests, preferred roles, motivations and moments of successful participation. A child who struggles in one part of the session may be confident in another. A strengths-based approach helps coaches build participation from what the child can already do, enjoys or responds to positively.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered through practical examples and discussion. Trainers should help participants recognise emotional responses as part of sport participation and explore supportive coaching responses.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: emotion, motivation and belonging in sport
15 minutes	Group discussion: emotional challenges coaches see during training
20 minutes	Emotional response mapping
15 minutes	Feedback redesign exercise
20 minutes	Peer inclusion and group dynamics activity
10 minutes	Reflection and key takeaways

The trainer should avoid presenting emotional responses as problems to be controlled. The focus should remain on understanding what is happening, reducing emotional pressure and supporting participation. The trainer should also remind participants that coaches are not expected to act as therapists. Their role is to create safer, clearer and more supportive sport conditions that help children participate.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: Emotional response mapping

Purpose:

To help coaches recognise early signs of emotional pressure, such as anxiety, frustration, withdrawal or overexcitement, and connect them with possible triggers in the sport session.

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Emotional Response Reflection Sheet

Steps:

1. Participants choose one emotional response, such as frustration, overexcitement, anxiety, raised voice, withdrawal, non-responsiveness or avoidance.

2. They identify what emotional state the child may be showing, what signals the coach can observe and what may have contributed to this state.
3. They discuss possible triggers linked to the activity, environment, instruction, group or feedback
4. They discuss which coaching responses could support participation, which responses might make the situation worse, and then suggest one calm and practical response.

Example:

A child becomes angry after missing several shots. The group explores whether the barrier is task difficulty, public comparison, peer comments or lack of smaller steps.

Reflection questions:

What might the emotion be telling the coach about the situation?

How might your response change if you understood the child's behaviour as a sign of emotional pressure rather than as a deliberate choice?

Activity 2: Motivation and confidence map

Purpose:

To help coaches identify what supports or reduces a child's motivation and confidence, and connect this understanding with practical session design choices.

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Motivation and Confidence Worksheet; a short fictional or anonymised child participation profile prepared by the trainer.

Steps:

1. Participants choose a child they know or a fictional example
2. They identify what the child enjoys, avoids, finds difficult and responds well to in a typical sport session. They then consider whether the child needs more choice, a clearer sense of progress or stronger peer connection.
3. They identify one specific change to the session design that could better support the child's motivation, confidence or sense of belonging.
4. They discuss how the strategy could be used in a sport session

Example:

A child who avoids competition may enjoy helping with equipment or demonstrating a routine. The coach can use this role to build confidence before inviting the child into a more active part of the game.

Reflection question:

Could low motivation be linked to an unmet need for choice, confidence, success or belonging? What helps this child feel ready to participate?

Which form of support is strongest in your sessions: choice, confidence or peer connection? Which one needs more attention?

Activity 3: Understanding emotional escalation

Purpose:

To help coaches recognise how emotional pressure can build gradually and identify moments where calm support can prevent escalation.

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Emotional Escalation Reflection Sheet; short written scenarios prepared by the trainer.

Steps:

1. Participants read a short scenario where a child becomes frustrated, anxious, withdrawn or overexcited.
2. They identify possible early signs of emotional pressure.
3. They map what happened before, during and after the emotional response.
4. They identify possible triggers linked to the task, instruction, peer interaction, sensory demands, feedback or competitive pressure.
5. They suggest one early support strategy and one response that should be avoided.

Example:

During a fast team game, a child becomes increasingly loud and begins running into others. The group identifies that the activity may be too fast, the rules unclear and the child unsure of their role. A possible response is to pause briefly, give the child a clear role and restart with clearer boundaries.

Reflection question:

At what point could the coach have intervened earlier and more calmly?

Activity 4: Peer dynamics mapping

Purpose:

To help coaches understand how group dynamics can support or limit participation.

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Peer Inclusion / Group Dynamics Toolkit; Group Dynamics Map.

Steps:

1. Participants choose a real or fictional group situation.
2. They map who is central in the group, who is often selected, who is ignored, who leads, who follows and who may be at risk of exclusion.

3. They discuss which children may be most at risk of exclusion and which dynamics the coach may be reinforcing unintentionally.
4. They identify one session choice that could help a peripheral child move towards greater participation and peer connection.
5. They discuss how often coaches reflect on the social map of their group and what could change if this became a regular practice.

Example:

In a small-sided game, the same children always receive passes while one child is ignored. The coach redesigns the activity so that every team member must touch the ball before scoring, and assigns rotating support roles.

Reflection question:

Were there any children in the scenario or your own group whose position became clearer when you mapped the group explicitly?

What session choices may currently reinforce exclusion, and what choices could support stronger peer inclusion?

Activity 5: Feedback redesign

Purpose:

To help coaches practise giving feedback that supports confidence, learning and a growth mindset.

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Feedback Redesign Worksheet

Steps:

1. Participants receive examples of discouraging, unclear or public feedback.
2. They rewrite the feedback so that it is specific, calm and supportive.
3. They include one element that recognises effort, progress or strategy.
4. They practise delivering the feedback in pairs.
5. The group discusses which versions are more likely to support participation and confidence.

Example:

Instead of saying, “No, that’s wrong”, the coach says: “Your position was good. Now try one smaller step before passing.”

Instead of saying, “You can’t do this”, the coach says: “You can’t do this yet. Let’s try it in a smaller step.”

Reflection question:

How can feedback correct a mistake without discouraging the child?

Scenarios for discussion

Scenario 1: Frustration after repeated mistakes

A child becomes angry after several unsuccessful attempts and says they do not want to continue.

Discussion focus:

Could the task be broken into smaller steps? Could feedback focus on effort, progress or one achievable next step? What might the frustration be communicating?

Scenario 2: Anxiety before competition

A child becomes quiet and avoids taking part when the activity becomes competitive.

Discussion focus:

Could the coach reduce public comparison, offer a supportive role or create a smaller challenge before the full activity? How can the child experience confidence before entering a more demanding situation?

Scenario 3: Peer exclusion

Peers avoid including one child in a team activity because they think the child slows the game down.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach structure cooperation and make inclusion part of the activity? What group norms need to be strengthened?

Scenario 4: Overexcitement during fast play

A child becomes overexcited during a fast activity and begins running into others.

Discussion focus:

Could the coach adjust the pace, create clearer boundaries, offer a short regulation break or give the child a structured role? How can the coach respond calmly without shaming the child?

Scenario 5: Withdrawal after public correction

A child is corrected in front of the group and becomes silent for the rest of the session.

Discussion focus:

How can corrections be given without embarrassment? What kind of feedback would support confidence and psychological safety?

Key takeaway for coaches

Inclusive coaching means supporting both participation and emotion.

Children are more likely to participate when they feel safe, encouraged, capable and accepted by the group. Frustration, anxiety, withdrawal or overexcitement should be treated as signals that something in the activity, environment, communication or group dynamic may need attention.

Coaches can support emotional safety by responding calmly, offering achievable challenges, using supportive feedback, recognising strengths and shaping positive peer relationships. They also influence the emotional climate through their own tone, body language, patience and predictability.

By helping children feel that they can try, make mistakes, improve and belong, coaches create sport environments where children with SEND feel more confident, motivated and included.

Module 7: Communication and Collaboration with Parents

At a glance

Element	Description
Main purpose	To help coaches communicate with parents and caregivers in respectful, practical and supportive ways
Suggested duration	60–90 minutes
Main training methods	Short input, parent communication scenarios, first-contact role-play, information-gathering practice, support-plan development, boundary/confidentiality discussion and follow-up planning
Key tools	Parent Meeting Template; Parent Information Questionnaire; Communication Planning Checklist; Active Listening Guide; Family Engagement Toolkit; Inclusive Communication Examples; Short Support Plan Template; Confidentiality and Professional Boundaries Guidance; First-Contact Conversation Guide; Follow-Up Check-In Template; Role-Play Cards for Supportive Communication
Practical outcome	Coaches become more confident in building trust with parents, gathering useful information and supporting children through respectful cooperation

Insights from Coaches and Parents

The needs assessment showed that communication between coaches and parents is an important part of inclusive sport. Parents often know what helps their child feel safe, confident and motivated. They may also know what creates anxiety, frustration, overload or withdrawal.

At the same time, communication is often informal and inconsistent. Sometimes information is shared at the beginning of participation. Sometimes it appears only when a difficulty has already occurred. Coaches may receive useful information from parents, but this information does not always become part of a clear support process during training.

Coaches also reported uncertainty about how to communicate with parents of children with SEND. They may not know what questions are appropriate, how to discuss difficulties, how to respond to concerns or how to maintain boundaries.

This module responds to those needs by offering practical communication tools and strategies that strengthen cooperation between families, coaches and sport organisations.

Why this module matters

Parents and caregivers often hold important knowledge about a child's strengths, preferences, triggers, communication style and support strategies. This knowledge can help coaches understand why certain situations are difficult and what may support participation.

Good communication with parents does not mean asking for every detail of a child's life or diagnosis. It means asking practical questions that help the coach support the child in the sport setting. It also means listening respectfully, using clear language and agreeing with realistic actions.

Parents may also have concerns, especially if their child has previously experienced exclusion, misunderstanding or lack of support in sport or education settings. A respectful first conversation can help build trust and prevent later misunderstandings.

This module approaches parent-coach communication as a practical and respectful relationship. The aim is not for parents to replace the coach's judgement. It is also not for coaches to become therapists or specialists. The aim is to create a shared understanding that supports the child's participation, wellbeing and confidence.

What this module helps coaches do

This module helps coaches understand why collaboration with parents and caregivers matters in inclusive sport. Parents can provide practical information about children's strengths, needs, preferences, triggers and support strategies.

It also helps coaches develop respectful and structured communication habits. This includes first conversations, active listening, asking useful questions, using strengths-based language and managing sensitive discussions professionally.

Finally, it helps coaches use parent input to inform coaching practice. Information from families can help coaches adapt instructions, prepare transitions, manage sensory needs, support emotional regulation, build motivation and organise peer support.

The central question of this module is:

How can I work with parents in a way that supports the child's participation while keeping roles and boundaries clear?

This question helps coaches see parents as partners in participation, while maintaining professional responsibility and appropriate boundaries.

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to...

- understand the importance of parent-coach collaboration in inclusive sport;
- recognise parents and caregivers as important sources of knowledge about the child;
- establish respectful and trust-based relationships with families;
- gather relevant information that supports participation and inclusion;
- communicate effectively about children's strengths, needs, preferences and support strategies;
- manage sensitive conversations professionally and respectfully;
- use active listening techniques during parent conversations;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- protect confidentiality and the child's dignity;
- use parent input to inform coaching practice and participation planning.

Core ideas for coaches

❖ Parents know things coaches may not see

Parents and caregivers often understand the child's everyday experiences, communication patterns, emotional responses, interests, preferences and support needs. This knowledge can help coaches understand why certain situations are difficult and what may support participation.

Useful information from parents may include:

- what helps the child feel comfortable;
- what may create anxiety or frustration;
- how the child usually communicates discomfort;
- what motivates the child;
- how the child responds to change;
- what sensory needs should be considered;
- what strategies have worked in school, therapy, home or other activities;
- what the coach should know before the first session.

❖ Communication should be practical

Coaches do not need to collect personal or medical details that are not relevant to sport participation. The focus should be on practical information that helps the child participate safely and confidently.

❖ First conversations matter

The first conversation with a parent can shape trust. A short, respectful conversation can show that the coach is open, prepared and willing to support the child. It can also help parents feel that their knowledge is valued.

❖ Boundaries protect everyone

Good communication does not mean that coaches must solve every issue. Coaches should be clear about their role, what they can adapt in the sport setting and when additional support may be needed. Boundaries help protect the child, the family and the coach.

❖ Information should lead to action

Parent input is useful when it informs practice. If a parent explains that sudden changes make the child anxious, the coach can give advance warnings before transitions. If a parent says the child responds well to visual cues, the coach can use a visual schedule or demonstration.

❖ Follow-up builds trust

Communication should not happen only once. Short follow-ups can help parents and coaches understand what worked, what needs adjustment and how the child is progressing. This supports consistency and shared learning.

How to use this module in training

This module should be delivered through role-play, practical communication exercises and discussion of realistic parent-coach situations. Trainers should keep the focus on respectful, useful and boundary-aware communication.

A suggested 60–90 minute structure could be:

Time	Activity
10 minutes	Short introduction: parents as partners in participation
15 minutes	Group discussion: what information do coaches need from parents?
20 minutes	First-contact conversation exercise
15 minutes	Parent information exercise
15 minutes	Difficult conversation scenario
10 minutes	Short support plan and follow-up

The trainer should emphasise that communication with parents does not need to be complicated. It should be respectful, practical and focused on supporting participation.

Training activities to try

Activity 1: First-contact conversation

Purpose:

To help coaches practise a respectful first conversation with a parent

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

First-Contact Conversation Guide

Steps:

1. Participants work in pairs
2. One person takes the role of coach and the other the role of parent
3. The coach practises asking simple, practical and respectful questions
4. The pair discusses what felt clear, supportive or uncomfortable
5. Participants switch roles

Example:

The coach asks: “What helps your child feel comfortable when starting a new activity?” and “Is there anything I should know that would help your child participate well?”

Reflection question:

Which questions help build trust without putting pressure on the parent?

Activity 2: Gathering useful information

Purpose:

To help coaches identify what information is useful for participation

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Parent Information Questionnaire

Steps:

1. Participants review the questionnaire
2. They identify which questions are most useful for coaching practice
3. They discuss how to ask questions in simple and respectful language
4. They decide how the information could be used in a session

Example:

Instead of asking, “What is wrong with your child?”, the coach asks: “What helps your child feel comfortable and participate well during sport activities?”

Reflection question:

How can wording change the tone of the conversation?

Activity 3: From parent information to coaching action

Purpose:

To help coaches translate parent input into practical support

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Short Support Plan Template

Steps:

1. Participants receive a short example of parent information
2. They identify the key participation need
3. They write one coaching action that responds to this information
4. They decide how to review whether the action helped

Example:

A parent explains that sudden changes make their child anxious. The coach agrees to give a short warning before transitions and show the next activity visually.

Reflection question:

How can parent information become a practical coaching action?

Activity 4: Difficult conversation role-play

Purpose:

To help coaches practise discussing concerns respectfully

Duration:

20 minutes

Materials:

Role-Play Cards for Supportive Communication; Active Listening Guide

Steps:

1. Participants choose a difficult conversation scenario
2. One person acts as coach and one as parent
3. The coach practises describing the situation clearly and respectfully
4. The coach asks for the parent's perspective
5. The pair agrees one practical next step

Example:

A child has become upset during the last three sessions. The coach says: "I have noticed that the last part of the session seems difficult. I would like to understand what might help."

Reflection question:

How can the coach raise a concern without blaming the child or parent?

Activity 5: Boundaries and confidentiality

Purpose:

To help coaches understand what information they need and what boundaries should be respected

Duration:

15–20 minutes

Materials:

Confidentiality and Professional Boundaries Guidance

Steps:

1. Participants discuss what information is relevant to sport participation
2. They identify information that may be sensitive or unnecessary
3. They discuss how information should be stored, shared and used
4. They identify when additional support may be needed

Example:

A coach needs to know that a child becomes anxious during sudden changes. The coach does not need detailed private medical information unless the parent chooses to share it and it is relevant to safety or participation.

Reflection question:

How can coaches gather useful information while respecting privacy and dignity?

Activity 6: Follow-up check-in**Purpose:**

To help coaches plan simple follow-up communication with parents

Duration:

15 minutes

Materials:

Follow-Up Check-In Template

Steps:

1. Participants choose one support action from a previous activity
2. They plan how and when to check in with the parent
3. They write two short follow-up questions
4. They discuss how to keep communication realistic and sustainable

Example:

After trying a visual transition warning for two weeks, the coach asks: "Have you noticed any difference in how your child talks about training?" and "Should we continue or adjust this support?"

Reflection question:

How can follow-up remain useful without becoming too demanding for coaches or families?

Scenarios for discussion**Scenario 1: Parent shares useful information**

A parent explains that their child becomes anxious when routines change suddenly.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach use this information in session planning?

Scenario 2: Coach discusses a difficult session

A child became upset and left an activity. The coach needs to speak with the parent after training.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach describe the situation respectfully and ask for advice?

Scenario 3: Parent is worried about exclusion

A parent says their child wants to stop attending because they feel left out by peers.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach listen, respond and plan a group-level action?

Scenario 4: Parent gives too much information

A parent shares many personal details that may not all be relevant to sport participation.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach listen respectfully while keeping the conversation focused on practical support?

Scenario 5: Different expectations

A parent expects the coach to provide support that may not be possible in the current setting.

Discussion focus:

How can the coach explain what is possible, what adaptations can be made and what additional support may be needed?

Key takeaway for coaches

Parents and caregivers are important partners in inclusive sport.

They often know what helps their child feel safe, confident and motivated. Coaches do not need to ask for every detail of a child's life or diagnosis, but they do need to listen, ask practical questions and use relevant information to support participation.

Respectful communication helps build trust, prevent misunderstandings and create more consistent support around the child. When coaches and parents work together with clear roles and shared focus, children with SEND are more likely to feel understood, included and able to participate meaningfully.

5 Guidance for Trainers and Facilitators

This chapter provides practical guidance for trainers and facilitators who will use the Inclusive Sports Training Programme with coaches, educators, trainers and sport practitioners. Its purpose is to support clear and consistent delivery, while allowing enough flexibility for different sports, countries, organisations and participant groups.

The Training Programme should be used as an active educational resource, not as a script to be followed mechanically. Each module provides a common structure, but trainers should adapt examples, activities, scenarios and timing according to the group they are working with. The main task of the trainer is to help participants connect the programme with real coaching situations and leave each session with practical ideas they can use in their own sport environment.

Preparing to deliver a module

Before delivering a module, trainers should review its purpose, central question, learning outcomes, core ideas, training activities, scenarios and linked tools. Not every element needs to be used in one session. A focused and interactive session is usually more effective than trying to cover all available material too quickly.

A simple preparation process may include:

Preparation question	Purpose
What is the main learning aim of this module?	To keep the session focused.
Which key idea needs a short explanation?	To avoid overloading participants with theory.
Which example will make the topic clear?	To connect the module with real sport practice.
Which scenario best fits the participants' context?	To make discussion realistic and useful.
Which activity will help participants practise the idea?	To move from understanding to application.
Which tool should participants use?	To support practical action.
What reflection question will close the session?	To help participants transfer learning to their own context.

Trainers should prepare any materials in advance, including scenario cards, worksheets, templates, visual examples or short presentation slides. Where possible, examples should be adapted to the sport, age group and experience level of the participants.

Keeping the training practical

The central delivery question for trainers is:

How can this help a coach act differently in a real training session?

This question should guide the delivery of every module. Trainers should avoid presenting inclusion only as a set of definitions or general principles. Participants need to see how inclusive practice appears in ordinary coaching situations: giving instructions, organising groups, adapting an activity, responding to frustration, managing transitions or communicating with parents.

A useful delivery rhythm is:

1. **Open the topic** with a practical question or short scenario.
2. **Explain the key idea** in simple and accessible language.
3. **Work with an example** from sport practice.
4. **Practise a strategy** through an activity, tool or group task.
5. **Reflect and transfer** by asking participants how they could use the idea in their own context.
6. **Close with one practical reflection question.**

For example, instead of only explaining that “instructions should be accessible”, the trainer can ask participants to rewrite a long coaching instruction into three short steps and add one demonstration. This makes the idea immediately usable.

Using scenarios and case examples

Scenarios are one of the most important methods in the Training Programme. They help participants discuss real coaching challenges without blaming a specific child, coach, parent or organisation.

A good scenario should be simple, realistic and open to discussion. It should not give the answer in advance. It should help participants ask what is happening, what may be making participation difficult and what the coach could adjust.

When using scenarios, trainers can ask:

- What is happening in this situation?
- What might the child be experiencing?
- What barriers may be present?
- What could the coach change first?
- How can the child remain included?
- What would be realistic in your own sport context?

Trainers should also invite participants to adapt scenarios to their own sports. A scenario about waiting in line can be used in football, basketball, gymnastics, athletics, martial arts, fitness or community sport. The sport may change, but the participation issue may remain similar.

Supporting reflection and peer exchange

Reflection should be part of every session. It helps participants move from “I understand the idea” to “I know what I can try differently.”

Good reflection questions are short, practical and connected to coaching decisions. For example:

- What would you try first in your next session?
- What could you change without extra resources?
- Which child or group might benefit from this?
- What could make this difficult in your context?

- What support would you need from your organisation?

Peer exchange is also important. Participants should have opportunities to share experiences, compare strategies and learn from different sports and contexts. Trainers should create a respectful atmosphere where participants can speak honestly about challenges without feeling judged.

Some participants may feel uncomfortable discussing SEND because they fear saying the wrong thing or revealing gaps in knowledge. Trainers should normalise learning and reflection. The purpose of the training is not to test participants, but to help them become more confident and better prepared.

Using tools actively

The tools should be used during training, not only mentioned. A checklist can support observation. A template can guide planning. A scenario card can structure group discussion. A communication guide can support role-play.

Trainers should choose tools carefully. It is better to use one tool properly than to present many tools too quickly. For example:

- use the **Participation Barriers Observation Checklist** to analyse a short scenario;
- use the **Activity Adaptation Template** to redesign a familiar exercise;
- use the **Visual Schedule / Routine Template** to plan a clearer session opening;
- use the **Feedback Redesign Worksheet** to practise supportive correction;
- use the **Parent Information Questionnaire** to discuss useful information from families.

After using a tool, trainers should ask participants whether it was clear, realistic and useful. This feedback should be noted, because it will help improve the Training Tool Pack and inform the later Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers.

Adapting delivery to the group

The Training Programme provides a shared framework, but delivery should be adapted to the group. Trainers may adjust examples, timing, activities and tools according to:

- the sport or physical activity context;
- the age group of children involved;
- the experience level of participants;
- available time;
- language and translation needs;
- facilities and equipment;
- group size;
- organisational capacity.

For example, a session with experienced coaches may spend more time on complex scenarios and activity redesign. A session with volunteers or new coaches may need more time on basic understanding, clear communication and simple tools. A sport-specific session may use examples from one sport, while a mixed group may use broader scenarios.

Adaptation is encouraged, but the core purpose of each module should remain clear. A shorter session should still help participants understand the issue, practise one response and leave with one practical action.

Closing each session with action and feedback

Each session should end with one concrete action. This may be a small change participants want to try, such as using shorter instructions, adding a visual cue, reducing waiting time, adapting one activity, planning a transition more clearly or asking parents one useful participation-focused question.

Useful closing questions include:

- What is one idea from this module that I can apply immediately?
- What is one barrier I have noticed in my own coaching practice?
- What is one small change I can make in my next session?
- Which tool or activity should be adapted for my context?
- What feedback should inform the next version of the material?

This closing process helps connect the training to real practice. It also supports continuous improvement of the programme.

6 From Training Programme to Practice: ToT, Local Workshops and Piloting

The Inclusive Sports Training Programme is designed to support the next implementation phases of the Inclusive Play project. It is a working training resource that will be used, tested and refined through the Training of Trainers, Local Workshops and piloting activities.

This chapter explains how the programme should move from document to practice. It focuses on the project implementation pathway: how partners will use the programme, how feedback will be collected and how this learning will inform the later Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers.

Use during the Training of Trainers

The first major use of the Training Programme will be during the Training of Trainers in Płock (August 2026). This activity will allow partners, trainers and facilitators to work through the modules, test selected activities and discuss how the material can be delivered in different national and sport contexts.

The Training of Trainers should not be understood only as a presentation of the programme. It should function as a practical learning and testing space. Participants should have the opportunity to experience the training methodology, discuss real coaching situations, try selected tools, reflect on the clarity of the modules and identify where adaptation may be needed.

During the Training of Trainers, partners should focus on a small number of practical questions:

- Are the modules clear, useful and realistic for coaches, educators and trainers?
- Which activities and scenarios create the strongest learning moments?
- Which tools are easy to understand and apply?
- Which parts need simpler language, shorter instructions or stronger examples?
- How can the material be adapted to different sports, age groups and national contexts?

This process will help ensure that the programme is not only coherent on paper, but also practical and usable in real training settings.

Adaptation for Local Workshops

After the Training of Trainers, partners will use the programme to prepare and deliver Local Workshops in their own countries. These workshops will transfer the content to coaches, educators, trainers, sport practitioners and grassroots organisations.

The Local Workshops should remain practical and interactive. They should not be limited to information-sharing. Participants should work with scenarios, discuss their own coaching experiences, practise activity adaptation, reflect on participation barriers and explore how the tools can support their everyday practice.

Partners may adapt the programme according to local needs. This may include:

- translating selected tools;
- simplifying language;
- choosing the most relevant modules;
- adding sport-specific examples;
- adjusting the duration of activities;

- selecting scenarios that reflect local realities;
- preparing materials in accessible formats.

This flexibility is important. A workshop for experienced coaches may need a different rhythm from a workshop for volunteers or educators with limited sport training. A workshop in a football club may use different examples from one in gymnastics, fitness, basketball or community sport. However, the core logic of the programme should remain the same: recognising participation needs, reducing barriers, adapting activities, supporting emotional safety, strengthening group participation and working with families.

Use in piloting activities

The piloting activities will provide an opportunity to test selected strategies, tools and approaches in real sport environments. This stage is important because inclusive coaching cannot be fully assessed only in a training room. It needs to be tried in everyday practice, where coaches work with real groups, real facilities, time limits, organisational pressures and diverse children.

Coaches and organisations may test, for example:

- shorter and clearer instructions;
- visual cues and routines;
- adapted activities;
- inclusive session planning;
- transition routines;
- sensory-friendly adjustments;
- active waiting time;
- peer inclusion strategies;
- parent communication routines.

Piloting should help partners understand what works well in practice, what is difficult to apply and what further support coaches need.

Collecting feedback from implementation

Feedback should be collected throughout the Training of Trainers, Local Workshops and piloting activities. This feedback should focus on practical usefulness, clarity and adaptability.

Useful feedback questions include:

- Which modules were most useful?
- Which activities worked well?
- Which scenarios felt realistic?
- Which tools were easy to use?
- Which tools were too long or unclear?
- What examples should be added?

- What should be simplified?
- What needs adaptation for local contexts?
- What support do coaches still need?

Feedback should be specific enough to improve the material. General comments such as “the session was useful” are helpful, but not sufficient. More useful feedback explains what worked, what was difficult and what should change.

Link with the Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers

The Training Programme prepares the ground for the later Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers. The Manual should not simply repeat the programme. It should build on what is learned during implementation. The Training Programme provides the structure, modules, activities, scenarios and tools to be tested. The Manual can later refine these materials into a more complete, user-friendly and publicly accessible resource, informed by feedback from partners, trainers, coaches and piloting activities. This means that the Training Programme should remain open to improvement. The Training of Trainers, Local Workshops and piloting activities are not only delivery moments. They are also learning moments for the partnership.

7 Using the Training Tool Pack in Practice

The Inclusive Sports Training Programme is accompanied by the **Inclusive Play Training Tool Pack**, included in Annex I. The Tool Pack gathers the practical materials linked to the training modules, including checklists, reflection sheets, scenario cards, planning templates, communication guides and feedback forms.

The purpose of the Tool Pack is simple: to help trainers and coaches move from discussion to practice. The modules explain the main ideas, learning aims and training activities. The tools help participants apply these ideas in real coaching situations.

The tools are not intended to create extra paperwork. They should support observation, planning, adaptation, communication and reflection in a practical and manageable way.

Role of the Training Tool Pack

The Tool Pack supports the Training Programme in three main ways.

First, it helps trainers deliver the modules in a more practical and participatory way. Instead of relying only on presentations, trainers can use scenario cards, checklists, worksheets and templates to organise discussion, group work, role-play and reflection.

Second, it helps coaches connect the training content with their own sport settings. A coach may understand the idea of inclusive activity design, but the **Activity Adaptation Template** can help them apply it to a real exercise. A coach may understand the importance of parent communication, but the **First-Contact Conversation Guide** or **Parent Information Questionnaire** can help them ask useful questions in a respectful way.

Third, it supports reflection and improvement. Tools such as the **Module Feedback Form** and **Trainer Reflection Sheet** can help trainers and participants reflect on what was useful, what was clear and what may need to be simplified or adapted.

How the tools connect to the modules

Each module is linked to tools that support its main learning focus.

In **Module 1**, tools such as the **Participation Barriers Observation Checklist** and **Behaviour-to-Need Reflection Sheet** help coaches observe what is happening before judging a child's behaviour too quickly.

In **Module 2**, tools such as the **SEND Profile Quick-Reference Sheets** and **Barrier-Strategy Matching Cards** help coaches connect different participation needs with practical coaching responses.

In **Module 3**, tools such as the **Inclusive Environment Checklist**, **Sensory-Friendly Sport Environment Guide** and **Visual Schedule / Routine Template** help coaches review the training environment and make it safer, calmer and more predictable.

In **Module 4**, tools such as the **Activity Analysis Worksheet** and **Activity Adaptation Template** help coaches identify barriers inside an activity and redesign it without separating children from the group.

In **Module 5**, tools such as the **Inclusive Session Planning Template**, **Session Flow and Engagement Observation Tool**, **Transition Planning Checklist**, **Waiting Time Redesign Worksheet** and **Group Composition Planning Tool** help coaches organise session flow, reduce confusion, plan transitions, limit passive waiting time and keep children actively engaged.

In **Module 6**, tools such as the **Emotional Response Reflection Sheet**, **Motivation and Confidence Worksheet**, **Emotional Escalation Reflection Sheet**, **Feedback Redesign Worksheet** and **Peer Inclusion / Group Dynamics Toolkit** help coaches understand emotional responses, support confidence, respond constructively to frustration and strengthen positive group participation.

In **Module 7**, tools such as the **Parent Information Questionnaire**, **First-Contact Conversation Guide** and **Short Support Plan Template** help coaches communicate with parents in a respectful and practical way.

This connection between modules and tools helps keep the Training Programme practical. Each module introduces a learning focus, and the linked tools help trainers and coaches apply that focus in everyday sport settings.

Using the tools during the Training of Trainers

Tools should be used actively during training. They should not be presented only as handouts at the end of a session. A tool is most useful when it helps participants observe, discuss, plan, practise or reflect.

For example:

- the **Participation Barriers Observation Checklist** can support scenario analysis;
- the **Activity Adaptation Template** can help participants redesign a familiar exercise;
- the **Visual Schedule / Routine Template** can help coaches plan a clearer session routine;
- the **Feedback Redesign Worksheet** can support practice with constructive correction;
- the **Parent Information Questionnaire** can help coaches identify useful information from families.

The aim is not to use every tool in one training session. Trainers should select the tools that best support the module aim, the available time and the needs of participants.

A useful principle is:

Use fewer tools but use them well.

This helps avoid overloading coaches with too many forms or templates. It also gives participants enough time to understand how a tool works and how it could be used in their own setting.

Adapting tools to real sport settings

The tools should remain flexible. They can be adapted to different sports, age groups, countries, languages and organisational settings. For example, a football coach, a gymnastics trainer and a youth worker may use the same tool in different ways.

Adaptation may include simplifying the wording, adding sport-specific examples, shortening a form, changing the format for a workshop or using images instead of long written instructions.

However, the purpose of each tool should remain clear. The **Behaviour-to-Need Reflection Sheet** should help coaches move from judging behaviour to understanding participation needs. The **Activity Adaptation Template** should help coaches redesign activities while keeping children included in the group. The **Parent Information Questionnaire** should help coaches gather practical information that supports participation, not unnecessary personal or medical details.

Learning from use

The Tool Pack should improve through use. When tools are used during training, workshops or piloting activities, trainers and coaches should reflect on what worked well and what could be improved.

Useful questions include:

- Was the tool easy to understand?
- Was it realistic to use in a sport setting?
- Did it help the coach make a practical decision?
- Was the language clear and easy to translate?
- Was the tool too long or too complex?
- What example would make it clearer?

This feedback will help refine the Tool Pack and inform the later Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers. The Training Tool Pack is therefore not separate from the Training Programme. It is the practical layer that helps turn the modules into action. Used well, the tools can help coaches think more clearly, plan more confidently and support children's participation more effectively in everyday sport practice.

8 Concluding Remarks

The Inclusive Sports Training Programme provides a practical learning pathway for strengthening inclusive coaching in grassroots sport. It responds to the needs identified during the first phase of Inclusive Play and translates them into seven interconnected training modules, supported by practical activities, scenarios and tools.

The programme is based on a simple but important idea: inclusion is not created only by good intentions. It is created through everyday coaching decisions. How a coach explains an activity, organises a group, adapts a rule, structures a transition, responds to frustration or listens to a parent can make a significant difference to a child's participation. The programme also emphasises that inclusion is not only about access. A child may be present in a sport session but still feel confused, isolated, overwhelmed or unable to participate meaningfully. For this reason, the Training Programme focuses on the quality of participation: safety, confidence, belonging, understanding, support and meaningful involvement.

The seven modules support this aim from different but connected angles. They help coaches observe participation barriers, understand SEND-related needs, create safer environments, design inclusive activities, organise clearer sessions, support motivation and emotional safety, and work respectfully with parents and caregivers.

The Training Tool Pack strengthens this practical orientation. It gives trainers and coaches concrete materials for observing barriers, adapting activities, planning sessions, supporting communication, reflecting on practice and collecting feedback. The tools should remain short, clear and realistic, so that they can support everyday coaching rather than create unnecessary administrative work.

The next phases of Inclusive Play will be essential for testing and refining this material. The Training of Trainers, Local Workshops and piloting activities will show how the programme works in different countries, sports and organisational settings. Feedback from these phases will help improve the modules, activities, scenarios and tools, and will inform the later Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers.

The programme should therefore be understood as both a shared framework and a working resource. It gives the partnership a common language and structure, while allowing adaptation to local realities. Its value lies not only in the written text, but in how it is used by trainers, coaches, organisations and partners.

Inclusive sport is a practical and collective effort. It requires coaches, trainers, organisations, parents and peers to work together so that children with SEND are not only present, but genuinely included. This Training Programme supports that effort by offering clear guidance, practical activities and adaptable tools for everyday sport practice.

Annex I: Inclusive Play Training Tool Pack

The **Inclusive Play Training Tool Pack** is the practical layer of the Inclusive Sports Training Programme. It gathers the working materials linked to the seven training modules, including checklists, reflection sheets, scenario cards, planning templates, communication guides and feedback forms.

The tools help trainers and coaches observe more carefully, plan more clearly, adapt more confidently, communicate more respectfully and reflect more consistently. Their value lies not in the number of materials included, but in whether they help coaches take small, realistic and meaningful steps towards more inclusive sport participation for children with SEND.

The Tool Pack supports active learning, group discussion, observation, activity adaptation, session planning, parent communication and feedback collection. The tools are intended to remain short, clear and adaptable, so that they can be used in grassroots sport environments without creating unnecessary administrative burden.

The tools are not separate from the Training Programme. Each tool is linked to one or more modules and responds to a specific training need: recognising participation barriers, understanding SEND-related needs, creating supportive environments, adapting activities, structuring sessions, supporting emotional safety, improving group dynamics or communicating with parents and caregivers.

Principles for using the Tool Pack

The Tool Pack should be used according to the following principles:

- **Practical use:** tools should help participants do something concrete during or after training.
- **Clarity:** each tool should have a simple purpose and clear instructions.
- **Adaptability:** tools may be translated, shortened or adjusted to different sports, age groups and national contexts.
- **Participation focus:** tools should help coaches understand and improve participation, not label children.
- **Realistic application:** tools should be usable in ordinary grassroots sport settings.
- **Reflection:** tools should support coaches in thinking about their own practice.
- **Feedback:** tools should help trainers and coaches understand what works and what needs further refinement.

Tool Pack inventory

The following inventory lists the official tool names used across the Training Programme. These names should remain consistent in the module tables, activity materials, tool lists, scenario work and any later working documents.

Module 1 – Understanding SEND and Recognising Children’s Needs in Training Contexts

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Participation Barriers Observation Checklist	Helps coaches observe when and why participation becomes difficult during training.
Behaviour-to-Need Reflection Sheet	Helps coaches move from judging behaviour to identifying possible needs, barriers or triggers.
Inclusive Observation Quick Checklist	Supports simple observation of communication, environment, activity structure and group interaction.
Participation Barrier Scenario Cards	Supports discussion of common situations where children struggle to participate.
Simplified Coaching Communication Examples	Provides examples of clearer, shorter and more accessible coaching communication.
Coach Reflection Worksheet	Helps coaches reflect on assumptions, responses and possible changes in practice.
Case Study Template for Trainers	Helps trainers structure real or fictional cases for group discussion.

Module 2 – Linking Specific SEND Profiles to Participation Mechanisms

Tool / Material	Main purpose
SEND Profile Quick-Reference Sheets	Provides simple notes on how different SEND profiles may affect sport participation.
Coaching Adaptation Checklist	Helps coaches identify possible adaptations linked to attention, communication, sensory needs, movement, confidence or emotional response.
Visual Communication Examples	Gives examples of visual cues, simple signs, step-by-step sequences and demonstration-based communication.
Barrier–Strategy Matching Cards	Helps participants connect participation barriers with possible coaching strategies.
Coaching Assumptions Reflection Worksheet	Helps coaches reflect on assumptions about SEND, behaviour and participation.
Strengths-Based Coaching Worksheet	Helps coaches identify strengths, interests, motivations and preferred ways of participating.
Inclusive Communication Short Guide	Provides simple guidance for clear, respectful and accessible communication.
Case Study Template for Trainers	Supports discussion of SEND-related participation barriers through realistic examples.

Module 3 – Creating Safe and Supportive Environments

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Inclusive Environment Checklist	Helps coaches review space, routines, communication, sensory demands, transitions and peer interaction.
Sensory-Friendly Sport Environment Guide	Provides practical ideas for reducing sensory overload and creating calmer participation conditions.
Inclusive Observation Quick Checklist	Supports simple observation of communication, environment, activity structure and group interaction.
Environmental Adaptation Template	Helps coaches identify one environmental barrier and plan a realistic adjustment.
Visual Schedule / Routine Template	Supports predictable session routines and clearer transitions.
Communication Support Tools and Examples	Provides examples of communication support that can make sport environments easier to understand.
Inclusive Team-Building Activity Examples	Offers simple cooperative activities that can support belonging and peer connection.
Transition Planning Checklist	Helps coaches prepare smoother movement from one activity to another.
Safety and Belonging Action Plan	Helps coaches plan practical changes that improve physical, emotional, sensory and social safety.

Module 4 – Designing Inclusive Activities and Exercises

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Activity Analysis Worksheet	Helps coaches identify the physical, cognitive, sensory, social and emotional demands of an activity.
Activity Adaptation Template	Helps coaches redesign an activity by changing rules, equipment, space, timing, grouping, instructions or level of challenge.
Inclusion Audit Template	Helps coaches check whether a planned activity may unintentionally exclude some children.
Differentiation Planning Grid	Helps coaches create different levels of challenge within one shared activity.
Universal Design for Learning Sport Planning Template	Supports planning activities with different ways to understand, participate and succeed.
Sensory Checklist for Activities	Helps coaches identify sensory demands within specific activities.
Mini-Session Planning Template	Helps coaches organise a short sequence of inclusive activities.
Adapted Sport Activity Examples	Provides examples of how familiar sport activities can be adapted without separating children from the group.

Module 5 – Structuring Session Flow, Engagement and Working with Diverse Groups

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Inclusive Session Planning Template	Helps coaches plan a clear, predictable and flexible sport session.
Session Flow and Engagement Observation Tool	Helps coaches identify where children may lose attention, confidence or engagement during a session.
Visual Schedule / Routine Template	Helps coaches present the order of the session in a simple visual way.
Transition Planning Checklist	Supports clearer and calmer movement between activities.
Waiting Time Redesign Worksheet	Helps coaches reduce passive waiting and create active roles during waiting time.
Group Composition Planning Tool	Supports purposeful grouping, peer support and cooperative participation.
Multi-Modal Instruction Checklist	Helps coaches combine short verbal instructions, demonstration, visual cues and checks for understanding.
Sample 45-Minute and 60-Minute Session Plans	Provides examples of structured inclusive sessions that trainers can adapt to different sports.

Module 6 – Managing Motivation, Emotional Responses and Group Dynamics

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Emotional Response Reflection Sheet	Helps coaches understand frustration, anxiety, withdrawal or overexcitement in context.
Motivation and Confidence Worksheet	Helps coaches identify what supports a child's confidence, motivation and willingness to participate.
Trigger and Support Strategy Worksheet	Helps coaches identify possible triggers and plan supportive responses.
Emotional Escalation Reflection Sheet	Helps coaches recognise early signs of emotional pressure and identify points where they can intervene calmly.
Feedback Redesign Worksheet	Helps coaches practise giving feedback that corrects without discouraging.
Peer Inclusion / Group Dynamics Toolkit	Supports planning for cooperation, belonging, peer support and positive group culture.
Group Dynamics Problem-Solving Template	Helps coaches analyse group situations where peer interaction affects participation.
Group Dynamics Map	Helps coaches reflect on children's social positions within the group and identify risks of exclusion.
Role-Play Cards for Supportive Communication	Supports practice with calm, respectful and supportive responses.

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Short Practical Examples for Trainers	Provides simple examples that trainers can use to explain motivation, emotional safety and group dynamics.

Module 7 – Communication and Collaboration with Parents

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Parent Meeting Template	Helps coaches structure a short and respectful conversation with parents or caregivers.
Parent Information Questionnaire	Helps coaches gather practical information that supports the child's participation.
Communication Planning Checklist	Supports planning of clear, respectful and participation-focused communication.
Active Listening Guide	Provides simple reminders for listening, clarifying and responding respectfully.
Family Engagement Toolkit	Supports wider cooperation between sport organisations, families and coaches.
Inclusive Communication Examples	Provides examples of respectful wording for parent-coach communication.
Short Support Plan Template	Helps coaches translate parent information into a simple support action.
Confidentiality and Professional Boundaries Guidance	Helps coaches understand what information is relevant, sensitive or unnecessary.
Role-Play Cards for Supportive Communication	Supports practice with calm, respectful and supportive responses.
First-Contact Conversation Guide	Supports the first conversation between coach and parent or caregiver.
Follow-Up Check-In Template	Helps coaches review whether a support strategy is working.

Cross-cutting feedback and reflection tools

Tool / Material	Main purpose
Module Feedback Form	Helps collect participant feedback after training modules.
Trainer Reflection Sheet	Helps trainers reflect on delivery, participant engagement, tool use and possible improvements.

Scenario Card Library

The modules include selected scenarios for discussion. These scenarios can be used as short cards during training activities, role-play, group analysis or reflection exercises. Trainers may adapt the wording to the sport, age group and local context.

Scenario card	Linked module	Main discussion focus
Long instructions	Module 1	A child becomes distracted during whole-group instructions. Participants discuss clearer, shorter and more visual communication.
Noisy activity	Module 1	A child covers their ears and moves away during a fast and noisy game. Participants discuss sensory overload and calmer participation options.
Frustration after mistakes	Module 1	A child becomes angry after repeated mistakes. Participants discuss task difficulty, pressure and smaller steps.
Peer interaction	Module 1	A child struggles to cooperate during a group task. Participants discuss roles, peer support and group structure.
Attention-related needs and waiting time	Module 2	A child struggles to wait for their turn and loses focus. Participants discuss active roles and reduced waiting time.
Autism and sensory overload	Module 2	An autistic participant becomes overwhelmed in a noisy group exercise. Participants discuss predictability, sensory awareness and visual structure.
Dyslexia and complex instructions	Module 2	A child struggles to follow a multi-step drill. Participants discuss demonstration, visual sequencing and repeated key points.
Dyspraxia and skill acquisition	Module 2	A child struggles with a new movement pattern and becomes embarrassed. Participants discuss smaller steps, adapted equipment and effort-based feedback.
Anxiety and fear of failure	Module 2	A child refuses to join a competitive activity after making a mistake. Participants discuss pressure, achievable challenges and supportive roles.
Noise and withdrawal	Module 3	A child withdraws during a noisy and fast-moving activity. Participants discuss sensory, spatial and emotional triggers.
Visual schedules and routines	Module 3	A coach introduces a simple visual schedule and a child becomes less anxious during transitions. Participants discuss predictability and routine.
Reorganising the space	Module 3	A crowded space creates confusion about where to wait, move and listen. Participants discuss spatial organisation and visual boundaries.
Team-building for belonging	Module 3	A child is often left out, and the coach introduces cooperative tasks. Participants discuss belonging and group culture.

Scenario card	Linked module	Main discussion focus
Supporting transitions	Module 3	A child becomes anxious during activity changes. Participants discuss advance warnings and clear transition routines.
Complex rules	Module 4	A game with several rules creates confusion. Participants discuss gradual progression and demonstration.
Equipment creates a barrier	Module 4	A child struggles with fast or hard equipment. Participants discuss adapting size, weight, speed or texture.
One way to succeed	Module 4	An activity rewards only speed and accuracy. Participants discuss multiple success criteria.
Competitive pressure	Module 4	A child refuses to join after mistakes in front of peers. Participants discuss cooperative formats and reduced comparison.
Group size affects participation	Module 4	A child gets lost in a large group activity. Participants discuss smaller groups, stations and rotating roles.
Too many activity changes	Module 5	Frequent changes create confusion. Participants discuss fewer transitions, visual cues and clearer sequencing.
Turn-taking drill with long waiting time	Module 5	Passive waiting leads to distraction. Participants discuss parallel stations and active waiting roles.
Unclear session opening	Module 5	The first minutes of training become noisy and disorganised. Participants discuss arrival routines and immediate starter activities.
Confusing movement between stations	Module 5	Children do not know where to go next. Participants discuss colour coding, signs and station cards.
Grouping creates pressure	Module 5	A child is placed with faster peers and becomes quiet. Participants discuss purposeful grouping and supportive partners.
Frustration after repeated mistakes	Module 6	A child becomes angry after unsuccessful attempts. Participants discuss task difficulty, encouragement and smaller challenges.
Anxiety before competition	Module 6	A child avoids a competitive game. Participants discuss fear of failure, supportive roles and cooperative alternatives.
Peer exclusion	Module 6	Peers complain that a child slows down the team. Participants discuss group culture, cooperation and coach response.
Overexcitement during fast play	Module 6	A child becomes overexcited and struggles to follow rules. Participants discuss pace, structure and clearer roles.
Withdrawal after public correction	Module 6	A child withdraws after being corrected in front of peers. Participants discuss private, specific and supportive feedback.

Scenario card	Linked module	Main discussion focus
Parent shares useful information	Module 7	A parent explains what helps their child manage sudden changes. Participants discuss how coaches can use family knowledge.
Coach discusses a difficult session	Module 7	A coach needs to speak with a parent after a child becomes frustrated. Participants discuss neutral, respectful communication.
Parent is worried about exclusion	Module 7	A parent says their child often feels left out. Participants discuss listening, group organisation and peer support.
Parent gives too much information	Module 7	A parent shares more personal detail than needed. Participants discuss boundaries and participation-focused communication.
Different expectations	Module 7	A parent expects constant individual support in a large group. Participants discuss clarity, realistic support and organisational limits.

Annex II: Selected Resources for Further Learning and Adaptation

This annex provides a selected resource base for trainers, coaches, sport organisations, educators and practitioners who wish to explore inclusive sport, SEND, coaching practice, safeguarding and training tools in greater depth.

It is not intended to be an exhaustive academic bibliography. Its purpose is to guide users of the Inclusive Sports Training Programme towards practical, reliable and relevant resources that can support inclusive coaching, activity adaptation, safe sport environments, communication with families and reflective practice.

The resources have been selected because they connect with the practical orientation of the Training Programme. They can help trainers prepare sessions, strengthen examples, design activities, support discussion and identify further ideas for adapting sport practice to the needs of children and young people with SEND.

Users may also add national or local resources in their own languages, especially where these are more accessible to coaches, families, trainers or sport organisations. The list below should therefore be understood as a common starting point, not as a closed bibliography.

How to use this annex

The resources should support the Training Programme, not replace it. Trainers should avoid turning workshops into reading sessions. The most useful resources are those that help coaches answer a practical question:

What can I change in my coaching practice, activity design, communication or environment so that children with SEND can participate more confidently, safely and meaningfully?

The resources can be used to:

- prepare short inputs for training sessions;
- strengthen examples and scenarios;
- design practical activities;
- support discussions on participation, safety and adaptation;
- inform the development or refinement of tools;
- provide further reading for participants who want to explore a topic in more depth.

Trainers should use the resources selectively. A small number of well-chosen resources is more useful than a long reading list.

Indexed resource library

The table below provides a single reference list for the whole Training Programme. Each resource is given an ID so that it can be referenced later without repeating the full title several times.

ID	Resource	Main relevance for the Training Programme	Most relevant modules
R1	UNESCO – A Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education	Supports the general framing of inclusion as the removal of barriers to participation, learning and belonging. Useful for explaining inclusion as a practical responsibility rather than only a policy principle.	Introduction, Chapter 2, Modules 1 and 3
R2	UNICEF – Inclusive Education and UNICEF – Children with Disabilities	Provides a child-centred and rights-based background on inclusion, disability and access to meaningful participation.	Introduction, Modules 1, 3 and 7
R3	European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education – Resources and Publications	Offers European-level materials on inclusive education, participation, learner voice and inclusive systems.	Modules 1, 3 and 7
R4	European Agency – Voices into Action	Useful for thinking about the role of children's and families' voices in inclusive practice and decision-making.	Module 7
R5	Inclusive Education in Action – Resource Base	Provides examples and case-based material on inclusive education practice.	Modules 1 and 3
R6	CAST – Universal Design for Learning Guidelines	Supports flexible ways of presenting information, engaging participants and offering different routes to participation.	Modules 2, 3, 4 and 5
R7	UNESCO – Quality Physical Education: Guidelines for Policy-Makers	Helps situate inclusive sport within wider education, health and participation frameworks. Useful for broader programme framing.	Introduction, Chapter 2
R8	UNESCO – Making the Case for Inclusive Quality Physical Education	Useful for connecting inclusion with quality physical education and policy development.	Introduction, Chapter 2
R9	WHO – Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour	Provides health and wellbeing background for the value of physical activity across different groups.	Introduction, Chapter 2
R10	UK Government – Physical Activity for Disabled Children and Disabled Young People: Evidence Review	Useful evidence base on barriers, benefits and participation in physical activity for disabled children and young people.	Modules 1, 3 and 6
R11	Activity Alliance – Resources	Practical entry point for inclusive activity, disability sport and accessible physical activity resources.	Modules 3, 4, 5 and 6

ID	Resource	Main relevance for the Training Programme	Most relevant modules
R12	Activity Alliance / UK Coaching – Inclusive Activity Programme eLearning and Inclusive Activity Programme Workbook	Highly relevant for inclusive coaching, activity adaptation, scenario-based learning and practical training design.	Modules 2, 4 and 5
R13	Activity Alliance – Inclusive PE Activity Cards	Useful for practical inclusive activity design, activity adaptation and accessible PE or sport sessions.	Modules 4 and 5
R14	Activity Alliance – Ten Principles for Engaging Disabled People in Sport and Activity	Supports welcoming practice, listening to participants, communication and inclusive sport experiences.	Modules 3, 6 and 7
R15	Scottish Disability Sport – Activity Inclusion Model and AIM/STEP Framework PDF	Very useful for adapting physical activity through space, task, equipment and people, while maintaining participation.	Modules 4 and 5
R16	Play by the Rules – 7 Pillars of Inclusion	Useful for clubs and organisations reflecting on inclusion, culture, access, attitude, choice and partnership.	Modules 3, 6 and organisational reflection
R17	Australian Sports Commission – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Sport	Supports organisational reflection on inclusive sport environments and participation.	Modules 3 and organisational reflection
R18	Canadian Disability Participation Project – Blueprint for Building Quality Participation in Sport	Highly relevant to the programme’s focus on meaningful participation, not only access. Useful for autonomy, belonging, challenge, engagement, mastery and meaning.	Modules 1, 3 and 6
R19	CDPP – Evidence-Based Strategies for Building Quality Participation	Supports evidence-informed strategies for improving the quality of participation in sport.	Modules 1, 3 and 6
R20	CDPP – Blueprint for Quality Participation for Children and Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Useful for autism-related participation considerations and quality participation in sport and physical activity settings.	Module 2
R21	Coaching Association of Canada – Coaching Athletes with a Disability	Useful for coach education, disability-aware coaching and practical adaptation.	Modules 2, 4 and 5
R22	NCCP – Coaching Athletes with a Disability module	Practical coach education resource focused on quality sport experiences for athletes with behavioural, intellectual, physical and sensory disabilities.	Modules 2, 4 and 5
R23	iCoachKids – Main Platform and European Coaching Children Curriculum	Useful for child-centred coaching, youth sport pedagogy and coach education design.	Modules 5 and 6

ID	Resource	Main relevance for the Training Programme	Most relevant modules
R24	Play Their Way – Child-First Coaching Hub and Sport England – Playing Their Way	Useful for child voice, motivation, autonomy, emotional safety and positive sport experiences.	Modules 5 and 6
R25	Special Olympics – Unified Sports	Useful for peer inclusion, cooperation and shared participation between people with and without intellectual disabilities.	Module 6
R26	Special Olympics – Young Athletes	Useful for play-based participation, early movement activities and inclusive sport experiences for young children.	Modules 4 and 7
R27	Special Olympics – Families Resources	Useful for family engagement, parent involvement and practical support around participation.	Module 7
R28	International Safeguards for Children in Sport	Supports safe sport environments, child dignity, organisational responsibility and safeguarding standards.	Modules 3, 6 and 7
R29	NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit – Resource Library and Safeguarding in Sport Training	Provides practical safeguarding resources, templates and training materials for sport organisations.	Modules 3, 6 and 7
R30	Council of Europe – Child Safeguarding in Sport	Useful for European safeguarding frameworks and organisational reflection on child protection in sport.	Modules 3, 6 and 7
R31	IOC – Safeguarding Toolkit	Useful for safeguarding policies, procedures, awareness and organisational responsibilities in sport.	Modules 3, 6 and 7

Module resource navigation

The table below helps trainers select resources according to the module they are preparing. It uses the resource IDs from the indexed library above to avoid repeating the same titles.

Module	Priority resource IDs	How trainers can use them
Module 1 – Understanding SEND and Recognising Children’s Needs in Training Contexts	R1, R2, R3, R5, R18, R19	To explain inclusion as participation, help coaches look beyond behaviour and connect child needs with activity, environment, group and coaching response.
Module 2 – Linking Specific SEND Profiles to Participation Mechanisms	R6, R20, R21, R22	To support a non-medical, participation-focused understanding of SEND profiles and how they may affect attention, communication, sensory experience, movement, confidence and emotional responses.
Module 3 – Creating Safe and Supportive Environments	R6, R10, R14, R16, R17, R28, R29, R30, R31	To prepare discussions on physical, emotional, sensory and social safety, and to support environmental checklists, visual routines, transition planning and group culture.

Module	Priority resource IDs	How trainers can use them
Module 4 – Designing Inclusive Activities and Exercises	R11, R12, R13, R15, R21, R22, R26	To support practical activity adaptation, inclusive activity design, flexible rules, adapted equipment, differentiated challenge and shared participation.
Module 5 – Structuring Session Flow, Engagement and Working with Diverse Groups	R6, R12, R13, R15, R23, R24	To support planning around clear openings, visual schedules, predictable routines, transitions, active waiting time and engagement in mixed-ability groups.
Module 6 – Managing Motivation, Emotional Responses and Group Dynamics	R14, R18, R19, R23, R24, R25, R28, R29	To support training on confidence, belonging, emotional safety, frustration, feedback, peer relations, group culture and prevention of exclusion or bullying.
Module 7 – Communication and Collaboration with Parents	R2, R4, R14, R27, R28, R29, R31	To support respectful parent-coach communication, first conversations, information gathering, boundaries, confidentiality and shared support planning.

Adding national and local resources

Users of the Training Programme may add national or local resources where these are useful. These may include national disability sport guidelines, inclusive education materials, safeguarding guidance, coaching resources, local SEND support organisations, adapted physical activity materials or examples of inclusive grassroots sport practice.

National and local resources are especially useful when they are more accessible to local coaches and families, reflect national terminology or connect with existing legal, educational or sport structures.

When adding resources, the same structure can be used:

ID	Resource	Main relevance	Linked module(s)
National resource 1	[Title and link]	Short explanation of practical use	Module(s)
National resource 2	[Title and link]	Short explanation of practical use	Module(s)

Maintaining the resource list

The resource list should remain practical and selective. It should be reviewed before publication of the Manual for Educators, Coaches and Trainers to ensure that links remain active and that useful new resources identified during training, workshops or piloting can be added. The aim is not to create a long bibliography. The aim is to maintain a useful reference base for inclusive sport training and practice.