



**Gymnastics**  
Western Australia

# GymAbility Participation Program



## Background

In March 2009 Gymnastics WA (GWA), through the work of Alida Scott, developed a pilot GymAbility Participation Program with Castlereagh School, where students with disabilities were brought to the State Gymnastics Centre at Leederville. Alida conducted a bi-weekly gymnastic program with the students based on stretching, flexibility, mobilisation and having fun!

## Aim

The aim of the GymAbility Participation Program is to offer gymnastics participation opportunities for individuals with a disability and organisations who support people with a disability. The program aims to create links between GWA, affiliated Gymnastics clubs and external disability support organisations and to create sustainable participation opportunities for the individuals involved. The program also offers an education opportunity for coaches to be mentored and to take the skills and experience they have gained back to their gymnastics club.

## Testimonial

Teacher, Kate Morgan, has been very impressed with the program.

*"When most people look at my students they see very little that they could possibly do. Gymnastics has shown even the greatest skeptics that they actually can do an awful lot that can be transferred into a variety of Curriculum areas, so from a holistic approach to Education, this program has been invaluable for them. They have also benefited individually in so many ways, thanks to the coaches working out what the students CAN do, not just what they should be capable of. The coaches have shown that the students are truly capable of great and "normal" things that their parents are amazed, humbled and grateful for - just like all of my staff and relief staff".*

Due to the success of the program, GWA, through the 2009-2013 Inclusion Action Plan, identified the potential to expand the pilot.



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## Actions

- Promotional information about the *GymAbility* Participation Program was sent to 62 identified external disability organisations in WA and Helen Webb, GWA Project Officer, was invited to present at the DSR Sports Connect Forum.
- Interest was received from a number of external disability organisations and programs / opportunities were offered that were specific to the needs of the organisation / individuals involved.
- Potential coaches were identified and sought to run the program

## Outcomes

Outcomes from the project to date include:

- Come 'n' Try session held for participants from identitywa and future holiday programs are being planned
- Castlereagh School continue to have fortnightly gymnastics sessions
- The Peter Moyes Centre attend the State Gymnastics Centre on a weekly basis in Term 1 2010
- Adult *GymAbility* Participation sessions are run for organisations that have individual referrals
- The Mary Ward Centre attended weekly sessions in 2009 and plan to attend sessions from Term 2 of 2010
- A total of 29 new participants have attended the sessions and where possible participants have been referred to local gymnastics clubs
- 5 coaches have been involved in the program, representing 4 different gymnastics clubs



## Future direction

GWA will continue to offer new opportunities. If you would like to be involved in the project as a participant, organisation, coach or helper please contact Helen Webb, GWA Inclusion Officer on 08 9229 9399 or email [inclusion@gymnasticswa.asn.au](mailto:inclusion@gymnasticswa.asn.au)



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