



## Using Social Media to Promote Inclusive Physical Education

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The start of a new school year is the perfect time to take a fresh approach to showcasing your physical education program on social media. When used thoughtfully and intentionally, social media can help highlight your program and educate parents and caregivers about what students are learning and experiencing in physical education. When families have a better understanding of the skills taught, it is easier to gain support and buy-in from the community. Social media can also be utilized to encourage physical activity and movement outside of school and expose family members to healthy lifestyle and wellness choices.

Before posting or sharing students' faces on social media, make sure you know and are following your school's policy regarding media use and student privacy. Be aware of which students do not have parent or guardian permission to be photographed or posted. Also, never share a picture or video of a student without the student's knowledge and approval.

When showcasing things happening within your physical education program, it is important to highlight special activities and events as well as skill development activities. This allows families to gain insight into the things students are learning, practicing, and experiencing in physical education, while also helping them better understand the purpose and value of the program. It helps promote conversation between child and parent about the things they are learning and gives families a reason to extend learning opportunities outside of school.

There are many platforms to share about your physical education program. The most common are: Facebook, Instagram, X, and TikTok. It's important that you find balance and utilize a social media platform that you are confident and comfortable using, but one that your parents and caregivers are also using. It is better to use one platform consistently and with purpose than to try to manage several platforms that you are unable to maintain.

There are also many different types of posts to consider. Using a variety of posts can create excitement and engagement. Informational posts can be program-specific or also aligned with health and wellness principles that serve as a quick lesson to parents. Posts could also be challenge-oriented, where you are challenging your families to be physically active.

Social media posts could also be reminders, updates, celebrations, skill spotlights, or quick highlights from class that help families stay connected to what students are learning and doing in physical education. Another thing to consider is that the videos you take for social media could serve other purposes, such as demonstrating skills or further explaining future lessons.

### **Highlighting Accessibility and Inclusion**

When showcasing your physical education program, your content must reflect the inclusive nature of your class. Quality physical education provides meaningful learning opportunities for all students, including students with disabilities. Sharing examples of how students participate, learn skills, and engage in activities can help families better understand that physical education is a place where every student belongs.

NCHPAD promotes inclusive physical activity by encouraging educators to consider accessibility, universal design, and intentional adaptations that allow all individuals to participate. When creating social media content, consider highlighting the strategies you use to support disability inclusion, such as:

- **Show all students as active participants:** Share examples of students of all abilities learning, practicing skills, working together, and celebrating progress.
- **Highlight adaptations and modifications:** Explain how equipment, rules, activities, or instruction can be adjusted to help students participate while still working toward the same learning goals.
- **Focus on ability and participation:** Showcase what students can do rather than focusing on limitations. Highlight effort, progress, skill development, teamwork, and confidence.
- **Use inclusive language:** Choose words and descriptions that promote respect, belonging, and inclusion. Avoid language that suggests that participation is only possible for certain students.
- **Share the purpose behind inclusive practices:** Help families understand why adaptations are used and how inclusive strategies benefit all students by promoting cooperation, problem-solving, empathy, and lifelong participation in physical activity.

Resources such as NCHPAD's [Discover Inclusive Physical Education: A Guidebook for Educators](#) provide educators with strategies, tools, and resources to create learning environments where students with and without disabilities can participate together. The

guidebook supports educators in understanding inclusion, identifying barriers, and implementing practices that promote meaningful participation for all students.

### **Creating Accessible Social Media Content**

In addition to showcasing inclusive practices, it is important to make sure the information you share is accessible to all families. Accessible communication ensures that individuals, including people with disabilities, can engage with your content and receive important information about your physical education program.

NCHPAD's [Best Practices for Accessible Communications](#) resource guides creating accessible digital content, including recommendations for images, videos, written communication, social media posts, and presentations. These practices can help physical educators ensure their messages are inclusive and reach a wider audience.

Small changes to how you create social media content can make a significant difference. Consider the following accessibility practices:

- **Add alternative text (alt text) to images:** Alt text provides a description of images for individuals who use screen readers. When writing alt text, describe the important information in the image, including what is happening, who is participating, and why the image is relevant. For example, instead of writing “students in PE class,” consider “Three students working together during a physical education activity practicing throwing and catching skills using a modified ball.”
- **Include captions on videos:** Captions allow individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to access video content. They also benefit many other viewers who may watch videos without sound or in environments where audio is unavailable.
- **Use clear and readable text:** Choose simple fonts, avoid overly crowded graphics, and make sure there is enough contrast between text and backgrounds. Use plain language and organize information in a way that is easy to follow.
- **Use inclusive hashtags and CamelCase formatting:** Hashtags can help your content reach a broader audience. Use capital letters to separate words, a practice known as CamelCase, to improve readability and help screen readers better interpret hashtags. For example, use **#InclusivePhysicalEducation** instead of **#inclusivephysicaleducation**.
- **Avoid relying only on images or videos:** Make sure important information shared visually is also available through text. Include descriptions, written instructions, or summaries so individuals who cannot access visual content can still receive the message.

- **Consider accessibility when creating graphics:** Use simple layouts, limit the amount of text included in images, and ensure that essential information is not only displayed visually. If important details are included in a graphic, repeat those details in the post description.

Creating accessible communication is one part of building a more inclusive physical education program. By intentionally incorporating accessibility into social media and other communication efforts, physical educators can ensure that families see themselves represented, understand the value of physical education, and recognize that every student has an opportunity to participate and succeed.

Social media provides an opportunity to tell the story of your physical education program. By sharing learning experiences, celebrating student achievements, and highlighting inclusive practices, educators can build stronger connections with families and communities while promoting the message that physical activity is for everyone.

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**Learn More:**

**NCHPAD** — The National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability works to improve the health, wellness, and quality of life of people with disabilities by promoting inclusive opportunities for physical activity, recreation, and healthy living. Learn more at **nchpad.org**.

**HEAL United** — HEAL United works to improve children's health and transform health culture through education and the practice of healthy lifestyle behaviors. HEAL provides schools, educators, and families with resources that support healthy eating, active living, and lifelong wellness. Learn more at **healunited.org**.