



EXCEL

Experiential

Community

Education

&

Leisure

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Who Is NEDSRA?

Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association (NEDSRA) has been serving people with disabilities since 1976. NEDSRA is an extension of 11 park districts and villages including Addison, Bensenville, Butterfield, Glendale Heights, Itasca, Lombard, Medinah, Oakbrook Terrace, Schiller Park, Villa Park and Wood Dale. Individuals of all ages and abilities are included in NEDSRA's programs as well as special events. Each year over 500 activities are offered for individuals with disabilities. The agency is staffed with committed and dedicated Therapeutic Recreation professionals. We provide a variety of services including Special Olympics, inclusions, social clubs, wheelchair athletics, preschool programs and many more. We are also involved in the school setting and hope to expand the cooperative efforts between NEDSRA services and the formal education system. Together, we **can** make a difference!

As Therapeutic Recreation professionals, we place great emphasis on the benefits of recreation and leisure and view these components as vital in the healthy development of a child. This process is not accomplished by one person, one agency or one program. This has led to outreach efforts to work cooperatively with teachers and families, to achieve all of the goals that will enhance the quality of life for today's youths. Individuals with special needs have the right to EXCEL, just as anyone. Our objective is to provide opportunities to assist in the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of children with special needs, which will in turn, build a brighter future for today's children.

Our Mission:

To serve as an integral partner with our member park districts and villages to positively impact individuals with disabilities through diverse recreation opportunities and community services.

Our Vision:

An agency of excellence, demonstrated by member partners working cooperatively with Board, staff and the community to enhance the quality of life for each individual.

Our Core Values:

Service with Compassion ♦ Excellence and Quality ♦ Integrity ♦ Commitment ♦ Fun

Goals of the EXCEL Program

The overall goal of the EXCEL program is to assist in the development of your students by providing programs that reinforce concepts being taught in the classroom. EXCEL programs also introduce students to community recreation that is available to them outside of school hours. Programs are designed with the goals below and to mirror general NEDSRA programs that are offered seasonally. This is a great way for students to explore their local community.

1. Intellectual Development

- a. To experience spontaneous and meaningful verbal and nonverbal ways of self-expression.
- b. To improve communication skills and language development.
- c. To improve attention span and concentration.
- d. To develop a sense of curiosity and exploration.
- e. To become more observant and aware of individual and community surroundings.
- f. To develop and improve auditory and visual discrimination.
- g. To reinforce concepts learned in the classroom through a fun and educational activity.

2. Social Development

- a. To develop socially appropriate behavior while interacting in the community.
- b. To offer social experiences that will promote social independence.
- c. To introduce activities that may lead to participation with family members.
- d. To be a contributing member of a team and work together as a group.
- e. To respect the rights and feelings of others.
- f. To become more cooperative; to accept and share responsibility; to learn to take turns and share.
- g. To develop new friendships and relationships with classmates and community members.

3. Emotional Development

- a. To improve self-image, self-respect and self-esteem.
- b. To develop greater self-discipline.
- c. To increase personal initiative and resourcefulness.
- d. To develop self-control and emotional stability.
- e. To release aggressions in a socially acceptable way.

4. Physical Development

- a. To improve general health and appearance.
- b. To develop and improve the basic motor skills and fundamental body movements.
- c. To increase physical stamina, motor ability and fitness.
- d. To improve posture, body mechanics, rhythm and control of movement.

General Information and Guidelines

Eligibility

Any classroom with more than 50% residency is eligible to take advantage of the EXCEL program. NEDSRA's residency policy includes anyone who resides in the following communities:

Addison	Bensenville	Butterfield
Glendale Heights	Itasca	Lombard
Medinah	Oakbrook Terrace	Schiller Park
Villa Park		Wood Dale

*Classrooms including the following disabilities will receive a maximum of **one program** per year and your choice of an **EXCEL Special**:*

Youth at Risk, Learning Disability, Behavior Disorder, Emotional Disability, Visual Impairment, Deaf/Hard of Hearing classrooms, and Early Childhood.

*Classrooms including the following disabilities will receive a maximum of **two programs** per year and your choice of an **EXCEL Special**:*

Youth with an Intellectual Disability, Autism, and Multi-needs, and all **Special Education Cooperatives: SASSED, NDSEC and CASE** classrooms regardless of residency

Registration

Registration forms outlining the details of the program will be issued to each student. Teachers must distribute and collect the individual registration forms and program fees to be submitted to the NEDSRA Coordinator on the day of the program. **The program cannot begin until the signed registration forms are completed in full and signed by the parent or guardian.**

Transportation

Schools are encouraged to arrange their own transportation to and from programs. NEDSRA may be able to arrange transportation for a minimal fee based upon van availability and schedules. **Any adults riding on NEDSRA vehicles must sign a Transportation Waiver.**

Financial Assistance

Limited scholarships are available to those residents in NEDSRA's 11 member districts/villages who would otherwise be excluded from participation due to financial limitations. Partial scholarships may be awarded and granted in "good faith," based upon expressed need from the classroom teacher. **If a student needs financial assistance, please make sure your NEDSRA liaison is aware of the situation.**

Insurance

In the event of an accident, the school district's insurance policy is primary; however, NEDSRA also carries liability coverage. A Certificate of Insurance will be provided by NEDSRA upon request to any and all school districts participating in an EXCEL program.

Payment/Refund Procedures

Payment may be made the day of the program or NEDSRA can invoice the school district. If a program must cancel, a full or prorated credit or refund will be granted accordingly.

Meet the EXCEL Staff



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In-House Programming

Can be facilitated in your classroom or at NEDSRA.

Adaptive Art

Adaptive Art inspires students to create visual works of art using a variety of medium choices and creative styles. Creativity and self-expression lead to beautiful projects for the students to take home or display at school. Sensory-based projects are a great way for students to try a new activity. **For students with physical disabilities, try the “Arts for All” program, which allows your students to use their wheelchairs or walkers as their paintbrush!**

STEM

The world is full of things we don't understand. Hands on activities help students figure out how the world around them works and offers a fun way to explore.

Go Green!

Let NEDSRA teach your students the importance of recycling and how to do it. Students learn what items can and cannot be recycled and what they can do to help the earth and preserve energy at home. Afterwards, students will utilize their knowledge and create their own recycled craft.

Sports Sampler

Get up, get moving and have some fun. Students will try a variety of sports in this mini-clinic designed to introduce the basics and spark interest.

Dream Team

Challenging cooperative games allow your classroom to work together as a team, promoting positive communication, cooperation and good sportsmanship. This is an excellent icebreaker at the beginning of the school year to give your students an opportunity to interact and get to know each other in an uninhibited environment.

Tye Dye Party

Tye Dye different pieces of clothing! Encourages students to create visual works of art using a variety of colors and designs using their own creative style. Creativity and self-expression lead to beautiful projects for the students to take home.

Out-Of-House Programming

A 4-hour time limit applies to all out-of-house trips.

Friends of the Forest

The wonders of nature are all around us! Join us on a fun and educational journey to local Forest Preserves and Nature Centers to learn about native flora, fauna and wildlife. We will be your tour guide as we use all of our senses to experience the world around us. Don't forget a picnic lunch!

Wild Wonders

Students will be amazed, entertained and educated by the sights, sounds and sensations of different ecosystems. Take your students to Cosley Zoo, Spring Brook Nature Center or Willowbrook Wildlife Haven for their animal adventure.

Shopping 101

Students develop an awareness of local retail, grocery and variety stores and gain a better understanding of how shopping affects our economic system. Tours and scavenger hunts help reinforce the importance of consumers, money management and the exchange of goods and services.

Get Fit

As childhood obesity is on the rise, expose your students to some healthy alternatives to television or video games. We visit a local fitness center, health club or indoor pool and focus on cardio, strength, flexibility and nutrition. Other options include yoga and Zumba. Drop the remote control and get moving!

Bowling

A NEDSRA staple, who doesn't love bowling. Whether you want to be competitive or just enjoy a leisurely outing with classmates take in a few games at the local bowling alley.

Bon Appetit

Promote independence, practice social skills and money management while enjoying a lunch outside of the school cafeteria. Local restaurants offer a unique and effective learning environment to work on many skills being taught in the classroom.

Sensory Station

Come play in NEDSRA's Sensory Station. There is something for everyone whether students prefer the ball pit, the play house or toy bins, you are sure to find an activity for each student's interests. Include other activities such as art therapy and lunch and make the most of your time.

TEACHERS:

Do you want your students to EXCEL?

Do you want them to succeed by growing with opportunities?

Students of every age and ability deserve a recreational outlet and a place to spend time with friends and make new ones. A place that has been created just for them!

The programs in this booklet are incorporated into many of the programs in NEDSRA's seasonal brochures.

Please share with your students' parents the endless opportunities they can have in our programs.

We offer many recreational activities including social clubs, Special Olympics sports, cultural arts and community outings.

If you know of any student that would benefit from NEDSRA programs, contact your NEDSRA liaison now!

Why not create awesome memories for your students?





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