



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED

*"Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone."*

— Martina Navratilova

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

#### Aims of Adaptive Physical Education

Physical education is recognised as an indispensable portion of the school curriculum because of its many faceted benefits. It helps students attain physical, emotional, mental and social prowess. All these eventually build-up their self-esteem – a quality that is not as simple to acquire as it appears to be. Children with disabilities such as mental retardation, speech or hearing impairment, autism, etc. find it harder to compete with their abled peers on the same level. This is why physical education is especially essential for disabled students. To include

them, adaptive physical education is introduced as a sub-discipline. It is a modified or individualised programme that caters to the special needs of disabled students. With specialised curriculum designs, it creates a space for them to realise physical and mental well-being.

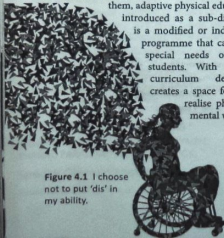


Figure 4.1 I choose not to put 'dis' in my ability.

#### Defining 'Disability'

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, broadly defines 'disability' as:

- ◆ blindness
- ◆ low vision
- ◆ leprosy-cured
- ◆ hearing impairment
- ◆ locomotor disability
- ◆ mental retardation
- ◆ mental illness

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990), an American legislation, further specifies the categorisation by including multiple disabilities, serious emotional disturbance, traumatic brain injury and other health impairment.

#### Objectives of Adaptive Physical Education

Adaptive physical education aims to:

- ◆ develop fundamental motor skills and patterns of students with disabilities, such as running, throwing, catching, etc.
- ◆ help students to improve their balance, coordination and posture.
- ◆ bring about their participation in activities such as dance, aquatics and other sports

- ◆ make them realise healthy self-esteem through increased physical independence
- ◆ reduce health complications

### Principles of Adaptive Physical Education

1. It is imperative to have a thorough knowledge of motor behaviours and development patterns of the different kinds of disabilities, and how people with these disabilities vary from their abled counterparts. Additionally, the trainers should also be aware of the neurological basis of these behaviours and patterns.
2. The activities and programmes should be planned according to the interests of the students and after taking their specific needs into consideration. Instructional design will therefore be customised in this case, with the equipment and environment tailored to cater to individual students or student groups. It will also be based on the capacity and limitations of the students in terms of participation. Group games should be included to encourage socialisation.
3. Routine medical check-up should be conducted not only for pure health benefits, but also to monitor the progress of the students and assess the effectiveness of the programmes.
4. The rules governing physical education classes for abled students cannot be applied to their peers who have special needs. The trainers as such should have the foresight to adapt existing trends. For example, duration of classes can be increased for students and their lesson plans can include more visuals and verbal activities.
5. Apart from having sufficient knowledge and experience, the trainers should also have abundant patience, empathy, and strong communication skills. They should be ethical in their pedagogical approach.

### ORGANISATION PROMOTING ADAPTIVE SPORTS (SPECIAL OLYMPIC BHARAT; PARALYMPICS; DEAFLYMPICS)

#### Special Olympic Bharat

Founded in 1987 as Special Olympics India, it is a

programme of Special Olympics International authorised to conduct Special Olympics for sportspersons with intellectual disabilities in India. Its name was changed to Special Olympic Bharat in 2001. It is now a National Sports Federation registered under the Indian Trust Act 1882 and the official nodal agency for all disabilities.



Figure 4.2 Eunice Kennedy Shriver

The Special Olympics was begun by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the sister of former US President John F Kennedy, who believed in providing equal rights and opportunities to everyone, including people with intellectual disabilities for whom sports could act as a motivating factor for the stimulation of physical and mental growth. Following this principle, Special Olympic Bharat aims to work for the inclusion of this previously neglected group in the field of sports. Till now, it has drawn an impressive number of nearly nine lakh athletes from all over the country.

In its own words, Special Olympic Bharat believes that:

- ◆ people with intellectual disabilities can also learn, enjoy and benefit from participation in sports, with the right help and encouragement.
- ◆ consistent training helps develop their sports skills, and competing with those with equal abilities, tests those skills, measures their progress and provides incentives for personal growth.
- ◆ sports strengthens and benefits people with intellectual disability physically, mentally, socially and spiritually. It also helps their families and the community at large, both through participation and observation.

#### Vision

The vision of Special Olympic Bharat is to:

- ◆ promote holistic development and training that goes beyond the classrooms and brings the participants to the sports arenas, and further to the larger cultural and community spaces.
- ◆ encourage children to join and remain in school so that they receive the same education as their more abled counterparts.

- ❖ produce inspiring role models and also to give a moral and beneficial incentive to parents to send their children to school for both academic education and participation in sports.
- ❖ prepare and sensitise teachers to the specific needs of special children and build a cadre of physical education teachers from among the disabled community with the ability to work both within and outside of the school.
- ❖ involve the community at large for understanding and accepting people with intellectual disabilities and encourage local people to volunteer.
- ❖ make sure that all Special Olympic Bharat activities reflect the Olympic movement values and standards.

### Mission

Special Olympic Bharat aims to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition. The types of sports included in the curriculum are all Olympic approved sports. Both children and adults with intellectual disabilities are covered in the programmes, thereby giving them a chance to strengthen their physique, boost their self-esteem and stimulate their emotional and social intelligence by engaging them in an atmosphere of active, and healthy communication and friendship.

### Oath

"Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

### Achievements

1. Organised competitions in a wide variety of disciplines since 2002 on the national level, such as National Games, National Floor Hockey Championships, National Football and Table Tennis Championship, National Volleyball and Basketball Championship and National Badminton Championship.
2. Athletes from Special Olympic Bharat have participated in World Winter Games and World Summer Games. Up to 2015, they have won 322 gold, 343 silver and 397 bronze medals in the world summer and world winter games bringing a total of 1062 medals.

3. Around 400 sportspersons participated in the first Regional Asia Pacific Games held in 2013. Special Olympics Bharat brought home a total of 387 medals, with 111 gold, 136 silver and 140 bronze.
4. A total of 23,750 athletes participated in the five National Games held between 2001 and 2011.

## Paralympic Movement

The Paralympic Games are an international multi-sporting event involving athletes with a variety of physical and intellectual disabilities, including mobility disabilities, amputation, blindness, short stature, and cerebral palsy. The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) oversees the organisation of these Games, which are held immediately after the Summer and Winter Olympics as Summer Paralympic Games and Winter Paralympic Games respectively.



Figure 4.3 The Paralympic logo

The Paralympic movement was started by Sir Ludwig Guttmann, who believed in the power of sports to change lives for the better. He valued the ability of sports and competing in sports for those with disabilities. He envisioned how they could overcome their physical limitations to the greatest extent possible, and how they could also build their self-esteem by performing well. Guttmann, a Jewish German who had fled Nazi Germany and was working at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital, organised the first games for the disabled in 1948. The participants were British World War II veteran patients with spinal cord injuries. The games were given the name '1948 International Wheelchair Games'.

The Mandeville Games became quite popular. They were held right after the Rome Olympics of 1960 in the same city. Over time, the number of participants increased to 400 athletes and

23 nations. In 1976, events for amputees and visually impaired sportspersons were added, and in 1980 athletes with cerebral palsy could participate for the first time.

A governing body was finally formed in 1982 called the International Coordination Committee of World Sports Organisations for the Disabled (ICC). The term 'paralympic' was officially used in the 1988 Summer Paralympics in Seoul, South Korea – the first time the games were held in the same Olympic host city and permitted to use the same facilities. Though the first Winter Paralympics happened in Örnköldsvik, Sweden, in 1977, it was only in 1992 that the Winter Paralympics enjoyed the same privileges as their summer counterpart to make use of the host city's Olympic facilities.

The IPC replaced the ICC in 1989. In 1994, the IPC organised its first Paralympic Games. It consists of 176 National Paralympic Committees (NPC) and four disability-specific international sports federations. Although the IPC is a separate body, it has close working ties with the IOC with members on the latter's committee participation. Its headquarters are located in Bonn, Germany.

The motto of the Paralympic Games is 'Spirit in Motion', and its symbol are three asymmetrical crescents called agito, circling around a central point. The crescents are red, blue and green in colour. The French musician Thierry Darnis composed the anthem 'Hymne de l'Avenir' ("Anthem of the Future").

Figure 4.4 The Paralympic games



## DID YOU KNOW?

### World Record Holders

1. Trischa Zorn, a swimmer, has won the most medals in the Summer Paralympic Games - a total of 55 medals (41 gold, 9 silver and 5 bronze).
2. Ragnhild Myklebust, a skier, has won the highest number of medals at the Winter Paralympic Games. She won 27 medals (22 gold, 3 silver and 2 bronze).



Trischa Zorn

### India at the Paralympics

1. Murlikant Petkar, a swimmer, won India's first gold medal in the 1972 Paralympic Games in Germany.
2. In the 2016 Summer Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Deepa Malik won a silver medal in shot put. She is the first Indian woman to win a medal in the Paralympic Games.



Deepa Malik

### Ceremony

The opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games is similar to that of the Modern Olympics, having followed the rituals of the Antwerp Summer Olympics of 1920. First, the flag of the host nation is hoisted and the national anthem is played. This is followed by a march past of participating nations in alphabetical order (according to the host's chosen language), with the host nation's participants entering last. After the speeches and entertainment programmes, the torch is lit.

After the sporting events have concluded, the closing ceremony takes place. The first to enter are the flag-bearers of participating nations, followed by athletes of different nationalities in a homogenous mass. The Paralympic Flag is taken down, the national flag of the subsequent host is hoisted and the national anthem played. The flame is extinguished to officially mark the conclusion of the Games.

### Categories of Disability

There are ten categories of disability recognised

by the IPC for participation in the Paralympic Games: eight physical impairment types, visual impairment types and intellectual disability.

### Physical Impairment

- ❖ Impaired passive range of movement, where ability of movement in one or more joints is limited in a systematic way.
- ❖ Loss of limb or limb deficiency, marked by a total or partial absence of bones or joints from partial or total loss. The cause may be trauma, illness or congenital limb deficiency.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

Arunima Sinha, a volleyball player, lost her leg in a tragic accident. She overcame her disability to become the first female amputee to climb Mount Everest.



- ❖ Leg length difference, in which there is significant bone shortening due to trauma or congenital deficiency.
- ❖ Short stature - shortened legs, trunk and arms.
- ❖ Impaired muscle power, for example, spinal cord injury, post-polio syndrome.
- ❖ Ataxia, in which there is lack of coordination of muscle movements.
- ❖ Athetosis, in which movements are unbalanced and involuntary and the posture asymmetrical.
- ❖ Hypertonia, characterised by an abnormal increase in muscle tension and reduced ability of the muscle to stretch.

### Visual Impairment

Visual impairment in this context includes partial vision, poor enough to be judged legally blind, to total blindness. Since 2012, sighted guides of athletes in this category have been recognised as part of the performing team and are eligible to receive medals of their own.

### Intellectual Disability

Impairment in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour are included, the condition being that the athletes are diagnosed before the age of 18.

## Deaflympics

The Deaflympics are an international sports event for deaf athletes, held every four years, with both summer and winter games held alternately after a gap of two years. First held in Paris in 1924, it is the second oldest multinational sports tournament. Over the years, it has gone by several other names, such as 'International Games for the Deaf' from 1924 to 1965, the 'World Games for the Deaf' from 1966 to 1999. The games were also sometimes referred to as 'World Silent Games'. The name 'Deaflympics' was adopted in 2001. Since its inception, it has been organised by Comité International des Sports des Sourds (CISS, 'The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf'). The CISS was recently renamed 'Le Comité International des Sports des Sourds' (The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf, or ICSD). The CISS was inducted into IOC in 1955.

Though the Games started with just 148 athletes from nine countries, 2711 participants from 83 nations participated in the 2013 Summer Deaflympics, while 336 athletes from 27 countries competed in the 2015 Winter Deaflympics.

The characteristics of Deaflympics are:

- ❖ participating must have athletes with a hearing loss of at least 55 decibels in their 'better ear'.
- ❖ hearing aids and cochlear implants are not allowed during the competition.
- ❖ the athletes cannot be guided by sounds, such as bullhorns, whistles and bells. Visual tactics such as waving flags, flashing lights, etc. are used for commencing and refereeing the games.
- ❖ like all other sporting events, it also enforces a drug-free sports environment for all deaf athletes in collaboration with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).
- ❖ it aims to provide deaf athletes a platform free of discrimination where they can compete under conditions of fairness and equality.
- ❖ events included in Summer Deaflympics are athletics, badminton, beach volleyball, volleyball, basketball, bowling, road cycling, football, golf, handball, judo, karate, mountain



Figure 4.5 The Deaflympics logo

biking, orienteering, shooting, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, tennis, freestyle wrestling and Greco-Roman wrestling. Winter events include alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, curling, ice hockey and snowboarding.

## CONCEPT AND NEED OF INTEGRATED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Integrated physical education is a fairly new concept shaped over years of evolution in the pedagogical style of the subject. Initially, physical education was restricted to physical games and play; the body was trained and honed to have a positive impact on the mind. In the modern age of interdisciplinary method of teaching, it can however no longer be separated from the rest of the overall curriculum.

Integrated physical education refers to the combination of physical education in the traditional sense with related sub-disciplines, such as sports sociology, biomechanics, sports medicine, sports pedagogy, exercise physiology, sports psychology, sports philosophy and sports management. The mind of the student is stimulated by both the process of physical exertion and the absorption of knowledge that give extensive insight into the subject as a whole.

### Principles of Integrated Physical Education

- ◆ Since integrated physical education is a wide subject, teachers should be well-versed in all the sub-disciplines and should work with experts and specialists of the sub-disciplines so that students obtain maximum benefits.
- ◆ The classes should be challenging and exciting. These should include plenty of activities and games and should cater to the ability and sensibility of the student group. The idea of learning by doing is an appealing one for students, to whom sitting in a classroom for several hours might not be a motivating environment. Integrated physical education has the potential to bring about such an active atmosphere of learning.
- ◆ The lesson plans should focus on both physical fitness and academic growth by developing motor skills and scholarly studies side by side.

◆ The subject should be taught in such a way that students are able to see the correlation between the various sub-disciplines and understand their significance in the larger context of their school education. Integrated physical education can act as a reinforcement of concepts from other disciplines.

◆ Since the task of education is to prepare students as dynamic citizens of society and the nation, integrated physical education can make a valuable contribution by promoting their physical health and expanding their knowledge base.

The main obstacles that deter the successful implementation of this teaching method in the present scenario of Indian physical education are the lack of additional knowledge such as teachers' and school administrators' unwillingness to change and need for proper funding. With the right amount of resources and training, these hiccups may be overcome and integrated physical education may be made available to every school in the country.

### Examples of Integrated Physical Education

Given below are some of the ways in which integrated physical education can be executed:

- ◆ English lessons can be made more fun and engaging by making the students act out the plays, poems and stories. This type of lesson plan can also be useful for history classes.
- ◆ Physical exercise activities are a good means of teaching students about the cardiovascular system and body metabolism.
- ◆ Mathematics is another area where this concept can be successfully applied. Students can use their motor skills to add, divide, subtract and multiply.

## CONCEPT OF INCLUSION, ITS NEED AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Concept of Inclusion

In UNESCO's Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report on out-of-school populations (2014), it was observed that 1.4 million Indian

children of ages 6 to 11 are not receiving formal education. Almost half of the students in primary school drop out before completing five years, while only 42% complete high school. Some of the contributing factors are shortage of teachers and schools in relation to the population, poor quality of learning, social and cultural factors, poverty, etc. This is the case with general education and the general population; in such a condition, inclusive education – education of students with learning disabilities and special needs – is a huge challenge to be met. That said, it is not an impossible task to achieve.

The matter of inclusive education<sup>4</sup> was first adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (Salamanca Statement, Spain, 1994), and reinforced at the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 2000). In this statement, the respective governments of participating nations were asked to prioritise inclusive education. Inclusive education was described as the “*recognition of the need to work towards schools for all – institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs.*”

Additionally, the importance of inclusive education is also highlighted by United Nations Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Person with Disability Proclaiming Participation and Equality for All. UNICEF declares: “*inclusive education is not only about issues of input, such as access, and those related to processes such as teacher training, but it involves a shift in underlying values*

**Figure 4.6** Inclusive education plays an important role in bringing people with special needs into the mainstream.



*and beliefs, along with very specific approaches, positions, and solutions.”*

At the Jomtien World Conference in Thailand, 1990, education was recognised as a fundamental human right. Of the many goals adopted by the delegates, the following are relevant to inclusive education:

- ◊ universal access to learning
- ◊ a focus on equity

In the context of India, the Kothari Commission raised the issue of inclusive education in 1966, and the government introduced Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) Scheme in 1974. Project Integrated Education for Disabled Children (PIED) was launched by NCERT in 1987 in collaboration with UNICEF to streamline the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education. The National Policy on Education (1986), the Programme of Action (1992), the District Primary Education Programme (1997), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2001), were some of the measures which also laid stress on the integration of students with special needs into the mainstream. The Universalisation of Elementary Education, which launched SSA, made the crucial declaration of access, enrolment and retention of all children of 6-14 years of age in school, with a policy of ensuring education for Child With Special Needs (CWSN).

Additionally, the Ministry of Human Resource Development introduced a National Action Plan in 2005 for incorporating inclusive education. The IEDC scheme was also replaced by the ‘Inclusive Education of the Disabled at the Secondary Stage’ (IEDSS) for providing inclusive education for students with disabilities in classes IX to XII.

Inclusive education simply means bringing students with disabilities under the same umbrella under which students of general education are covered. The idea is to treat them equally and provide them the same academic and vocational opportunities that their peers receive.

### Need of Inclusion

- ◊ Students with special disabilities already face certain disadvantages and limitations, which does not mean that they should be deprived of the knowledge and experience obtained by

others at their schools. They too should enjoy the fundamental human right of education.

- ❖ Inclusive education is a big step towards integration of students with disabilities in the greater fold of the society. It will not only make them informed and skilled individuals but also produce more capable citizens for the nations.
- ❖ Inclusive education will also reduce the discrimination faced by people with disabilities. Here, mention may be made of Ira Singhal, who did not let her disability prevent her from topping the UPSC Exam in 2014 – her second attempt. She had already cleared the exam in 2010 in her first attempt but was denied a posting owing to her spinal cord problems and related motor inabilities and extremely short height.
- ❖ Inclusive education also has multiple benefits for students with special needs, such as enhancement of their social skills and emotional intelligence, development of principles and cultural sensibilities and generally enriching their lives. The same can be said of their classmates, who through the close contact established in the classroom, begin to nurture high levels of empathy and social cognition.

## Implementation of Inclusion

In order to facilitate inclusive education successfully, the following measures may be considered:

- ❖ a proper realisation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act and its provisions, and inclusion of students with special needs under its aegis. All marginalised students should be welcomed by schools whose task is to educate one and all without bias.
- ❖ specialised training programmes for teachers who are given the responsibility of working with students with disabilities, since the requirements of this section of the population are different from the general trend.
- ❖ at schools, an entire team of experts, from special educators and physiotherapists, to counsellors and occupational therapists, should be present to look after the various needs.
- ❖ curricula and instructional design prepared for students with disabilities should have plenty of

room for adjustments, without dumbing down the content.

- ❖ schools should be able to provide necessary facilities, including ease of transport and sanitation and equipment – from wheelchairs and assistive devices to basics like stationery and audiobooks, for their students to enable learning methods that are suitable and interesting for students with special needs.
- ❖ it is important to involve parents in the education of students with disabilities, since their care and nurture are also to be taken up at home. Another concern is that parents and guardians should be fully aware of the progress of the student at the school, and their inputs sought on how to proceed in case of trauma or special situations. They will also be able to meet other parents and guardians and thus form a supportive community.
- ❖ students with disabilities should be treated as the general population of the school and not approached with sympathy, which will only have a negative impact on their self-esteem. The onus is on the teachers to cultivate a healthy environment where differently abled students can successfully learn and attain self-growth.
- ❖ steps such as frequent training programmes should be carried out, along with evaluation and upgrading of the programmes.
- ❖ if the existing curriculum is proved ineffective, then measures for improvement of the structure should be taken up after consultation with experts in the field.
- ❖ at the government level, action should be taken to adopt and execute frameworks such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Dakar Framework for Action. It would also be productive to work with NGOs that are specialising in the area for developing plans on successful implementation of inclusive education.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Ministry of HRD launched Saksham Scholarship Scheme in 2014 to provide support and encouragement to 1000 differently abled students to pursue technical education in a year. For more information, visit: [mhrd.gov.in](http://mhrd.gov.in)



## **ROLE OF VARIOUS PROFESSIONALS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (COUNSELLOR, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST, PHYSIOTHERAPIST, PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SPEECH THERAPIST AND SPECIAL EDUCATOR)**

### **Special Education Counsellor**

The role of a school counsellor is to look after the students and their well-being, taking into consideration the academic, vocational, social and psychological factors. A special education counsellors do the same for students with special needs. They work with the students and parents when the need arises, consult the teachers and school authorities, and try to resolve any problem that the students might be facing. The role of a special education counsellor for children with special needs may be outlined as given below:

- ❖ To communicate with the students and determine the problems they might be facing and the causes of the problems, and to arrive at solutions after consultation with the parties involved in the welfare of the student, such as family and school authorities.
- ❖ To hold sessions with the students on a one-on-one or group basis.
- ❖ To figure out the best ways of bringing a strong and productive relationship between the students and their teachers.
- ❖ To work along with other experts, such as speech therapists, hearing and ear mould technicians, social workers, etc. when the situation demands so that the issues faced by the students are resolved successfully.
- ❖ To provide guidance to the students when it comes to chalking out their career, and offering referrals to external resources such as vocational trainers and non-profit organisations specialising in the field.
- ❖ To broaden as well as deepen the connection between the students and their families so that the latter are fully knowledgeable of the strengths, limitations and potentials of the former.
- ❖ To expand the social skills of the students and identify their aptitudes, and intervene in cases of trauma.

An individual interested in becoming a special education counsellor should have sufficient academic knowledge of disabilities and special needs, experience in the field of student counselling, sharp communication skills and personality traits like patience, empathy and strength of will.

### **Occupational Therapist**

An occupational therapist has a very significant role for children and young adults with special needs, especially those who face difficulties with coordination and sensory processing. Their many responsibilities may be outlined as follows:

- ❖ to help students perfect their fine motor and visual skills, as well as take care of themselves.
- ❖ to aid the students in gaining correct hand-eye coordination, translation of sensory perception and spatial awareness. An occupational therapist can also guide special needs students with visual impairment or visual processing difficulties to recognise shapes and figures correctly.
- ❖ to assess the abilities of the students and encourage them to participate in the activities of the classroom and playgrounds.
- ❖ to bring about improvement in the instructional methods, such as modification of the classroom equipment and facilities.
- ❖ to evaluate the needs of students individually and as a group, provide intervention along with evaluation, and come up with strategies for meeting targets and goals.

### **Physiotherapist**

A physiotherapist helps students with special needs achieve full physical functions. She/he is usually well-versed in related disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, kinesiology and neuroscience. The various roles of a physiotherapist are:

- ❖ to start by assessing the students' physical capabilities and then helping them gain control of fundamental motor skills such as reaching, grasping, tying, handwriting, eating and drinking.
- ❖ to design programmes and activities that involve promotion of balance, strength and coordination.



Figure 4.7 A physiotherapist helps a child with special needs to achieve complete physical function.

- ♦ to introduce toys and equipment through which a greater range of physical functions can be mastered.
- ♦ to monitor the progress of the students and make adjustments to the programmes and activities as required.
- ♦ to teach the parents and guardians, if necessary, how to approach the problems faced by the students and train them to participate in the development of the students' motor abilities.
- ♦ to work with other authorities and experts, including health professionals when there is a need for medical consultation and supervision.

### Physical Education Teacher

Students with special needs are less likely to be enrolled in physical education classes as compared to their peers in general education. This is dangerous since lack of physical activity will bring on a set of health risks and disorders. For this reason, physical education teachers should shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that students with special needs also get their own share of activities such as playtime and exercises, for improvement of their physical health as well as social and emotional skills. The roles of physical education teachers in this context include:

- ♦ to devise a platform or setting in which students with special needs can perform exercises and activities suitable to them.

- ♦ to evaluate and adapt existing curriculum so that students with special needs can be accommodated.
- ♦ to plan and prepare for activities that are tailored to suit the abilities and requirements of students with special needs. This would include modification of equipment and facilities.
- ♦ To instil a positive attitude in the students by bringing out their strength and potential.
- ♦ to participate actively in the classes themselves so that they may observe the progress of the students and make changes in the programme accordingly.
- ♦ to approach the students' needs on individual and group levels and come up with solutions for both levels.
- ♦ to identify the emotional needs of the students and work with counsellors and clinical psychologists, as well as parents and authorities, for the betterment of the students. This is especially crucial for students suffering from anxiety and depression.

### Speech Therapist

A speech therapist, also called speech language pathologist (SLP) or simply speech pathologist, works with communicative and speech disorders, which may be speech and lingual issues, problems with swallowing and voice, cognitive-communication etc. The roles and responsibilities of speech therapist with respect to students with special needs are:

- ♦ to first diagnose the exact type of speech disorders the student is suffering from. There are many types of speech disorders, including those involving language, articulation, fluency, resonance and swallowing. A speech disorder may be inherited, it may occur at birth, or it may be caused by neurological damage brought on by some traumatic event.
- ♦ to plan a process of treating the disorder, and then to work closely with the student and monitoring her/his progress once the treatment begins.
- ♦ to make considerations for personal, social, emotional, academic and vocational needs associated with the student's educational goals.



Figure 4.8 A speech therapist helping a child during a session.

- ♦ to make considerations for cultural and environmental factors that might have contributed to the disorder, and devise a treatment strategy that pays due attention to deal with such factors.
- ♦ to work along with special education teachers, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, audiologists and physiotherapists so that the treatment for the student is inclusive and fruitful.

### Special Educator

Special educators specialise in the field of special education, and are experts in working with students with learning, mental, emotional and

physical disabilities. Their roles are many and may be listed as given below:

- ♦ to evaluate the existing skillsets and potential of students with special needs so that a suitable instructional method may be designed.
- ♦ to alter general education lessons in such a way that they are accessible to students with special needs.
- ♦ to teach basic literacy and communication skills.
- ♦ to implement teaching on both individual and group levels and plan activities and lessons accordingly.
- ♦ to help the students achieve academic success in addition to perfecting their social skills and emotional intelligence.
- ♦ to constantly assess their lesson plans and activities and make changes to suit the level of progress of the students.
- ♦ to work with the other parties involved in the education of students with special needs – teachers, counsellors, experts and school authorities – and aim for all-round growth and development of the students.

As per the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Act 1992, any qualified individual interested in working in the field of special education in India is obliged to obtain a 'Registered Professional Certificate' from RCI. Any deviation from the above regulation should have the prior approval of RCI.

### SUMMARY

1. To include the differently abled, adaptive physical education was introduced as a sub-discipline. It is a modified or individualised programme that caters to the special needs of disabled students.
2. Adapted physical education is concerned with improving the health and fitness of the child. This includes enhancing motor skills and coordination and subsequently boosting self-esteem.
3. Special Olympics Bharat is a programme of Special Olympics/International authorised to conduct Special Olympics for sportspersons with intellectual disabilities in India.
4. The Paralympic Games are an international multi-sporting event involving athletes with a variety of physical and intellectual disabilities, including mobility disabilities, amputation, blindness, short stature and cerebral palsy.
5. The Deaflympics are an international sports event for deaf athletes held every four years, with both summer and winter games held alternatively after a gap of two years.