

# HOW TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE WALKING CLUB!



**INCLUSIVE FITNESS INITIATIVE**  
NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council 2015







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Inclusive Fitness Initiative is a pilot program that is focused on wellness and health promotion for young adults who have developmental disabilities.

This booklet was published in 2015 with funding from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.



# Acknowledgments

This booklet was created in 2015 for the Inclusive Fitness Initiative. The goal is to promote inclusion of young adults with developmental disabilities in community-based wellness programs. The Inclusive Fitness Initiative is funded by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

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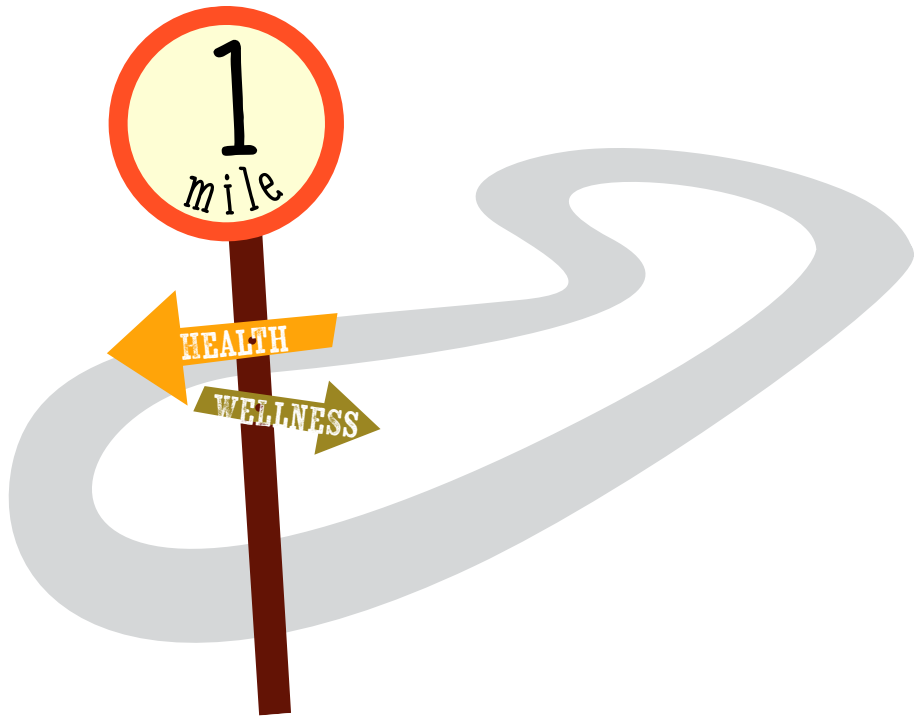
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# Our Story

## Fitness Inclusion Network

The Fitness Inclusion Network is a collaborative, cross-institution initiative that was launched in 2013 with support from the Upstate Foundation/Golisano Children's Hospital, SUNY Cortland Department of Physical Education, Exercise Science-Physical Education at Syracuse University and the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University. We are an interdisciplinary group of athletes, students, families, and professionals in adapted physical education, medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, engineering, therapeutic recreation, special education, social work, and disability policy and law.



Our mission is to develop innovative ways to promote and support inclusive fitness for children, adolescents and adults with disabilities in Central New York.

We maintain an Information Hub for listing local adapted physical activity and inclusive sports events. We also host an Annual Fit-In Conference

<http://FitnessInclusionNetwork.org>

that brings national leaders in the field of adapted sports to Central New York. Lastly, our team has published a wide variety of educational materials, manuals, and DVDs. These are all open-source materials that can be downloaded from our website. In 2012, with support from the Green Family



Foundation and the Madeline Cote Fund, we launched the first in a planned series of guidebooks for high school students. These guidebooks are intended to help high school students to be change agents in the inclusive fitness movement. "How to Create an Inclusive Walking Club" is our second publication in this series.

### Pilot Project Funding

Central New York's inclusive Monday Mile program and this companion how-to guide are part of a pilot grant called the Inclusive Fitness Initiative that was funded in 2015

by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC). The focus of the Inclusive Fitness Initiative is young adulthood (ages 18-25 years). Our goal is to promote inclusion in community settings such as gyms, parks, climbing walls, dance schools, and yoga studios. To date our work has focused on Syracuse's Near West Side and South Side, which has some of the highest disability rates in Central New York. We would like to thank Syracuse's Near West Side Initiative and the Southwest Community Center for all that they do with and for people who have developmental disabilities. In particular we would like to thank the young adults with autism, intellectual disability and other developmental disabilities, and their circles of support, for feedback and guidance during Year 1 of the Inclusive Fitness Initiative.





## Partnerships

This guidebook was created in collaboration with the City of Syracuse Department of Parks and Recreation, the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion at Syracuse University, and SUNY Cortland's Inclusive Recreation Resource Center. Technical assistance was provided by Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute and the Northeast ADA Center. For more information about DDPC's Inclusive Fitness Initiative, the Fit-IN guides for high school students, and the Fitness Inclusion Network, please visit <http://FitnessInclusionNetwork.org>.

## Our Strategy!

Our strategy is to empower young adults themselves to become change agents for inclusive fitness in our community.

We hope that this booklet will generate ideas and provide inspiration. Be the change you want to see!



# The Monday Mile

## Healthy Mondays

Healthy Monday is a public health initiative founded in 2005 in association with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Columbia Mailman School of Public Health, and Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. The idea behind Monday Mile and other Healthy Monday initiatives is to start the week off with healthy habits. More information about Monday Mile loops in Onondaga County, including printable maps, can be found at <http://healthymonday.syr.edu>. If you live outside of Onondaga County and would like to start a Monday Mile program, you can get a toolkit at: <http://www.moveitmonday.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Monday-Mile-Toolkit-2015.pdf>

### Start Your Own Monday Mile Group! It's Easy:

#### 1. Map Your Monday Mile

Pick a starting point for your group to meet. Use the Monday Mile loops that are marked throughout Onondaga County, or create your own Monday Mile loop. It's easy to create a mile-long walking route using MapMyWalk or Gmap-Pedometer apps. Refer to the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center ([www.inclusiverec.org](http://www.inclusiverec.org)) database to see whether your trail or loop is accessible to all, or do an inclusion assessment using the Inclusion U assessment tools (Learn more about this on page 22)

#### 2. Announce Your Monday Mile

If your school or workplace allows it, send an announcement via interoffice or school-wide email. Create a Facebook group or Instagram account for your group and encourage participants to join.

#### 3. Mark Your Route

Consider marking your route with Monday Mile Markers: Place markers at the one-quarter, half, three-quarter and one mile points.

#### 4. Meet and Mile

Show up on time, greet participants and enjoy your Monday Mile!

#### 5. Log Those Monday Miles

Keep track of Monday Miles and exercise completed during the rest of the week. Even if you fall short of the 150-minute weekly activity goal, the next Monday is another chance to start again. You can use the Monday Mile passport to keep track of your progress and challenge yourself to move more!

#### 6. Thank Everyone for Participating

Send a thank you email and post the walk on Facebook or Instagram. Ask participants to encourage others to attend next Monday and to share posts about the walk.

#### 7. Encourage Healthy Competition

Organize teams of walkers or encourage individual group members to compete against each other to see who can walk the most each week. It's easy to keep track of walking data using smartphone apps such as MapMyWalk and Moves.

#### 8. Promote Inclusion!

Share information about Monday Mile loops that are accessible and inclusive: Instagram has a mapping feature that makes it easy for people to locate routes and to share pictures and videos that demonstrate accessibility and inclusion.



# The Monday Mile Q•A



The Monday Mile is a fun way to achieve your fitness goals by getting out to move a mile for your health. Healthy Monday encourages people to use Monday as a way to start or sustain healthy behaviors. There are many Monday Mile marked walking routes across Onondaga County. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy this non-competitive fitness initiative. The purpose is to provide people of all ages and abilities the opportunity to exercise, meet others, and enjoy scenic locations throughout Central New York.

## **Q: So, what exactly is the Monday Mile?**

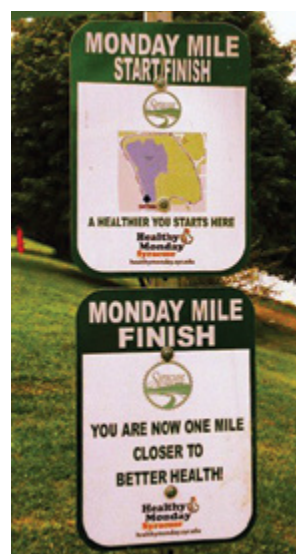
**A:** The Monday Mile is a fun way to get in your daily exercise, it easily works into your schedule and helps to jump start your week. Oh— and it's also a great excuse to go visit the Syracuse and Onondaga County parks! C'mon, grab a buddy!

## **Q: Why a mile?**

**A:** Did you know that the weekly exercise recommendation for adults is 150 minutes a week? Well, break that down to just 5 days a week—yep, that's only 30 minutes—about the time it would take you to walk a mile or so.

## **Q: What's walking a mile going to do for my health?**

**A:** Walking a mile takes about 20-30 minutes. And guess what? Just walking 30 minutes a day has been shown to have numerous health benefits! It can improve your heart health and lower your blood pressure, strengthen your bones, help you maintain a healthy weight, manage stress, improve your sleep and reduce your risk of developing certain chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, obesity and certain types of cancer.



## **Q: I walked on Monday so I am done for the week, right?**

**A:** Well, as we like to say here at Healthy Monday Syracuse, Mondays are the day to set your intentions for the week and kick off your week with a healthy start. Make it your goal to continue your healthy behaviors throughout the rest of the week. And if that's not okay there is always next Monday!

## **Q: Are there any side effects I need to be aware of:**

**A:** Yes! Side effects may include happiness, less stress, a healthier heart, weight loss, more energy, and increased confidence!



# The Passport Challenge

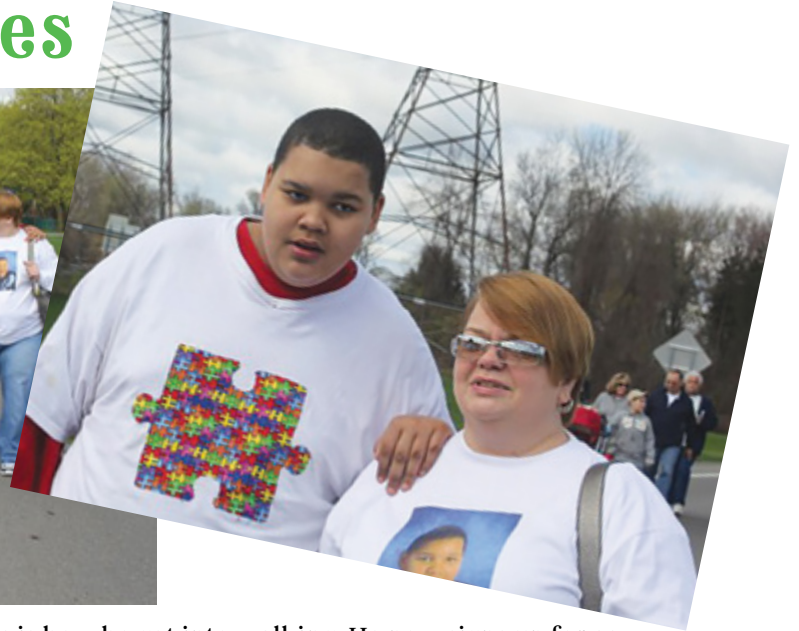
Get active with the Monday Mile Passport Challenge! Stroll or roll all of the routes to win a Fit-In pin from the Fitness Inclusion Network.

<http://FitnessInclusionNetwork.org>



- Barry Park
- Beaver Lake Park
- Burnett Park
- Downtown Syracuse
- Highland Forest Park
- Jamesville Beach Park
- Near West Side
- Onondaga Lake Park
- Schiller Park
- St. Joseph's Hospital
- Sunnycrest Park
- Syracuse University Campus
- Thornden Park
- Upper Onondaga Park
- Upstate University Campus
- Upstate University Community Campus
- Webster Pond

# People and Stories



Cory did the autism walk a couple of years ago. This is how he got into walking. He now signs up for as many walk-a-thons as he can. In the winter he does mall-walking with his friends. He recently signed up for the Monday Mile Passport Challenge.



Chad is vice president of the Anglers Association of Onondaga, a non-profit group that is based at Webster Pond in the Valley section of Syracuse. This is a 95-acre pond/nature sanctuary, with fish and wildlife as the main attraction. Chad uses a power wheelchair for mobility. He is a local leader for Inclusive Fitness. Over the past couple of years Chad has led an effort to create an accessible walking loop around the pond. The pond includes a nature trail complete with accessible bridges and benches for resting.

“I know how much people in the Valley love this landmark and have been coming here for many years. I wanted to take this whole thing and turn it around into something that the public and the community can enjoy.”



# People and Stories

Many of Syracuse's Monday Mile loops are near workplaces. The idea is to make it easy for employees to get together to go for a walk during the lunch hour. High school interns with Upstate's "Project Search" school-to-work program participate in the Monday Mile walks. This is an example of inclusion. The Monday Mile program contributes to an excellent total workplace immersion experience for "Project Search" students at SUNY Upstate Medical University. Learn more about "Project Search" school-to-work transition program for students who have developmental disabilities.

[www.projectsearch.us](http://www.projectsearch.us)



MONDAY  
mile

# Inclusion

## Inclusive Recreation Resource Center (IRRC)



We worked with people from the Syracuse Department of Parks and Recreation and the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center to make sure that Monday Mile loops would be accessible and inclusive. Several of us became Certified Inclusivity

Assessors along the way. You can learn more about this online course at the IRRC website:

The mission of the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center (IRRC) is to promote and sustain participation by people of all abilities in inclusive recreation activities and resources. The IRRC puts that mission into action with these ongoing services and activities.

[www.inclusiverec.org](http://www.inclusiverec.org)



### Inclusion U

IRRC provides online training, called *Inclusion U Online*, to parks and recreation professionals, self-advocates, high school and college students, tourism professionals, human services professionals, families, and anyone interested in increasing opportunities for inclusive recreation. Inclusion U Online teaches you how to be a Certified Inclusivity Assessor (CIA)! Once you complete Inclusion U Online, you are able to complete inclusivity assessments and submit the results to the IRRC online recreation database.

### Inclusivity Surveys

A user-friendly tool, the *Inclusivity Assessment Tool*, helps programs and facilities assess both physical accessibility and administrative and programmatic inclusion.

### Online Recreation Database

All programs or facilities that are assessed using the Inclusivity Assessment Tool are entered into an extensive online database. The searchable database is a comprehensive bank of descriptive information on how inclusive and accessible recreation resources are. The goal is to help people with disabilities better plan their recreation.

### Technical Assistance

IRRC is available to help individual agencies as they work to increase inclusion of people with disabilities and other differences into their parks, programs, or facilities.

### Partnerships

The Center partners with numerous agencies and groups to promote full inclusion in recreation. IRRC welcomes new partnerships that will help change and sustain systems for inclusive recreation and parks.

### Research and Evaluation

Central to the Center's work is careful study of what works best to facilitate inclusion. IRRC collects data to help identify the best ways to help parks and recreation opportunities be inclusive, and to help people with disabilities achieve their "recreation dreams and aspirations."




# Top Ten Tips to Increase Usability

Through years of research using the Inclusivity Assessment Tool on many recreation facilities and programs, the IRRC has developed a list of the “Top Ten” areas where improvements may be needed to increase inclusivity. Following is that list and several other helpful checklists to put the suggestions into action.

1	<b>People First</b> People with disabilities are people first.
2	<b>Communicate Clearly</b> Use plain language and alternative forms of communication.
3	<b>Make Sure Everyone’s Invited</b> Review marketing materials and website for inclusiveness.
4	<b>A Clear Path</b> Ensure that people of all sizes and abilities can approach, enter, and use.
5	<b>Make Space</b> Ensure there is room for people of all abilities to move freely and use amenities.
6	<b>Provide Alternatives</b> One size does not fit all — use basic principles of universal design.
7	<b>Know Your Business</b> Policies about inclusion and access are developed and shared.
8	<b>Bridge the Gap Between Ability and Activity</b> Bridge the gap between customers needs and satisfying experiences.
9	<b>Support Each Customer</b> A best practice to support all people is to provide a quiet space.
10	<b>Your Staff are Your Ambassadors</b> Staff must understand what inclusion is and how to make it happen.



# Checklist for Accessibility Dimensions

Route of Travel	
Width of route of travel at its narrowest point	36"
Slope of route of travel at its steepest point	8%
Wheelchair Maneuvering space	
Diameter needed to turn wheelchair	60" circle
Parking	
Clearly marked with upright signs	
International symbol of accessibility displayed	
Width of accessible parking spots	96"
Width of access aisle	96" in NY
Ramps	
Width of ramp at its narrowest point	36"
Slope of ramp	8% or less
Depth of ramp landing	60" or more
Doors	
Distance between doors in a series	48" or more
Clear open width of door	32" or more
Opening force of interior doors	5 pounds or less
Clear space on pull side of door	18" or more
Registration /Check-in Area	
Registration counter height	36" or more
Restroom	
Width of the toilet stall	60"
Depth of the toilet stall-varies; see link below for details	varies
Distance to center line of toilet from nearest side wall	16-18"
Toilet seat height	17-19"
Sink height	34" or less
Depth of knee space under sink (from outer edge of sink to pipes under sink)	at least 8"
Soap dispenser and hand dryer/paper towels height	48" or less
Elevator	
Elevator control panel height	48" or less
Elevator door width	36" or more

# Principles of Universal Design Checklist

1

## Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

- ✓ Provide the same means of use for all users: identical when possible, equivalent when not.
- ✓ Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- ✓ Make provisions for privacy, security, and safety equally available to all users.
- ✓ Make the design appealing to users.

2

## Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

- ✓ Provide choice in methods of use.
- ✓ Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- ✓ Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

3

## Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's level of ability.

- ✓ Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- ✓ Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- ✓ Arrange information consistent with its importance
- ✓ Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

4

## Perceptible Information

The design communicates information effectively to the user, regardless of abilities.

- ✓ Use the different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for presentation of information.
- ✓ Maximize "legibility" of essential information.
- ✓ Provide compatibility with techniques/devices used by people with sensory limitations.

5

## Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and adverse consequences of unintended actions.

- ✓ Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements are most accessible.
- ✓ Hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
- ✓ Provide warnings of hazards and errors and fail-safe features.

6

## Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

- ✓ Use reasonable operating forces.
- ✓ Minimize repetitive actions.

Minimize sustained physical effort.

7

## Size & Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of users body size, posture or mobility.

- ✓ Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- ✓ Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- ✓ Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- ✓ Provide adequate space for the use of assistive device or personal assistance.

# Helpful Policy Recommendations:

## Wheelchairs and Other Assistive Mobility Devices

The ADA adopts a two-tiered approach to mobility devices, distinguishing between wheelchairs and “other power-driven mobility devices,” which include a range of devices not specifically designed for individuals with mobility impairments (e.g., Segways). Wheelchairs and other devices designed for use by people with mobility impairments must be permitted in all areas open to pedestrian use. “Other power-driven mobility devices” must be permitted unless such use would fundamentally alter the entity’s programs, services or activities, create a direct threat, or create a safety hazard.



## Personal Care Attendants

Personal care attendants accompany an individual with a disability for the express purpose of providing assistance in daily living, transferring, and the like. Personal care attendants are often not charged full admission because they are attending a recreation venue solely in their work capacity as an assistant to the person with a disability. Many recreation agencies offer “membership plus one” or “caregiver cards” that allow the personal care attendant to enter the recreation venue without question about fees and charges

## Service Animals

The ADA defines a “service animal” as any dog (or miniature horse) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Other animals and dogs that are not trained to assist with a disability or who merely provide emotional support are excluded from this definition. The rule also clarifies that individuals with mental disabilities who use service animals that are trained to perform a specific task are protected by the ADA.

To determine if an animal is a service animal, a public entity or a private business may ask two questions: 1) Is this animal required because of a disability? 2) What work or task has this animal been trained to perform? A public entity or private business may not ask about the nature or extent of an individual’s disability. It also may not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained or licensed as a service animal, or require the animal to wear an identifying vest.



# Inclusion U Online – Becoming a CIA!

## What is Inclusion U?

The Inclusion U training provides a foundation of inclusion and prepares you to use the Inclusivity Assessment Tool in a consistent, accurate, and valid manner. Everyone who uses the tool and reports information to be included in the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center's online recreation database has received this same training. After successfully completing the training, you become a Certified Inclusivity Assessor (CIA)! Here is a brief overview of the important topics you learn about in Inclusion U:

### Module #1: Introduction

- The IRRC (mission, vision, activities)
- Process to complete the course and become a “certified” inclusivity assessor

### Module #2: What is Inclusion and Why Is It Important?

- Definitions and core principles
- Physical accessibility - built and natural environment
- Social accessibility - programs, services & events, administration

### Module #3: What Do I Need To Know About Disability?

- Person first language
- Functional abilities - physical, sensory, intellectual, emotional, social

### Module #4: Assessing Inclusivity

- Overview of the Inclusivity Assessment Tool (validity, reliability, usability)
- Tools and supplies needed
- Description of each section of the inclusivity tool

### Module #5: What is Physical Inclusion?

- Accessibility - approach, enter, use in relation to functional abilities
- Guidelines for built and natural environments
- Universal design

### Module #6: Administrative Inclusion

- Mission, vision and values
- Planning structures and involvement of people with disabilities
- Staff hiring, training, and evaluation
- Inclusion point of contact
- Communication, marketing and promotion, including web page design
- Policies and procedures (e.g., policy on personal assistants, use of helping dogs, etc.)

### Module #7: Programmatic Inclusion

- Registration and needs assessment
- Supports and accommodations

### Module #8: Networking, Partnerships and Collaboration

- Benefits of partnerships and collaboration
- How to identify potential partnerships that are win-win
- How to form productive partnerships
- Skills needed for collaboration and partnering

### Module #9: Putting It Into Action

- Steps to completing an inclusivity assessment
- Inputting your assessment into the IRRC Online Recreation Database
- FINAL EXAM!

## What is a CIA (Certified Inclusivity Assessor)?

A Certified Inclusivity Assessor (CIA) is anyone who has been trained to use the Inclusivity Assessment Tool (IAT) by completing **Inclusion U Online** and passing the “final exam” with the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center. A CIA knows how to use the IAT to assess a recreation amenity for its inclusiveness. CIAs are trained to assess physical and social inclusion at a recreation agency. And, only CIAs can use the Inclusivity Assessment Tool, developed by the Inclusive Recreation Resource Center.

## How do I become a CIA?

To become a CIA, you must successfully complete **Inclusion U Online**. You must pass the final exam to show that you have the knowledge to use the Inclusivity Assessment Tool. Once you pass the exam, you are given access to all the online assessment tools and resources so that you can use the tools to assess recreation agencies. You can register for Inclusion U Online at [www.inclusiverec.org](http://www.inclusiverec.org). You can then complete the nine modules at your own pace, take the final exam (and score 80% or better), and become a CIA!

## What happens to the information I collect on the IAT?

Information you collect with the Inclusivity Assessment Tool goes directly into the IRRC Online Recreation Database. The Online Recreation Database can then be used by people with disabilities and their families and friends to plan recreation experiences, so they can “play wherever they choose!”

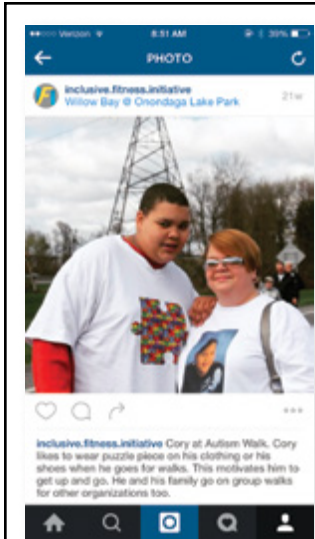




# Join Us On Instagram!

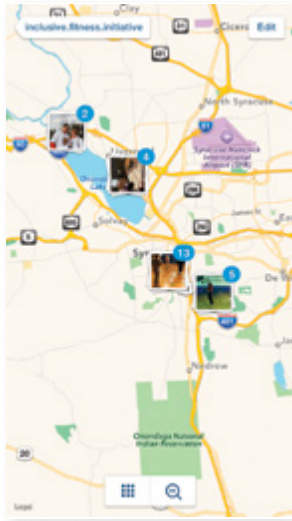
Share what you do and where YOU go to stay fit and active! Download the Instagram app on your smart phone and look us up:

**Inclusive.Fitness.Initiative.**

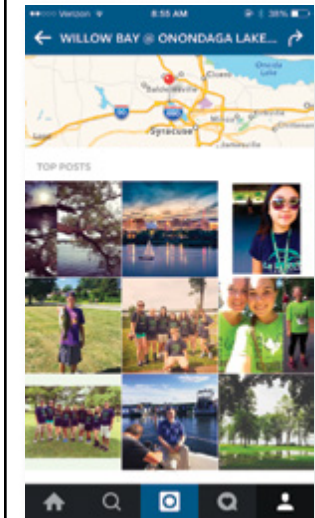
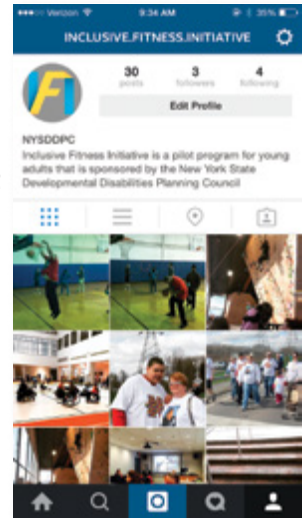


**1** Post a photo of an inclusive fitness activity that you enjoy! Say something about the activity. Others can comment too!

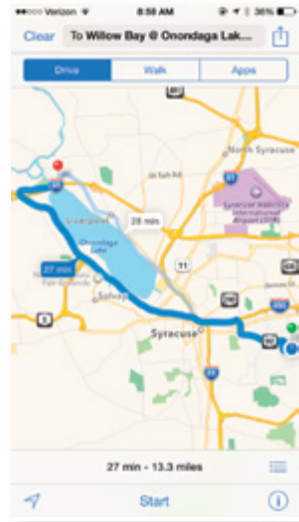
**2** Use Instagram to find out about other inclusive fitness groups in our community.



**3** The map feature lets you locate inclusive resources in your area.



**4** Tap on a location to see what others are doing to stay fit!



**5** Open in maps to get directions!



# RESOURCES

## Local Resources

City of Syracuse Department of Parks and Recreation  
<http://www.syracuse.ny.us/parks/>

Fitness Inclusion Network  
<http://bbi.syr.edu/projects/Fit-In/index.html>

Folksmarch Walking Group, YMCA of Greater Syracuse  
<http://www.syracuse.ymca.org/folksmarch>

Healthy Monday Syracuse  
<http://healthymonday.syr.edu/index.html>

Inclusive Recreation Resource Center  
<http://www.inclusiverec.org/>

Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion  
<http://lernercenter.syr.edu/>

Syracuse Near West Side Initiative  
<http://www.saltdistrict.com/>

## National Resources

Center for Disease Control Vital Signs: Adults with Disabilities  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/disabilities/>

Commit to Inclusion Campaign  
<http://committoinclusion.org/>

<http://committoinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Guidelines-Implementations-Manual-1.pdf>

Monday Mile Starter Kit:  
<http://www.moveitmonday.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Monday-Mile-Toolkit-2015.pdf>

How I Walk: A Campaign to Rebrand Walking  
<http://www.nchpad.org/>



# Recommended Walking (and Rolling!) Apps



**Every Body Walk!**



**Moves**



**Runtastic Pedometer**



**Map My Walk**



**Charity Miles**

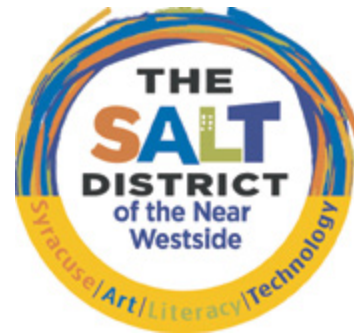


**RunKeeper**



**Wheelchair Calorimeter**





Burton Blatt Institute  
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

# Cortland

State University of New York College at Cortland



*Fitness Inclusion Network*



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