



<p style="text-align: center;">Volunteer Information Role B: Sports Activity Helper for Autistic Children</p>

Description of What is Needed:-

Autistic children attending a trampoline session need two forms of help.

1. When they are off the trampoline and waiting for their turn they may need support in undertaking warm up activities with other children and with 'finishing' one activity before moving onto the next.
2. Whilst on the trampoline the emphasis may initially be less on sport skill development than on encouraging the foundation skills to be able to access coaching i.e. getting used to the sound, sensation and feel of the trampoline. Specific help for those new to the sport may also be required.

The sports coaching needs to take account of some of the particular difficulties that autism brings. For instance:- rules need to be set out clearly and adhered to. Instructions need to be delivered personally, directly, clearly and may need to be repeated with time allowed for processing the information.

Skills awards for progress in trampolining are given to the children and volunteers will have input to this. There will also be opportunities to become a sports volunteer session leader or even be sponsored to become a qualified trampoline coach.

Skills and Qualifications Needed:-

Experience working with children, disability or challenging behaviour would be useful but no specific qualifications are needed as periodic training sessions are given by a specialist worker in autistic spectrum disorder. This is specifically for volunteers working with children with autism in out-of-school activities. However, a good deal of patience, understanding and a strong personality are particularly useful attributes. Autistic children may express their anxiety and confusion through challenging behaviour and this may occasionally include bad language and some physical contact. With the right support these incidents are few and far between. A reasonable degree of physical fitness is required