

# ADVOCATING FOR: ADAPTIVE TENNIS

*Advocacy for tennis involves taking our knowledge and passion for tennis and connecting it to the needs of communities, schools, colleges, and local governments. Advocacy is the ability to demonstrate to decision-makers how making tennis accessible to all populations can benefit the community.*

## INTRODUCTION

**Tennis strives to be an inclusive sport.**

Advocating for tennis in your community can help increase participation in the sport from underserved populations. Tennis is a sport that can be adapted for any player with a intellectual, physical or emotional disability. There are hundreds of active adaptive programs serving these athletes across the U.S.A.

## KEY POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Tennis is a lifetime sport for athletes with disabilities, offering valuable life lessons such as teamwork, commitment, sportsmanship and the development of a good work ethic.
- Tennis provides a community with which the athlete can engage, interact and build success.
- The structure and the individual nature of the game are well-suited to players with a wide range of disabilities, including cognitive disabilities, post-traumatic stress disorder, stroke survivors, the visually and hearing impaired and standing athletes with a physical disability.
- Volunteers, coaches and caregivers working with adaptive programs find they benefit from the experience as much as the athletes.

## TENNIS TIPS FOR ATHLETES WITH PHYSICAL CONDITIONS/ DISABILITIES

- Allow for warmup and stretching in your lesson plan.
- Use soft feeds and a smaller court.
- Keep classes and instructor/student ratio small. Use volunteers to assist.
- Demo all activities using visual aids and clearly explain each step.
- Praise students often.



TENNIS INDUSTRY UNITED • FOUNDING MEMBERS



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To get started, contact your local USTA representative, or go to

**USTA.COM**

for more tools and resources on starting a veteran, adaptive or wheelchair tennis program.

## TENNIS TIPS FOR ATHLETES WITH INTELLECTUAL/COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

- Use visual cues and demo all activities, keeping verbal instructions to a minimum.
- Establish a routine.
- Utilize constant repetition and shadow drills.
- Keep classes and instructor/student ratio small. Use volunteers to assist.
- Praise students often.

## TENNIS TIPS FOR ATHLETES WITH EMOTIONAL/PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

- Maintain control and structure.
- Keep classes small and use volunteers to assist.
- Be flexible about participation as some athletes will need breaks.
- Demo all activities using visual aids and clearly explain each step.
- Praise students often.

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