



## About Recreation Professionals

[en français](#)

**Accessibility:** In Ontario, for example, the Ontarians with a Disability Act requires organizations to provide services that suit the needs of individuals of all abilities. That requirement applies whether your child is joining a private club, going to a community centre or part of a community team or league. [The Ontario government provides information on the standards for accessible customer service, transportation, facilities, employment and communications.](#)

**Confidentiality:** Health care organizations are required to abide by privacy legislation. In Ontario, the legislation is the [Personal Health Information Protection Act \(PHIPA\)](#). Provincial and local governments and their institutions are also required to abide by privacy legislation ([Provincial / Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Acts](#)). Depending on who is providing the recreation opportunity, these legal requirements for the protection of personal privacy may or may not apply. Most recreation, sport and physical activity organizations will have a formal privacy policy, but the scope and content of the policy and the privacy training provided to staff can vary widely. One would hope that all leaders and coaches would treat sensitive medical information with discretion. To protect your child's privacy:

- Ask supervisors or managers about their specific policies if you have privacy concerns.
- Recognize that volunteer coaches are unlikely to have any formal training or codes of practice regarding the treatment of confidential information.

### Volunteer Coaches

Volunteer coaches are often parents who have stepped in to help coach a youth sports team. Depending on the sport, there is often no formal training required of these coaches. Sometimes the coach, manager or convenor will have first aid training, but that is not always required. Volunteer coaches are giving their time so children can participate, but they may not understand the condition of your child's heart. In-depth conversations or support from you may be required to ensure that the coach is confident in knowing what activities can be enjoyed and what activities would not be appropriate.

### Personal Trainers (Varying certifications)

There are a wide variety of Personal Trainer certifications in North America. Some certifications require intensive education while others can be acquired through a weekend or online course. Before signing up with any trainer, ask questions and make sure that you are comfortable with their knowledge. In particular, ask if they have any knowledge of training children who are seen at a heart clinic. The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) offers certifications that are considered the "gold standard" among Canadian certifications. Trainers holding the Certified Exercise Physiologist (CEP) certificate will have some knowledge and experience related to physical activity for those who are seen in a cardiac clinic. However, you should always discuss your interests and concerns, and ask the trainer what they know about your child's needs, abilities and interests.

### Recreation Professionals and Program Leaders

Recreation professionals provide activities and supervise programs that take place both indoors and outdoors, and on land, snow, ice and in water. They are usually required to be trained in first-aid, CPR and AED machines, although it is always smart to check with each program to confirm their requirements. Permanent staff and managers will usually have a post-secondary education related to recreation or physical activity. If informed, most recreation professionals are more than happy to adapt the programme curriculum to suit the health needs of participants.

### Supervisors and Directors of Recreation

Recreation supervisors are responsible for the daily operations, planning and organization of recreational activities and facilities. They are responsible for the supervision and oversight of recreational staff. They plan staffing, organize events and manage recreational activities planned by the recreational director.

### Sport Specific Coaches (Including Teachers)

Coaches and teachers organize and lead programs based on specific sports. These individuals usually have a high level of experience or an interest in their chosen sport. In Canada, most sport coaches are required to take a [coaching certification course](#), which includes basic information about how to teach, rules, skills and safety. While certain facilities and sports offer varying degrees of adaptability and safety, most coaches are open to discussing with parents any medical concerns about the children participating in their programmes.