

Minister for Sport and Recreation's Award for Inclusion

Award Details

Woden Valley Gymnastics Club fully embraces the principles of inclusion and diversity within the sport of gymnastics in the Canberra community. This is demonstrated in its unique Enable Gym; Groove and Move and Gymnastics for All Programs which it provides and subsidises. The Club is the only gymnastics club in the ACT that provides fully trained coaches for these needs-specific areas of our community.

EnableGym commenced at Woden Valley Gymnastics Club in July 2012 to cater for people of all ages who have an intellectual or physical disability. The Enable Gym Program provides the opportunity for participants to improve their general fitness, well-being and self-confidence as they try doing things not previously thought possible. It gives them completely different movement experiences by having them access all the apparatus and areas of the facility and encourages them to interact with others in a club environment. One coach was originally employed to manage and conduct one-on-one classes and small groups. This has now increased to eight coaches working with 20 high-need participants one-on-one and a few small groups. A number of our EnableGym participants have graduated and now are members of our mainstream Gymnastics for All classes. Our highly trained EnableGym coaches also provide programs to larger classes at the Woden School, the Gowrie Primary Learning Support and Autistic Unit and the Malkara School.

The Club introduced a unique gymnastics program aimed at people aged 55+ years in 2014. This Groove and Move class incorporates all the benefits of gymnastics into a movement program which is achievable, fun and provides ongoing physical and psychological stimulation. Participants benefit from this multi-faceted program by developing flexibility, strength balance and co-ordination. It is presented in a stimulating gymnastics club environment by highly professional coaches in partnership with health professionals and other sporting organisations within the Canberra community. This program has recently developed to allow members the opportunity to participate in our performance team. The performance team has opportunities to perform at public events and recently competed at a National 'Gym 4 Life Challenge' where they won a Gold Medal.

Our Gymnastics for All Program is for everyone. It encourages participation from every member of the community, regardless of age, culture or ability. Gymnastics for All promotes all-round physical development – muscular strength, flexibility, balance, co-ordination and good posture required for everyday living. It provides a broad based approach to the teaching of fundamental movement patterns for all participants. Our Program includes the 20 participants in the EnableGym Program, the 10 older people in the Groove and Move Program, the 30 participants in the Performance Team and over 650 participants in our total Gymnastics for All Program, including those who have now moved from the EnableGym Program. The Club is committed to excellence and so provides a high level of training for our staff, under the auspices of the Gymnastics Australia LaunchPad Program, in club workshops and in Gymnastics for All Intermediate coaching courses, all of which include inclusion in sport.

Contribution to and Impact on the Sport

The Woden Valley Gymnastics Club is committed to the fact that gymnastics is a foundation sport for everybody and all sports. The Club has successfully introduced unique and stimulating inclusion programs that motivate participants to be involved in sport. These programs include EnableGym, for people of all ages with special needs, Groove and Move, for older members of our community, and Gymnastics for All which embraces participation by everyone in the community.

These three programs allow all members of the community to access their permanently established gymnastics facility, to access their highly trained, professional coaches and reap the total physical, social and psychological benefits provided by the sport of gymnastics.