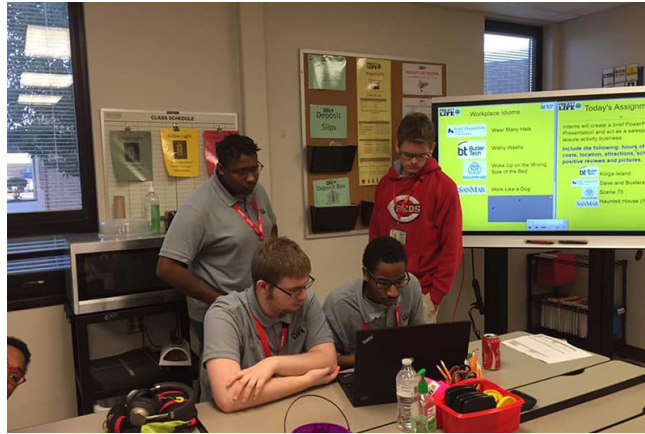




Project LIFE Collaboration: Providing Work Experiences at the Cincinnati Curling Club

Cincinnati Curling Club
Jonathan Penney



Project LIFE is more than a typical transition-to-work program. This comprehensive program combines classroom and life skill education with authentic work experiences to prepare students with disabilities for a self-determined future. Paired with Project SEARCH® as a final year, employment outcomes are well above the national average for persons with disabilities.

High school graduates, ages 18-22. All interns have been identified as having transitional needs in employability skills and independent living skills and all have diagnosed and documented disabilities.

Initial Contact

Quick story ... My neighbor's daughter was graduating and I was going through the grad list (pictures, names and future schools). I see a picture of someone I had seen at various band concerts and football games. His plans for next year was Project LIFE. That prompted a search and a question about what it was. A couple of emails later, the leaders of Project LIFE had a tour of our facility in the summer.


Nothing in our club scared this group. All the tasks we talked about were exactly what they were looking for. The fact we are a non-profit with no employees made the partnership even more desirable (no displaced paid workers).

Initial Contact

- Project Life's intention and need?
 - All interns have been identified as having transitional needs in employability skills and independent living skills and all have diagnosed and documented disabilities.
- CCC's intention and need?
 - Exposure of the game in the community
 - COVID-19 put us in a position of needing some extra cleaning
- What was initially arranged?
 - Four or five interns, four days a week for about 2 hours per day
 - COVID modifications turned that to 2-3 interns each day.
- What made this appealing to Project Life?
 - The fact the CCC is a non-profit and a non-traditional workplace
- What made this appealing to CCC?
 - Getting the extra help in cleaning the facility for free

Work Experience in a Curling Club

- Examples of jobs that Project Life fulfills
 - Vacuuming the warm room and carpeted areas around the rink
 - Cleaning bathrooms, mopping floors, cleaning windows, sanitizing high touch areas
 - Removing trash and recycling
 - Recording various temperatures and humidities around the rink
 - Assist in ice maintenance (shovelling snow, mopping the sheet)
- What does this look like? How are the workers supported?
 - Skills trainers provide support to interns
 - About a 1:2-3 during COVID times
 - Interns work every other day



Date & Time	Logged By:	
	Air Temp (°F)	Humidity (%)
Wall A		
Wall C		
Random		
DH IN		
DH OUT		
Home A		
Home Heater		
Away Heater		
Away A		
Mid C		
Water Meter		
DI Green Light	Green / Red	
DH Red Light	On / Off	



Highlights

Different place with similar needs (curling clubs are rare but the cleaning skills are common)

Low pressure environment (quiet and safe)

Interns get individualized support

Exposure to the community

Challenges

Consistency (interns are only coming every other day)

Thoroughness & Speed

Glass cleaner in the aerosol can was used too fast.

Swiffer Wet got used too fast (cost)

Modified learning curve, everyday working to add a bit of knowledge to the interns.

Project LIFE Tries Curling!

- What does this look like?
 - Little steps (Cincinnati is not a traditional curling community so the sport is an unknown for most)
 - One group was exposed to our day league
- What was considered while these folks were on the ice?
 - Physical ability (coordination)
 - Mental ability (nervousness, bravery, trust)
- What did a basic “curriculum” look like for instructors?
 - Start with basics - stepping on the ice - walking with a shuffle - no sweeping
 - Stick curling with just the basic attempts at a draw shot and a take out (some people like to make noise)
- Safety, equipment use, instructing techniques?
 - Small groups (1:1 or 1:2)
 - Grippers
 - Safety talk about only walking on the ice
- Future Events
 - Bigger group event on a Friday, encourage parents and caregivers to join in. (get helmets and halos)





It's ok to be a bit nervous when you try something new. The accomplishment is so much sweeter at the end.



Fast Tips

- For club leaders and administrators that may be hesitant to facilitating a program like this
 - BE BRAVE - ASK THE AWKWARD QUESTIONS - BE PATIENT
 - Contact your county's Development Disabilities Department
- Actively working to make a curling club a welcoming environment for all people with disabilities
 - Both the Spirit of Curling and rules around 501(c)3 orgs encourage inclusion
- Contact Project Life at Butler Tech - www.btprojectlife.org
- Contact Cincinnati Curling Club - cincinnati Curling Club@gmail.com