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ELiSE – ELIMINATING SOCIAL EXCLUSION

***Children's engagement and preparation
of travel***

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„We think that it is important for us and for the kids to develop and see other things and get away from the everyday life... not being seen as disabled, but to be like anyone else.....” (Parents of kids with special needs, a meeting on 22nd of February, Opole, Poland).



International situation

- In turn, M.A. Devine has shown that 28% of the US population of people with disabilities travel outside of their own territory. The distances that disabled families can get through for tourism depend on the type of child dysfunction. M. Milewska showed that 20% of people with physical disabilities travel in Poland. A much larger difference occurs in the case of mentally ill people, because according to M. Milewska they travel the least often, which was not confirmed in the presented work (Milewska, 2008).

Tourism of disabled children

- Tourism of disabled children should be treated as part of the rehabilitation of disabled people, whose main goal is to restore maximum physical, mental, social and professional fitness and adapt to normal life. Tourism of people with various disabilities should be treated not only as active leisure, but also as therapeutic and educational measure, enabling everyone to handle at various, often harsh conditions.

IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY TRAVELLING

- Travelling as a family is usually seen as something important. Family holidays can strengthen the family relationship since they can get away from the everyday stress (Hazel, 2005). Both the parents and the children tend to increase their happiness and life satisfaction during, and in close relation to, a tourism trip (Durko & Petrick, 2013). Families who are travelling with a disabled family member usually travel differently than families without disabilities (Huh & Singh, 2007; Jo et al., 2004), due to the adaptations that they have to make in order to make it possible to travel together (Kim & Lehto, 2013).

CURRENT SITUATION OF CHILDREN'S WITH SPECIAL NEEDS TOURISM

- Regardless of the type of child disability, most often decide on trips organized on their own. Organized travel is popular among families with a blind child (18.5%), while specialized camps among children with physical disabilities (17.9%). Active recreation is preferred by families of deaf (60%) and mentally retarded children (51.4%), while most families passively rest with children with motoric dysfunction (71%) and multiple disability (65.4%). A popular form of recreation among families blind children are visited (35.7%) (Milewska 2008). Other data indicate that parents of disabled children most often use the offer of private accommodation. Guest houses are also popular. Parents of deaf children choose to stay in holiday homes and campsites (20% of parents surveyed each), while parents of blind and disabled children use hotels (24.1% and 15.2%, respectively).

EXAMPLES OF IMPROVMENTS IN POLAND



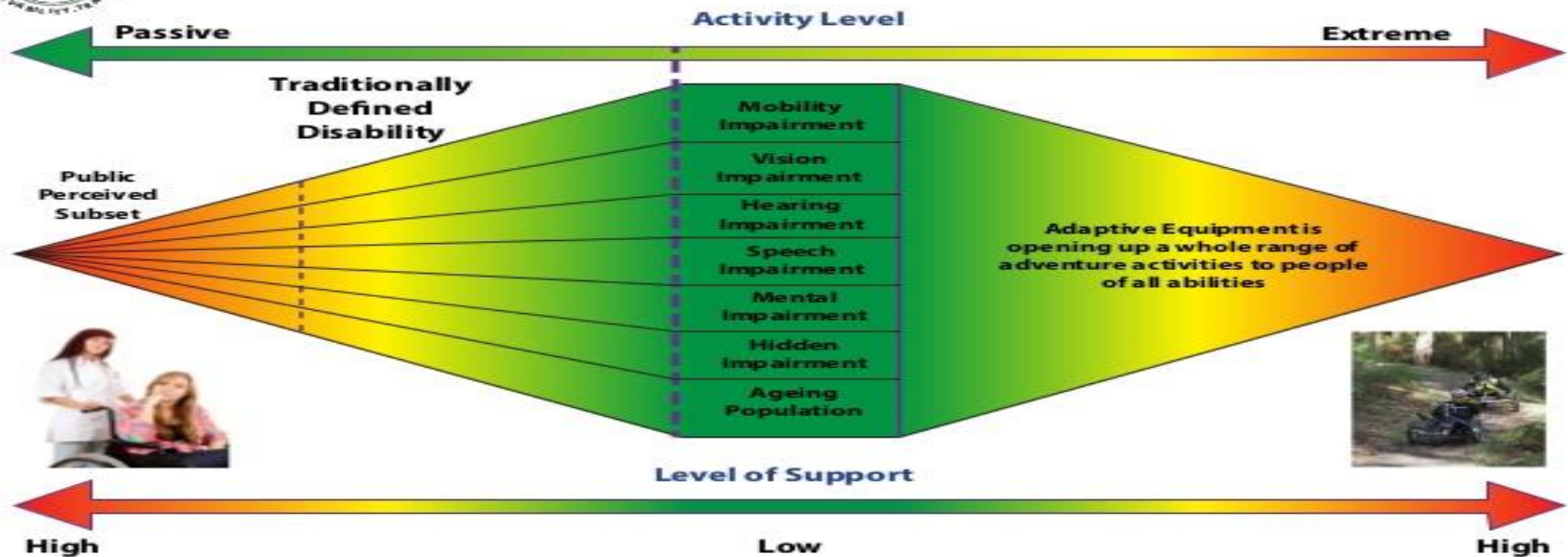
MAIN OBSTACLES OF OF CHILDREN's WITH SPECIAL NEEDS TOURISM

- Most obstacles related to the lack of infrastructure adaptation during trips are declared by parents of children with physical disabilities (80%), multiple disabilities (63%) and blind children (44.4%). The problem of parents with a mentally retarded child is usually intolerance (56.3%). Parents of deaf children in general, 60.0% have no major objections during traveling (Milewska, 2008).

MAIN OBSTACLES OF OF CHILDREN'S WITH SPECIAL NEEDS TOURISM

- Children with disabilities tend to have more difficulties when they are using public transport modes compared to non-disabled children. How difficult transportation is experienced by children with disabilities depend both upon the severity of the disability and the age of the child. The more severe the impairment in terms of mobility is, and the older the child is, the more challenging public transportation becomes (Wheeler et al., 2009). Difficulties related to public transportation can be in terms of inaccessible trains and train stations (Ferrari et al., 2014; Freeman & Selmi, 2010) or a lack of needed equipment (Patterson et al., 2012). Regarding bus transportation, a majority of people who are carried by wheelchairs experience it as too difficult and avoid to travel by bus. This is mainly because of difficulties to board the buses due to high steps and a lack of ramps (Bromley et al., 2007). There can also be problems regarding the safety and security on public buses, such as a lack of equipment to secure the wheelchair (Man-ary & Schneider, 2011).

Continuum of Ability



The arbitrary line defining disability is exactly that, an arbitrary line. The advent of modern alloys and design has opened up a vast range of activities including some at the extreme adventure end of the spectrum. People with a disability can be found across the full range of sporting and leisure activities. Their tastes and budgets, likewise, spread from economy to five star and include the conference and meetings market. The key to developing tourism product is to look at the aspirations of potential visitors, the opportunities that exist within a destination and the technology available to allow participation by people of all abilities. Customer expectations should drive the product development.

From a tourism industry point of view, higher levels of assistance and support are common in the higher adventure type tourism activities and in the group tour segments. The industry has a proven capacity to support people to achieve stretch goals and aspirations. Accessible Tourism needs to capitalise on that pre-existing skill set by clearly defining the customer needs.

New technology is opening adventure to all - Images available from Photoability.net



The pre-travel phase

- The parents have to change their travel patterns due to their child's disability. One mother said that they could not do everything in the same way as before they got a child with cerebral palsy, but that they continued to travel with the same frequency and made some adjustment. She said: "I'd rather do something to a level of 80 percent when it comes to travelling than to not do it at all just because we can't do it to a 100 percent."

The pre-travel phase

- Even if tourism is considered as easier than some parents thought before they became travel active, some chose to go to the same destinations and some also use the same accommodation when they are travelling. Others tend to use the same travel company for all their trips. In order to be able to relax, they chose to travel in ways that they know will work and be accessible enough for their children:

“...we have always travelled to Turkey with [travel company] because we think that we both get good treatment and also that they have nice, large hotels which are accessible.” (Parents of children with disability)

The pre-travel phase

- How to cope with cases of behavioural disorders such as:
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ME2wmFunCjU&feature=related>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6c5DDLwwoo&feature=related>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9v4FsKXmj8>

The pre-travel phase

- USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR TAMING STRESS:

Adaptive technology. *The computer and AI devices can be an especially useful learning tool for a kid with behavior problems because they provide an objective, neutral response to the child's sometimes provocative or challenging behavior. Computers can focus the attention of the children, adapt the speed of delivery to match the student's pace of attention and a need for playing.*

The pre-travel phase

- BE PREPARED FOR:

Cont...

- Set rules.
- Set routines for meals and bedtimes.
- Develop your child's ability to empathize others.
- Help your child learn how to express frustration, disappointment and anger without hurting others.
- Establish basic rules of conduct: no hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, (no hands allowed), and no hurting others through our words.



The pre-travel phase

Cont...

Teaching our children to;

- pick out their clothing
- dress themselves as they grow older
- tie their own shoes
- pack school snacks and make lunches
- set their own alarm clocks instead of waking them up



Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- **COPING WITH STRESS:**

Cont...

- Work on communicating with your child
- Put the time and energy in so that he knows that he matters in your life.
- Talk to your child every day-even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Put down your iPhone
- Turn off your laptop when your child (or you) return home, at mealtimes and story times, and when you pick your child up from school.
- Look at him and make eye contact while having a conversation.
- Speak to your child in the tone and with the words that you wish he would use with others.



Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- **COPING WITH STRESS:**

Most Important

- Express your love every day, no matter how tough the day.
- Always encourage your child.
- Give positive reinforcement.



Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- **COPING WITH CHILDREN STRESS before TRIPS:**
 - make jokes, listen to their jokes, smile often, say something silly, sing something you would normally say, or anything else that would make them smile/laugh (make sure it is age-appropriate).
 - do activities with your children (academic or otherwise) that involve something they are interested in (gaming, playing,...etc.) even if it may not be your favorite activity. Let them choose topics of interest for certain activities.
 - it is okay to share your opinion on your trip's expectations , but in general, don't make them wrong for their opinion; confront your preparations decisions on accomodation, transport, travel means, costs, efforts..etc.

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- Stay away from empty threats such as “If you don’t stop I am going to leave you here” or “I’ll throw all of your toys away if you don’t straight them up.”

These types of statements can be scary for children leading to crying, tantrums, etc. and in all probability you are not going to do those things.

- to avoid packing routine and other typical preparation activities before travel, if possible provide an alternative activity or redirect them to something they like to do like “let’s do jumping jacks together” or “here are some puzzles/blocks to play with.”

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

It is a very important to strenghten children's positive motivation:

- Some examples of specific praise include “excellent job picking up your toys,” “you were so focused during homework tonight,” “nice job listening to directions” etc. Specific praise or acknowledgment of healthy behaviors reminds the child what behaviors you are looking for and reinforces them.
- Remember that, If your a „few-year-old” is playing in the dirt and you find it disgusting during a trip, let them. As long as they are safe, not hurting or disrespecting themselves or anyone else, and not damaging anything, try to give them as much freedom as possible.

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

Try to hold your daily schedule as much as it is possible also during a day of preparation to trip, i.e.

Schedule 3	
Time	Activity
6:30 to 7 pm	Help mom/dad with chores-give choices (e.g., vacuum, carry laundry basket, take out garbage) 
7 to 7:30 pm	Screen Time (you earned it!!) (e.g., Computer/IPAD/Tablet/ Phone) 
7:30 to 7:45 pm	15 Min Exercise (pushups/trampoline/dance video/etc.) 
7:45 to 8:15 pm	Night time snack (child can help choose, prepare, clean up) 

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- if you are going to plan visiting a restaurant or other place, talk about what will happen when you get there (e.g., wait to be seated, look at the menu, order your food, etc.) and what your child's behavior should look like (e.g., using an inside voice, speaking respectfully while inside the restaurant, waiting nicely for your food). Let your child know when you see him/her following the behavioral expectations appropriately (e.g., you are waiting very nicely for the food).

Prepare them to facing diversity or unusual for them situation, behaviour, peopole, things...etc.

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- talk about the differences between proper and improper behaviors within your travel plans. Try to visualize through real-life examples (as in the pictures below) what those differences look like. Act out, show pictures, or draw different scenarios. There are a ton of images on Google that illustrate impulsive and non-impulsive behavior. For a fun activity, ask your child to draw a picture of someone engaging in impulsive and non-impulsive behavior.
- explain to your child that once you get to be an adult, impulsive behaviors are often not tolerated in the strange place or touristic community. Discuss real-life consequences, such as being fired, thrown out, or arrested, for certain types of impulsive behaviors (e.g., throwing things in a public place, hitting someone, etc.)

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- working on tasks such as crafts, projects, cooking or any other creation increases our self-confidence. Projects and creations also lead to reduced anxiety and an improved mood. So you can prepare your kids to new places by drawing them, cooking and eating together their local food, playing movies about those places...etc.
- some physical conditions are also important: Plan to utilize healthy eating as a method for combating anxiety; plan to make gradual food changes over a period of time within trip, which become part of your regular routine. Some examples of foods that are shown to have a positive effect on our mood include fish, nuts, avocado, asparagus, beef, strawberries, and spinach. You can read more about the research and about eating. Also so direct physical therapeutic gestures as hugs are shown to release endorphins, a chemical in the brain that helps us to provide secure and confidence.

Children's engagement and preparations to travelling:

- discuss with your children about the planned place to visit using virtual tools. Finding opportunities to use virtual reality (VR) in order to help families with disabled children to identify and to avoid physical barriers in tourism activities . After experiencing the use of VR, all the participants suggested that this technology is able to help families with disabled children through providing better information before planning their journeys.

REMEMBER !!!

- Planning travel in these days is an action that encompasses all the travel components and can be affected by traveling relationships. When a family plans travel should define a strategy to minimize the primary impacts/issues that can occur. To achieve this goal, it is important to define travel in all its aspects. On this purpose, can be useful the following travel descriptors:
 - trip origins
 - trip destinations
 - distance
 - travel time
 - travel duration
 - trip purpose
 - mode for trip
 - number of persons.

Find useful material below to read:

1. Nyman, P. (2016). Tourism for Families with Wheelchair Carried Children Experiences of Parents to Children with Cerebral. Umeå University, Department of Geography and Economic History Master Thesis.
<https://www.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:938581/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
2. Barbara (No last name given), & Wistrom, E. (2012). Recreation tips for students with physical disabilities. Bright Hub Education, goo.gl/21nUXz
3. Melikechi, L. (2013) [A Camp for Everyone](http://ucpde.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/a-camp-for-everyone-a-guide-to-including-children-of-all-abilities-in-summer-camp-programs.pdf). Project of United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware. A Guide to Including Children of All Abilities in Summer Camp Programs. Inc., the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council.
<http://ucpde.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/a-camp-for-everyone-a-guide-to-including-children-of-all-abilities-in-summer-camp-programs.pdf>

Find useful material below to watch:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daqIMDnt458>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLA6G8lOD7I>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvfDE3d1uGQ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2lC8kBgLVg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WlDghAMPwvo>



The Spirit of Inclusive Travel



Having fun in the Everglades

I travel because I want my mind and my heart and my soul to overcome the boundaries that my body now feels. I travel in spite of the fact that it is "inconvenient" in that I am unable to walk onto the plane or to simply stand up and use the bathroom when needed, or that I have to spend innumerable hours planning and seeking out where I may be able to go in a wheelchair; what I will be able to see and where will accommodate me once I reach my chosen destination. I travel because to do so puts me in the realm of saying "HA! Look at me now!" I can do and be and see and experience this wonderful world. I CAN taste, smell, delight in the people and remarkable sights and win in the battle of my body over my spirit.

I was a dancer and I was 18 when I crashed my car in front of the Mormon Chapel on the Maryland beltway. I broke my neck and was told I will never move from the neck down again. Yet, I heard a voice as I lay alone in the night..-

"you will not be able to move your legs..but it will not be permanent and there is a purpose"

I accepted this, moved on and regained the use of my arms and hands... just like the voice said.

So I go--and I relish in the next trip--the next challenge that I WILL overcome. I am not a wheelchair sports jock--never raced in my chair or played tennis or rugby or wheelchair basketball. Travel and love is how I survive. I take my love and my will with me and I look strangers in strange lands in the eye as I roll by and I am saying to myself and to everyone who sees me that WE are not pathetic, sad, miserable cripples....

WE are here and we want to share the world with you...it is up to me to show you I will come--it is up to you to show me I am welcome.

Deborah Davis

As published in the New York Times.



Deborah in Stockholm

“With a special needs child, a parent has to learn to be patient, to be a nurse, to be a lawyer because I have to be a good mediator for all the things that happen to my child.”

—Mother from Omaha, Nebraska