

AOTEAROA ADAPTIVE ARCHERY

Visibility & Portrayal

Last updated: September 26, 2021



Lexie Matheson

Co-authored by Hana Saemon-Beck

Aotearoa Adaptive Archery (AAA) is a sports organisation set up to enable every individual to participate in archery. AAA believes that archery is an adaptable sport that can be enjoyed by everyone regardless

of background, age, gender and ability.

AAA aims to provide opportunities to all individuals to participate, in particular to those who have been side-lined and excluded due to neurodevelopmental disorders, cognitive disabilities and physical impairments.

AAA also delivers tailored and specialised foundation sessions and courses for children, youths, and community groups, and runs teambuilding sessions for corporate groups.

What is the purpose of the project?

1. To “make archery accessible to everyone”.
2. Aotearoa Adaptive Archery is an organisation set up to support and include special needs and in-need individuals, in particular tamariki and rangatahi (children and youths) in the sport of archery with the aim to improve their physical and mental health, and to increase opportunities in other areas of their life through archery’s the benefits.
3. AAA works independently, but also collaboratively with the Christchurch Archery Club.
4. AAA is an incorporated limited liability company.
5. AAA is a social enterprise. Aside from organising and running sessions for special needs and in need individuals, AAA also caters to groups and corporate events. Profit earned from these programmes is channelled back into AAA’s core purpose. When a group or organisation chooses AAA as their archery partner, they are helping bring the joy and benefit of archery to a special needs or in-need young individual.

What were the enablers that proved successful in your project?

1. Challenges re who can participate
Children, youths and adults who have been diagnosed with neurodevelopmental disorders and cognitive impairments such as autism,

down syndrome etc., as well as physical disabilities. AAA also conducts one-on-one or small group coaching sessions for children, youths, and adults, as well as community groups.

2. Challenges re age requirements

Participants must be at least 5 years and above.

It may be possible for younger people to participate but they will need to contact AAA to determine if they meet the size requirements.

3. Challenges re physical capabilities?

AAA can adapt to most of those with specific physical requirements and offers a free 30 minute trial to assess what can be offered to the potential participant.

4. AAA is the first and only archery coaching organisation catered for those with Special Abilities in Christchurch, Canterbury and New Zealand.

5. Staff all have personal and professional experiences in disabilities, education and archery

6. Specialised service at clients' preferred locations.

7. Adapted to clients' individuals needs.

8. One-on-one coaching.

9. Flexibility based on clients' needs at no cost to client.

What impact did your project have?

This project has changed the landscape of the sport:

1. Archery NZ has had a long term commitment to disabled athletes but has not had great outcomes.

2. Recently Archery NZ has developed strong relationships with national disability groups. This project is an advance on that.

3. Many with disabilities are unable to participate in sports due to inaccessibility or lack of opportunity.

4. By participating in archery, individuals can engage in a low-impact activity which burns calories, builds strength, improves hand-eye co-ordination and increases flexibility.

5. Archery is a repetitive sport so is beneficial for those with cognitive and neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism where repetition is one of the key traits.

6. Archery:

1. builds upper body strength;
2. improves hand-eye coordination, hand-finger strength and flexibility due to constant training;
3. helps individuals manage emotions and teaches how to remain calm in high-stress situations;
4. is a social sport. All archers stand on the same line and shoot at the same time.

7. There are also team components which allows socialising while embedding teamwork skills;

8. Individuals with disabilities often feel isolated and different. Joining the archery family helps build a social network and allows them to not only socialise but work together in a team.

What were the outcomes for women?

This project is based on equity and the needs of the minority disability community.

Women and girls feature strongly in the kaupapa of this project and will be targeted and encouraged to participate.

Parents, women and girls often find it difficult to access sports opportunities for themselves and for their children and archery is a perfect option.

Related Links



<https://adaptivearchery.co.nz/about/>

