

## Episode 51 | Eden Levinson Pt. 2

**Sarah Smith 0:11**

I was wondering how you think the programming improves accessibility to sport for the community.

**Eden Levinson 0:18**

Yeah, so in terms of our programming for the community, we do have community programs that are specific at PISE that are like adapted specific programs that allow individuals that have various different types of disabilities that they might experience to participate in physical activity. But another way that I feel like we're hoping to improve and increase the understanding of adapted physical activity and providing modifications when necessary is through community education as well. So part of my role is also to go to various rec centers or different cooperative like preschools, for instance, and do presentations about how you can modify all the standard things that you already do that you might not know have possible modifications, and teaching them how to do that and make changes to various equipment for various different reasons, so that not only, like our PISE programming can be continued to be improved on, but other organizations can also begin to provide those more inclusive environments as well.

**Sarah Smith 1:33**

Oh, amazing. So again, that sort of awareness piece that's that was coming through when we were talking about the kids in PE classes, and really just sharing knowledge and yeah, awareness.

**Eden Levinson 1:45**

Yeah, for sure. And I'm lucky because I get to be part of that child and youth knowledge and education and development, as well as the adult education, as well as teaching our facilitators how to have that toolkit as well. So I get to see it from all sides, which is really great. And see those improvements, kind of across the board in terms of understanding.

**Sarah Smith 2:09**

Amazing, very, very cool. Is there anything else that you want to share, either about your experience or about PISE or programming before we wrap up?

**Eden Levinson 2:20**

So we do have, I'll tell you a little bit about our adapted specific programs. Some of them kind of go that more sports specific way, but some of them do focus on that more gaming activity and learning how to just play in different ways. So on the weekend, we offer a program called Power Physical Literacy. It's for kids anywhere from one and a half to about five years old who are using a power chair, and often it's their first experience and introduction into their power chair. So they will be powered chair users, but usually it's just that they're too young to have one of their own yet. So we work really closely with an awesome team of occupational and physiotherapists, and they help us get loaner chairs, and we work to, you know, move kids in and out of these different types of chairs to play games and learn how to use a joystick for the first time and where it's going to be best placed to suit their strengths best as well, and often a big role that is just learning how to steer and find direction and target practice and things like that. So it's a very early phase to adapted physical activity and using mobility equipment for the first time, or powered mobility equipment for the first time. And then we have a program that we do in partnership with another organization called one ability, and it's called Para Play. So that is for the older demographics, so older kids and youth, and those kids get to actually go and try a variety of different sports. And sport coaches are brought in, and they are introduced to things like sledge hockey, which is really cool, and wheelchair basketball, Boccia, which is a really cool para sport as well, and a variety of other things as well. So that's probably the closest thing to our sports specific realm. But most of the activities we do are kind of like that lead into the sports specific area.

**Sarah Smith 4:35**

I love that, and I love that it starts at such a young age too. Like one and a half to five is really young. And I think, you know, early at the start when we're talking about physical literacy as a mindset of motivation and like enthusiasm and acceptance of all abilities to play sport and continuing to learn. I think it's really cool to start that at such a young age as well.

**Eden Levinson 4:59**

Yeah. Absolutely, and that's the thing is, like there's such a high need for that, like early introduction for physical activity, and when you're younger, it's way easier to kind of absorb all that information and to be able to have those experiences. And our goal is that through our leader training and through really intentional programming, that we're providing really positive experiences with physical activity and avoiding those negative experiences that deter individuals from participating in physical activity sport across their lifespan. So we're hoping to have the best possible experience from the youngest age, so that as you continue to grow and develop, you're able to continue to strengthen those skills and refine

them, and then move into maybe a sport, or maybe multiple sports and things like that as well.

**Sarah Smith 5:56**

I love that. That's a really cool approach. I have one last question, what is your favorite part of your job?

**Eden Levinson 6:06**

Oh, that's such a good question. I am very passionate about opportunity to participate in physical activity, so I was really lucky enough as a kid that I was involved in soccer and dance and a variety of sports and just like recreational activities in general, and I think that that is just like a fundamental aspect of childhood. And I want all kids, regardless of ability or exposure experience, to be able to have that access with as few barriers as possible. So my goal is always that the answer is yes, and then we'll work and we'll try to find the best way possible that we're going to be able to participate and have fun. And I really like that opportunity of reducing barriers and making things fun and inclusive and exciting for kids and youth of all ages. I think it's really awesome. And like we once had a child in a power chair who, you know, she just really wanted to play water games as part of a summer camp, and that was the thing that she was looking forward to most. And, you know, we put plastic bags over all the electrical components of her power chair and things like that. And this kid was able. It was such a small thing, but meant so much to this particular child, and was something that next summer, when they attended camp, again, we're still talking about how they were able to play water games and things like that. So seeing how like sometimes what feels like very little effort from us as a facilitator, and the impact it makes on kids is really cool, and it's super rewarding. And, yeah, something that like definitely makes me happy every time I think about my job.

**Sarah Smith 8:04**

Absolutely. I love that that's really cool and obviously made a big difference for that child. And I love the way that you put it, that the answer is yes, and we'll find a way to make it work. I think that's a really cool approach and sort of mind frame to come into that work with. Lovely. Well, thank you so much for chatting with me today. Before we sign off. Do you maybe just want to let people know where they can find PISE's information and programming in case they want to check out any of these cool things that are being offered?

**Eden Levinson 8:36**

Okay, so we can be found at [pise.ca](http://pise.ca) online, and that's where all of our programs are offered, as well as on Instagram. We can be fine at @piseworld or @pise\_play, and that's more of our kid focused programs.

**Sarah Smith** 8:50

Very cool. Well, thank you so much for taking the time to chat. This has been a really interesting conversation. I loved hearing about all of the great programming and just the mindset that you bring into the work there. So thank you for joining me.

**Eden Levinson** 9:03

Yeah, thanks so much for having me. This was so fun.

**Sarah Smith** 9:05

And to all of our listeners. Thanks for tuning in today. We hope you join us next time on Discover Stories.