



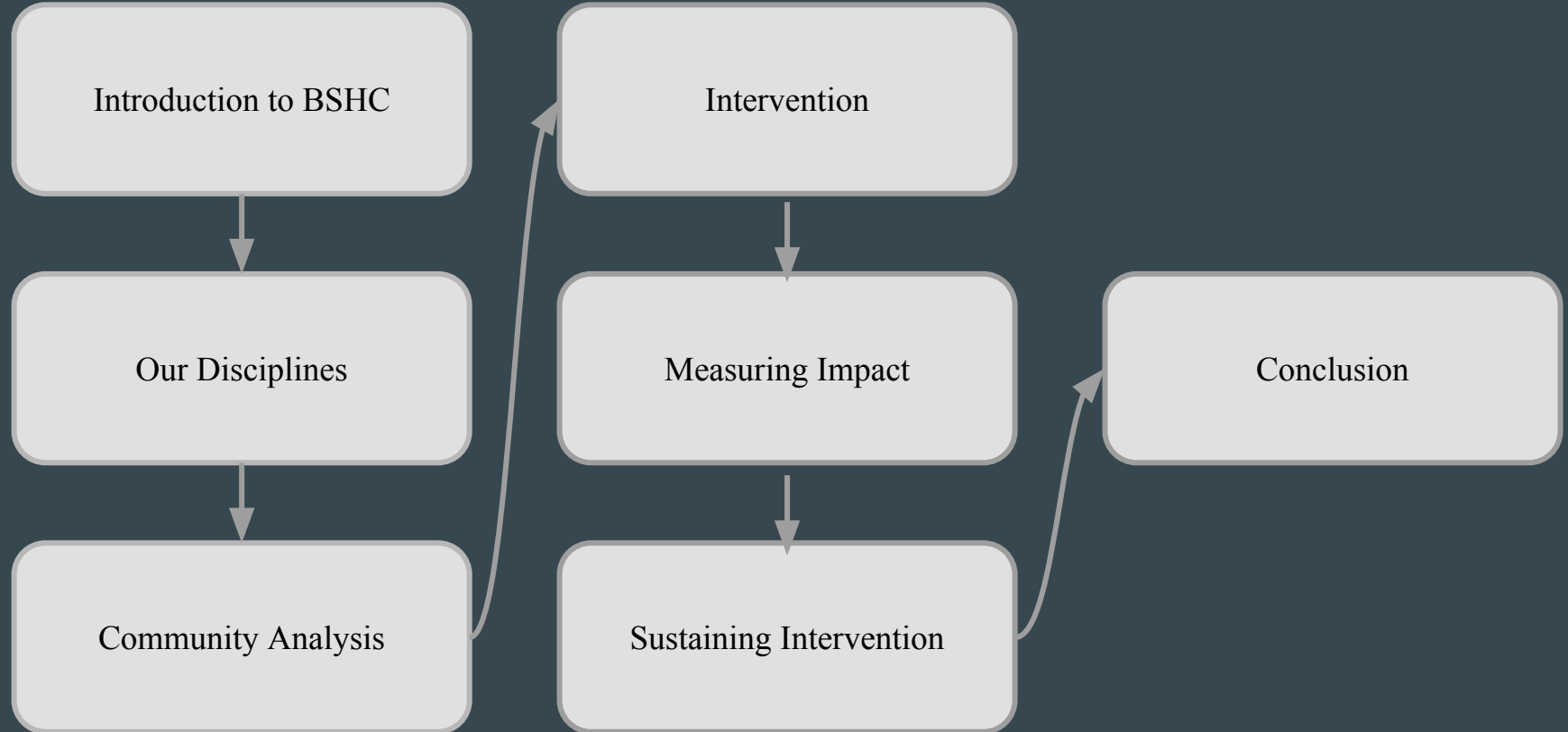
# Volt Hockey at BSHC



Boston  
Self Help  
Center

Rachel, Akosua, and Gabriela

# Overview



# Introduction to BSHC

- Boston Self-Help Center is a non-profit organization that provides adaptive sports and recreation activities for people with disabilities
- The organization is housed at Tobin Community Center in Mission Hill
- The Boston Whiplash has two volt hockey teams
  - Whiplash Orange
  - Whiplash Blue
- BSHC addresses a big community health concern of access to adaptive sports activities and physical activities for people with disabilities

# About Volt Hockey



# Our Disciplines

## **Rachel**

Cell and Molecular Biology Major  
Pre-med Track

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I think it is important for me to have awareness of the unseen daily challenges faced by people with disabilities

I want to be able to consider and address these challenges in my career as a health professional

## **Akosua**

Cell and Molecular Biology Major  
Pre-med track

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I was able to make connections between neurological and physical factors and exercise and mental health and the importance of bridging that gap that many people may face.

As a professional, I would like to be able to provide or help others provide more inclusive practices and forms of healthcare that advocate for those who aren't able to.

## **Gabriela**

Environmental Science

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Care for the environment is deeply intertwined with social justice and new innovations for dismantling the current system.

Moving forward in my career, I will seek to consider and incorporate accessibility in any project I partake in.

# BSHC Mission Statement

“The Boston Self Help Center Inc. is a 501(c) 3 non-profit run by and for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses providing and advocating for adaptive sports, recreation and other resources for individuals with disabilities.”

# Community Analysis: Assets and Constraints

## **Assets**

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### **Space**

The Tobin Community Center gym

### **Equipment**

Numerous volt hockey chairs available for players

### **Volunteers/staff**

Local colleges provide a supply of volunteers and there are several team coaches

## **Constraints**

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### **Small elevator**

Elevator size makes it a slow process to reach the gym

### **Cost for equipment/repairs**

Each chair costs up to \$10,000 and are custom made

### **Not enough charging outlets**

Not all batteries can be charged simultaneously

# Community Analysis: Social Determinants of Health

## Public Transportation/Accessibility

- T stations and bus stations nearby
- Public transport often has accessibility issues
  - Broken elevators
  - Broken chair lifts

## Low-Income neighborhood

- Limited resources in the community
- Limited opportunity for recruiting community volunteers

## Proximity to Longwood Medical Area

- Access to diverse healthcare resources
- Numerous types of healthcare available
  - Emergency
  - Clinics
  - Physical Therapy

## Ample Green Spaces

- Opportunities for outdoor activity and engagement



# Intervention

Our responsibilities:

- Assisting with playing field set-up and clean up
- Helping players transfer from wheelchairs to Volt Hockey chairs
- Changing batteries during practice
- Assisting with ball collection and cone set-up during drills
- Writing a blog post to spread awareness about Volt Hockey
- Help facilitate access to adaptive sports



# Goals

## **To promote access to community-based adaptive sports for people with disabilities**

Increases the frequency and inclusion of people with disabilities in adaptive sports and creates and more supportive and empowering communities

## **To spread awareness about and advocate for people with disabilities in community-based adaptive sports**

Combats stereotypes and beliefs that people with disabilities are not able or do not need to get involved in physical activity and community efforts

Interviewing players for blog posts discussing their involvement in the Olympics and perspectives on adaptive sports

# Measuring Impact - Discussions with athletes and coaches

- Engaging in conversation with the Volt Hockey athletes helps determine how impactful volunteers are for the program
  - Informal discussions with players and their families and blog posts following and highlighting experiences and takeaways
  - Spreading awareness and individual and unique perspectives on adaptive sports
- Talking with the coaches and supervisors of the team to understand how things might be different if volunteers weren't available for assistance
  - Orientation with overview of work and informal discussions with staff to promote more long-lasting volunteering and aid

# Measuring Impact - Survey/Interview Questions

- Have the volunteers been helpful and beneficial in facilitating practices and making everything run smoother?
- Did you feel like the coordination of the many volunteers was effective and time efficient?
- How has being apart of a team like this impacted your life and brought a new perspective on physical activity and health?
- Do you believe your participation and the center and volunteers' efforts are bringing awareness about adaptive sports? How?
- Is there anything the volunteers can improve on in the future?

# Sustaining Intervention

**Focus on building relationships between volunteers and players**

With their families that come to support them too

**Easier to advocate for a group when you build connections**

To be able to spread awareness and their stories, they first have to be shared with us

**Give a larger role and more extensive training to volunteers**

Teach volunteers the rules and regulations

Have volunteers shadow the ref or coach to learn more about the game

**Advocating for funding**

Very expensive service, need to have people willing to backup the site and justify its need

# Conclusion

- Volunteering at Boston Self Help Center with the Volt Hockey team with the goals of promoting accessibility in adaptive sports and addressing the problem of community engagement
- With our given disciplines, we want to promote greater access to community-based activities to combat social isolation and promote equality
- There is a great importance for volunteers in these BSHC programs and promoting deeper connections between volunteers and athletes as well as between the center and college community service groups or professional fraternities to sustain interventions
- Volt Hockey is a critical resource for promoting community engagement for people with disabilities

# Citations

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