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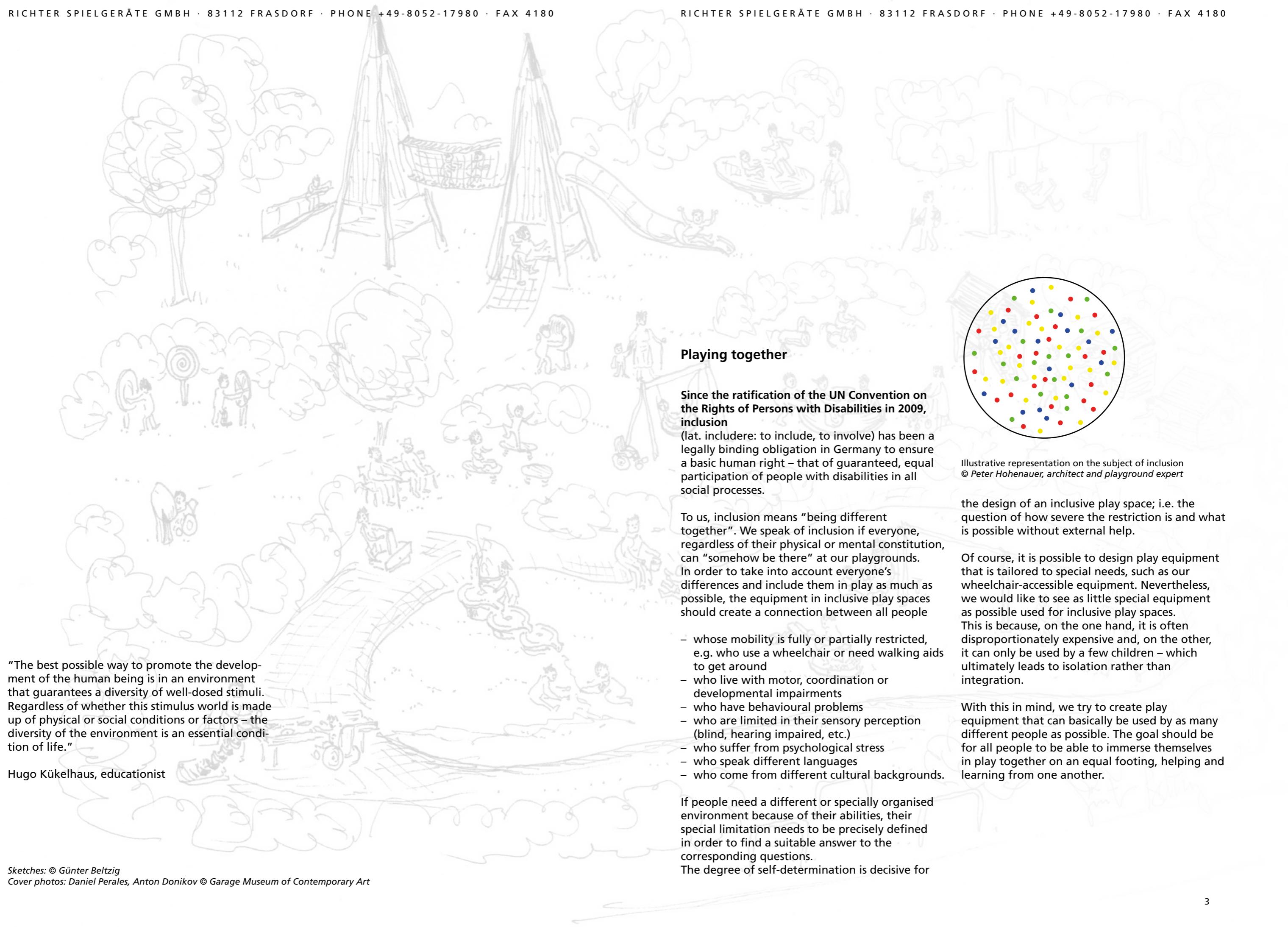


Sharing inclusive
play spaces

Richter Spielgeräte GmbH

Das **Original**, seit über 50 Jahren





"The best possible way to promote the development of the human being is in an environment that guarantees a diversity of well-dosed stimuli. Regardless of whether this stimulus world is made up of physical or social conditions or factors – the diversity of the environment is an essential condition of life."

Hugo Kükelhaus, educationist

Sketches: © Günter Beltzig

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Playing together

Since the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009, inclusion

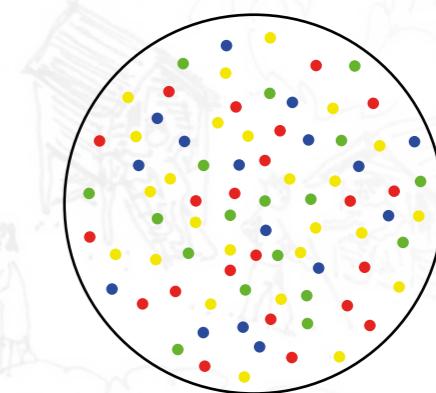
(lat. includere: to include, to involve) has been a legally binding obligation in Germany to ensure a basic human right – that of guaranteed, equal participation of people with disabilities in all social processes.

To us, inclusion means "being different together". We speak of inclusion if everyone, regardless of their physical or mental constitution, can "somehow be there" at our playgrounds. In order to take into account everyone's differences and include them in play as much as possible, the equipment in inclusive play spaces should create a connection between all people

- whose mobility is fully or partially restricted, e.g. who use a wheelchair or need walking aids to get around
- who live with motor, coordination or developmental impairments
- who have behavioural problems
- who are limited in their sensory perception (blind, hearing impaired, etc.)
- who suffer from psychological stress
- who speak different languages
- who come from different cultural backgrounds.

If people need a different or specially organised environment because of their abilities, their special limitation needs to be precisely defined in order to find a suitable answer to the corresponding questions.

The degree of self-determination is decisive for



Illustrative representation on the subject of inclusion
© Peter Hohenauer, architect and playground expert

the design of an inclusive play space; i.e. the question of how severe the restriction is and what is possible without external help.

Of course, it is possible to design play equipment that is tailored to special needs, such as our wheelchair-accessible equipment. Nevertheless, we would like to see as little special equipment as possible used for inclusive play spaces.

This is because, on the one hand, it is often disproportionately expensive and, on the other, it can only be used by a few children – which ultimately leads to isolation rather than integration.

With this in mind, we try to create play equipment that can basically be used by as many different people as possible. The goal should be for all people to be able to immerse themselves in play together on an equal footing, helping and learning from one another.



Playing together – possible for everybody

The catchword "inclusive" encapsulates the efforts of making play areas accessible to everybody, regardless of whether or not they are limited by their body or mind at that time.

In inclusive playgrounds, we want areas where all children can play together and learn from one another. Children experience other individuals' differences more directly, more openly and with more confidence than adults.

Children with a disability have an even greater need than other children for opportunities to play in order to learn about life. Alongside fun and enjoyment, play provides the opportunity to exercise and can therefore also be considered a type of therapy.

Alternative skills develop during play, which has the effect of lessening the limitations in their lives. In a way, this is true for all children who are not limited in any obvious way as well. You will see that it is merely the way they play that is different.

Play is necessary and possible for all children. Each in their own way. Together.



Special offers for playing on wheels

In addition to pure enjoyment, playing together opens up a range of situations in which communicative, motor and social skills can be practiced. It is often all about reaching and conquering psychological and physical limitations. Attractive inclusive play offers provide a motivating support for this process.

These play offers should

- meaningfully enhance the status of the wheelchair by considering it as part of the play equipment
- make the success of the game measurable for the individual wheelchair user but mainly offer an incentive for an inclusive play experience within the group
- enable play to be possible even without a carer
- be designed in such a way that play can be interrupted at any time if a user gets tired or loses interest in the playing
- be wide enough to allow several wheelchair users to meet, pass and overtake each other, thus providing playful competition in a motivating way
- be distributed over the entire area of the playground or recreational facility and not limited to a specific area to ensure there is a higher inclusion value
- not be located in a cul-de-sac in order to avoid the association of being "pushed away"
- not be located in large open spaces so that users do not feel presented "as if on a stage".



Castle Tower School, Ballymena/Northern Ireland, Opened 2017



Photo: Paul Upward Photography



Photos: Daniel Perales

Planning

Paths:

- walkable, rideable, without "traps"
- tactile orientation aids on the ground using versatile surfacing (wood chips, sand, gravel, earth, stone slabs) as well as by changing the laying direction or the course of floor elements (e.g. slabs, concrete block etc.)
- acoustic signals
- orientation aid by changing the light (e.g. arches of plants at intersections, planting bushes or hedges on one side, pergolas)

Demarcation/guidance by tactile orientation aids:

- guardrails with marked handrails
- marker posts at the entrance to play areas
- fences made of different materials
- inviting ramps (e.g. through shortest possible distances, changing ground structure, terrain rich in experience)
- guiding rope with information elements

Species-rich planting:

- different bark and leaf shapes
- strongly scented plants
- alternating/repeating
- high and low planting
- no thorns

Taking the aspects listed above into consideration will ensure that the goal of making an inclusive play space attractive to everyone is met. A design with space-creating elements provides for an atmosphere that is rich in experiences, characterised by alternating light and shade and a strong sensory appeal (touch, smell, feel).



Art. No. 7.25000 Giant Revolving Disc

The Giant Revolving Disc is set in motion by its intended function of children running against the slope, with the "passengers" very clearly experiencing the centrifugal force. Those who cannot hold on simply slide off, while stronger and more skilful children can stay on the disc despite a high speed. For young people in particular this is an attractive meeting place. Quietly rotating, they can talk and enjoy mutual togetherness. Children with functional disabilities also enjoy the feeling of the rotating motion while sitting or lying down comfortably.



Art. No. 6.32000 Rotating Plate

The flat metal plate with attached run-up ramps and a movable part for turning does not need any foundations. It can be easily moved with a lift truck but is heavy enough not to be moved intentionally. Its stability also allows wheelchair users and people with bicycles and mopeds to ride on and over it.



Art. No. 6.30000 Rocking Plate Art. No. 6.31000 Hexagonal Rocking Plate

Numerous people can rock and play at the same time on our rocking plate. Big people interact with small, heavy with light, old with young, everybody can easily join in here. It is this integrative aspect that gives the play equipment its special value.



Here people play with and against others – even losing can be fun on this piece of equipment. Whether on foot, with a skateboard, a bicycle or a wheelchair, the rocking plate is always fun and at the same time a lively meeting point of a play world. Play equipment installed in the ground is an inconspicuous but effective offer that encourages movement.

Art. No. 6.29000 Wheelchair Carousel

Carousels count as basic equipment on playgrounds. Young and old children alike enjoy being whirled around or gently rotated.

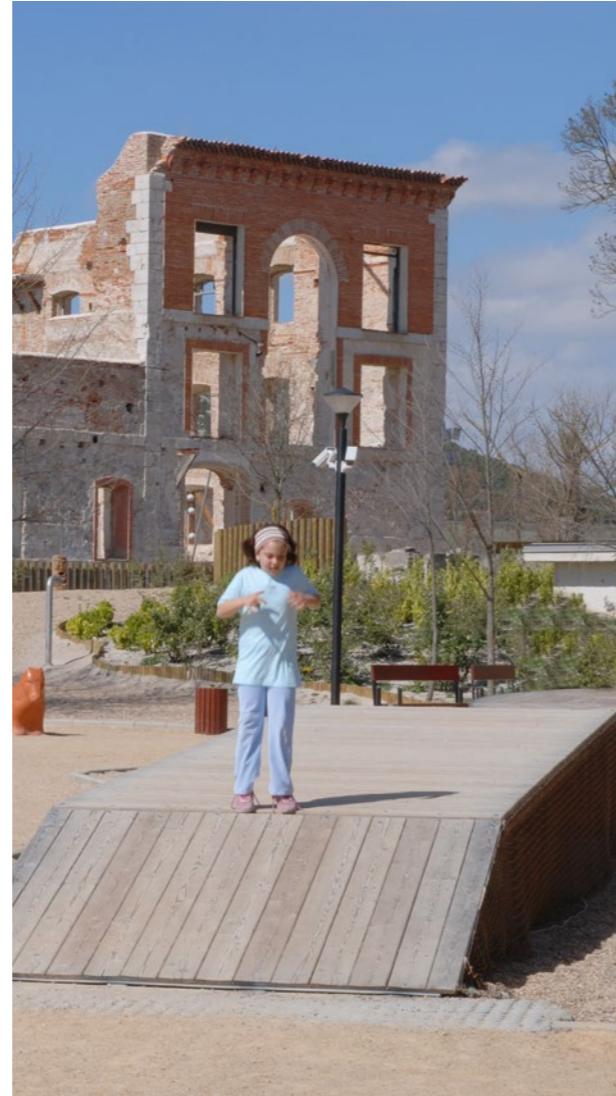
The special carousel is designed in such a way that wheelchair users can play on the equipment without needing assistance. It not only conveys the joy of movement but also boosts self-confidence and conveys a sense of independence. This gives it a particularly high play value.

The Wheelchair Carousel is an inclusive play offer, ideal as the creative centre of a playground that serves as an attractive meeting point and encourages harmonious togetherness.

**Art. No. 6.70000 Big See-Saw Platform**

Changing the position of their own body in a playful way appears to be a basic childlike need. If this change is caused by a movement of the equipment that is difficult to assess or even unexpected, and is therefore associated with a certain risk, the experience becomes particularly impressive. In some play offers, the experience of different heights as well as the necessity to work together intensify the play value.

The chief benefit of the Big See-Saw Platform is that it encourages people to work together and be aware of the need to cooperate with one another. Numerous people can see-saw at the same time, and even wheelchair users or blind people are able to easily join in due to the generous dimensions of the rocking surface.

**Art. No. 10.46000 Stone Xylophone**

Being able to generate a sound from the oversized stones of the giant xylophone is a very moving experience. Tapping the solid, black granite blocks with a plastic hammer produces a wealth of sounds and harmonies, which has a lasting effect on people. The perceptible vibration of the stone blocks and the humming sounds are a very special experience, especially for people with mental or emotional limitations, deaf people or senior citizens.

Art. No. 11.01500 Marbles Table

The Marbles Table can be compared with a classic game of skill. By carefully moving the table you can drop the marbles into the intended holes. This requires skill and coordination, especially when this game is played with several people. The Marbles Table allows for intergenerational play where "everyone" can join in. In addition, eye contact during the game makes it particularly easy to communicate.



Art. No. 10.22100 Rotating Disc

The observer gently spins the disc and then takes a step back. While looking at the disc, the eye actively and intrinsically creates complementary and polar counter images. The sense of sight thus fulfils a basic principle of nature: maintaining unity in diverse perceptions and thus maintaining diversity through this unity. Exciting and colourful light phenomena are created by the turning motion of the rotating disc, which also provides people with various limitations a very special sensory experience.

Art. No. 6.14500 Cradle Nest

Swings and cradles are connected to the world of children's experience in many ways. Over and again, children and adults seek out opportunities to experience these rocking movements.

Lying in the nest cradle is especially enjoyable when another person sets it in motion from the outside. And it's even more fun with several other "chicks" in the nest.

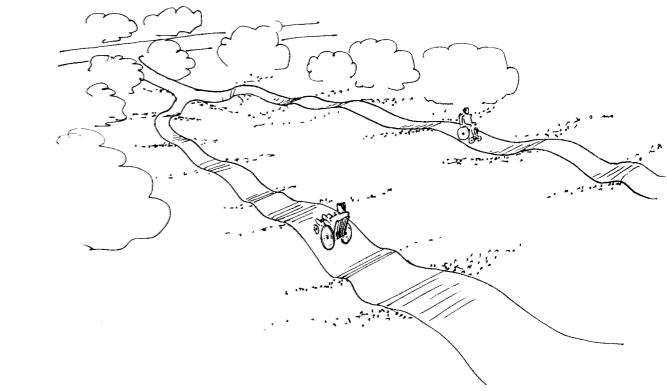


Design options for a rolling activity trail

© Design Günter Beltzig

Mountain and Valley Track

Sequences like running up, braking or coasting offer incentives for playful training as well as a child-oriented competitive situation for roller skaters, skateboarders and scooter riders as well.



Structured Track

Riding skills and endurance are trained through playful competition on track sections with different coatings and surface structures such as sand, gravel, stone, asphalt, cobblestones, puddles or horizontal corrugation.

Mountain

The structuring of a run-up and roll-out hill with a height indicator is perfect for playfully training riding control and strength – either alone or together with roller skaters, skateboarders and scooter riders.



Pothole

Movement sequences like riding the "silodrome", rolling in and out and rolling to and fro can be practiced in the slight hollow of the pothole.

See-Saw

Here the wheelchair user can train see-sawing and riding skills alone or together with people on foot or other wheelchair users.

Balancing See-Saw

Balancing skills can be honed on the long, narrow see-saw track, which tilts slightly to the side. This equipment is equally attractive to people on foot and on wheels.



Cardan See-Saw

A hexagonal platform that tilts slightly to all sides provides the incentive to stay centred by moving forwards and backwards and by shifting the position of the upper body. This exercises balancing skills, the musculature and riding mastery.

Suspension Bridge

The characteristic rocking, swinging and swaying movements of the suspension bridge can also be experienced by wheelchair users thanks to a particularly wide, safe and easy-to-ride version.

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Die Sicherheit. Die Qualität. Das Original.

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