



**Kelly Brush
Foundation**
Life is Better Active



Case for Support

Life is better active

Sports and recreation are some of the most important tools for happiness, fulfillment and independence. Recharging with a brisk run, refocusing with a quiet hike, or resetting with an escape to the ski slopes are essential ways we establish good physical and mental health, develop a community, and preserve our identity.

Now imagine in an instant, the way you experience these life-enhancing activities changes dramatically. After a spinal cord injury (SCI) sports and recreation become even more critical to maintain life balance, however many who have suffered an SCI face significant barriers to being active.



AVERAGE ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT PRICES



\$1,000
HOCKEY SLED



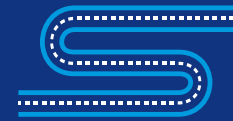
\$2,000
SPORTS CHAIR
(Basketball, Tennis)



\$2,500
ENTRY LEVEL
HANDCYCLE



\$4,000
ALL-TERRAIN
CHAIR



\$5,000
PERFORMANCE
HANDCYCLE



\$7,000
MONOSKI



\$8,000
RUGBY CHAIR



\$10,000
OFFROAD
HANDCYCLE

The Kelly Brush Foundation changes lives

The Kelly Brush Foundation (KBF) understands the challenges of living with a spinal cord injury. The KBF was started by Kelly Brush, who suffered a spinal cord injury in a collegiate ski race in 2006. Kelly and her family founded the KBF when she personally experienced the life-changing power of adaptive sports and recreation during recovery and beyond. Kelly was determined to help other people not just exist but thrive after their injury.



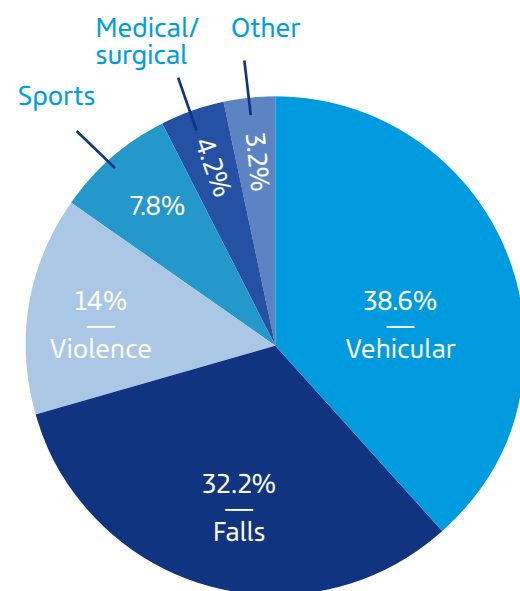
The KBF is on a mission

Each year, approximately 17,500 people in the U.S. suffer a spinal cord injury. Nationwide, there are over 300,000 people living with a spinal cord injury and tackling the challenges that come along with it every day.

SCIs CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE

The causes vary, but they are frequently the result of a sudden accident, meaning they are unexpected and life-altering.

CURRENT CAUSES OF SCIs:



The mission of the Kelly Brush Foundation is to inspire and empower people with spinal cord injuries to live active and engaged lives.

It takes years to recover and readjust to life with paralysis. The KBF supports people with SCIs during their journey from injury to independence.

- **KBF ACTIVE PROJECT** is a web-based resource to broaden awareness of the breadth of sports and recreation possibilities, and connect people to a robust network of programs, peers, volunteers, and support.
- **PATH2ACTIVE** provides access to instruction, learning opportunities, and communities who fully understand life with an SCI.
- **THE ACTIVE FUND** awards grants to purchase adaptive sports equipment, enabling anyone with an SCI to be active independently and incorporate recreation into their daily lives.

The Kelly Brush Foundation provides the inspiration to believe, the resources to connect, and the grants to enable everyone with an SCI to get out and go.

People with SCIs face significant barriers to being active

“I find myself describing it like a therapy. I really can say that handcycling has changed my life. **It has given me a new passion to work out and to strive for a healthy lifestyle.**”



FINANCIAL BARRIERS

Increased cost of living

Living with a spinal cord injury is expensive. The average yearly expenses directly attributable to an SCI in the **first year following injury (depending on injury level) are \$360,000 - \$1,102,000**. The average yearly expenses directly attributable to an SCI in **subsequent years following injury range from \$44,000 - \$191,000**. In addition to significantly heightened medical expenses, people with SCIs need to make costly modifications to their homes and vehicles in order to make them comfortable and accessible.

Diminished employment options

The average household income of KBF grant applicants in 2020 was under \$40,000. Many cannot return to their previous employment due to their disability, such as jobs that require physical labor. **At one-year post-injury just 18% of people of working age are employed**, and that percentage only increases to 24% after ten years post-injury.

Prohibitively expensive adaptive equipment

Adaptive sports and recreational equipment is **cost prohibitive for most**. An entry-level handcycle or sports chair is \$2,500. A monoski is \$5,000-\$7,000. And an off road handcycle can cost \$10,000-\$18,000!

EMOTIONAL BARRIERS

Isolation, depression and loss of confidence

After a spinal cord injury, people often lack the vision, tools, and confidence to engage in society upon returning home from an inpatient rehabilitation setting. This leads to a cycle of social isolation that becomes difficult to break. **After a spinal cord injury, people need the support of a community more than ever**, but after the initial flurry of activity around returning home, people often report feeling disconnected from even their closest friends and family.



The world is often not wheelchair-friendly

People who use wheelchairs are **unable to access all the places —like the woods or a field— that able-bodied individuals can, and are limited in the way they move through the world**. Being able to participate in sports or an active lifestyle is hard to reach. Knowledge, resources, connections, and even the inspiration to believe in what's possible can be very hard to come by.



“Being out in nature lets me forget about the other challenges in life. **Biking feels like a great equalizer** and way to enjoy the sport I love with my able-bodied friends.”



“Skiing is a deep-seated passion of mine, and **sliding down snow covered slopes does something for my soul**. Your gift to me means that I will be able to ski when I want, where I want, on my own schedule, **and that is so empowering!**”



“When I was injured, one of my first thoughts was that I would never be able to play the sports that I loved again. **Adaptive sports have been one of the most important parts of my recovery**. It has allowed me to connect with a community of people in similar situations as me - something I was severely lacking.”



The consequences of inactivity are real

People with SCIs are at a higher risk for certain health complications, and face emotional challenges.

OBESITY

● **66%** of people with SCIs are overweight, and **30%** of those people are considered obese.

DIABETES

● Nearly **20%** of people with SCIs have adult-onset diabetes due to decreased activity, weight gain, and metabolism changes.

DEPRESSION

● 1 in 20 Americans report depression every year, but **1 in 5** people with an SCI experience depression.



“Handcycling allows me to participate in activities with other people, thus **helping me socialize and be an active member of the community**. Fresh air and physical activities also help my mental health. **When I am on the handcycle, it makes me feel alive.**”

The Kelly Brush Foundation transforms lives from injury to independence

The Kelly Brush Foundation offers inspiration to believe, resources to encourage, and grants to enable active and engaged lives. The KBF helps people be themselves again after an SCI.

KBF ACTIVE PROJECT: Empowering Connections

The Active Project is a **digital platform to share knowledge and build community around a passion for being active.** It brings together informational content about sports, real-life opportunities to engage, and meaningful community connections.

The Active Project helps break down the psychological barriers that prevent people from engaging in the first place. Education and inspiration are the starting point for anyone before they become active. People need to learn about what is possible before they can dream about it!

PATH2ACTIVE & CAMPS: Creating Experiences

Strong community is everything. KBF Camps & partnerships **engage and bring together people with spinal cord injuries from around the country to build community, grow participation and gain further experience in adaptive sports.** KBF adaptive sports camps create a unique environment for those with an

SCI to share adventures and experiences, share personal stories, build leadership and camaraderie, as well as promote wellness through an active lifestyle.

ACTIVE FUND: Enabling Independence

The Active Fund, the KBF's marquee program, **helps people achieve their best active lifestyles by eliminating the financial barrier to owning cost prohibitive adaptive sports equipment.**

The KBF has awarded over 1,250 grants to people in 49 states. Over 200 grants are awarded each year at the average amount of \$3,500. And each of those grants is truly life-changing – fostering independence and the ability to be active. The KBF receives over 300 applications for grants annually, totaling over \$1.5M, meaning the opportunity to serve more people with SCIs strongly exists.

“Sit-skiing changed my life and I am extremely grateful for the opportunities it has afforded me. **My abilities and confidence in my job improved and I began to become able to take care of myself in every way.** Skiing helped me find myself again and gave me a reason to keep going.”



The benefits of an active and engaged life are transformational

HAPPINESS AND HEALTH

Adaptive sports create a path to fulfillment and health after a spinal cord injury. In fact, sports and recreation have a massive impact on the self-reported life fulfillment and health status of people with disabilities.

People with a disability before and after participating in sports and recreation

WHO REPORT LIVING A FULFILLING LIFE

46%

BEFORE participating in sports and recreation.

80%

AFTER participating in sports and recreation.

WHO REPORT BEING IN GOOD OR EXCELLENT HEALTH

25%

BEFORE participating in sports and recreation.

76%

AFTER participating in sports and recreation.

COMMUNITY

A community of family and friends is extremely helpful for people with SCIs, but even the most supportive loved ones cannot truly understand the frustrations or unknowns one faces when paralyzed. It is critical that people with SCIs have access to each other, and connection to a community where experiences, knowledge, and ideas can be shared in a meaningful way.

The adaptive sports world is the perfect place to gain access to this essential community. From competitive wheelchair basketball teams to women's handcycling groups, or from weekend warriors on the ski hill to weekly exercise classes, having a fun, shared experience with like-minded people tackling similar issues is a very

powerful tool. The connections made prove you're not alone because you have an SCI, the knowledge shared is life-changing, and the bonds formed are lifelong.

INDEPENDENCE

Not only does participation in adaptive sports lead to higher rates of reported fulfillment, health, and employment, there are also downstream benefits. The independence gained from participating in adaptive sports helps people with SCIs establish or reestablish identity and have the increased motivation and confidence to achieve success in other aspects of life.

KELLY'S STORY

Growing up in Vermont, Kelly always identified as an athlete and was active in many sports; alpine ski racing, gymnastics, soccer, basketball, softball, lacrosse and swimming. In high school, Kelly's focus became alpine ski racing and hard work made her dream of joining the Middlebury College Alpine Ski Team come true in 2004.

On February 18, 2006, Kelly's life changed forever. She caught an edge during an NCAA ski race, causing her to fall off course, strike an unprotected lift tower, and break her back, leaving her paralyzed from the chest down.

Today, Kelly is a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, leader of the KBF, mother of two, and recreational weekend warrior. She credits much of her success in life to the power of adaptive sports, which provided her the important realization of what is still possible.



BRING JOY, HEALTH AND INDEPENDENCE TO PEOPLE WITH SCI

Your donations are life-changing!

Empowering Grants

\$500

Enables someone to try various adaptive sports activities, take lessons, or demo different models of equipment to learn what fits them best.

\$1,000

Provides a scholarship for one person to attend a multi-day life-changing adaptive sports camp.

\$3,500

Represents the KBF's average equipment grant amount, and funds many base-level models of adaptive sports equipment.

Empowering Specialized Equipment

\$5,000

Provides a grant for life-changing equipment for people to use independently like a monoski, all-terrain chair, rugby chair, or a performance handcycle. 36% of our grant requests fall into this price range.

\$10,000

Funds a grant for one person for some of the most expensive adaptive sports equipment, like off-road handcycles. Off-road handcycling is a sport quickly gaining popularity and the number of people looking to purchase this equipment is growing rapidly.

Empowering Programming

\$25,000

Funds an entire KBF camp experience, such as a 3-day adaptive mountain bike camp or monoski camp, for up to 10 participants, including equipment, travel, lodging, food, and staff coordination.

\$50,000

Supports the development and expansion of innovative new programs, such as the Active Project platform, aimed at introducing active lifestyle opportunities to people who have suffered an SCI shortly after their injury.

Empowering Organizational Growth

\$100,000

Provides the KBF the ability to expand programs based the needs of the SCI community – additional adaptive sports camps, more adaptive equipment grant funding, or expanded development of the Active Project.

\$350,000+

Funds one of the Active Fund grant cycles each year, in which approximately 120 people receive grants for cost-prohibitive adaptive sports equipment.

Gifts at this level can also be directed towards the creation of our endowment fund, to secure the future of the KBF.

