



ERIK DAILY/LA CROSSE TRIBUNE

Alahna Keil, 11, and Kathy Frise of Mount La Crosse talk after a run using adaptive ski equipment, which has a tether that connects Keil and Frise. The YWCA Adaptive Ski Day will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 21, and Saturday, March 3, at Mount La Crosse. The cost is \$15 per skier and scholarships are available. For more information, call (608) 781-2783, ext. 5

# 'I like to go fast'

## Event aims to get skiers of all abilities out on the slopes

By **AUTUMN GROOMS**  
La Crosse Tribune

Small jumps occasionally form on Alahna Keil's favorite run at Mount La Crosse.

Rather than maneuver around them, the 11-year-old aims herself for launch.

"I like to go off them and get a little bit of air," said Keil, a sixth-grade student at Longfellow SOTA II.

Keil who has cerebral palsy, uses a bi-ski she borrows from the YWCA Adaptive Physical Recreation

Opportunities program to zig and zag down the slopes several times a year.

She controls the equipment by shifting her body weight from side to side.

Her speed and balance are regulated by a Mount La Crosse Ski Patrol tethered behind her.

"I like to go fast," Keil said. "Since I've been skiing for seven years, it's easy."

Keil was introduced to the sport in 2000, when she attended the first YWCA A-PRO Adaptive Ski Day at the La Crosse ski hill.

"Every kid dreams of going down a hill on skis," said Lisa Mathson, YWCA Youth Activities director. "(Adaptive Ski Day) gives them the freedom."

Adaptive Ski Day is designed to familiarize people with physical disabilities with the equipment available through a United Way grant and funding from the North American Squirrel Association, Mathson said. About 20 kids and adults participate annually.

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