The Whole-School Approach to the HYP Physical Activity Mission

What is the whole-school approach to physical activity?

A whole-school approach is the best approach to the HYP Physical Activity Mission.

The whole-school approach means involving the whole school in influencing school practices, environments and partnerships through a coordinated and comprehensive approach, as described in the Health Promoting Schools Framework.

The whole-school approach helps everyone be physically active every day at school.

For best health and wellbeing, young people aged 13–17 years need to accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity every day.

For extra health benefits, young people should do more physical activity – up to several hours per day.

Australia’s Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines, 2014
Tips for a whole-school approach to physical activity

Below are ways schools can encourage students to be physically active every day at school.

**Practices (curriculum, teaching, learning)**

- Encourage staff to attend professional learning sessions about school-based physical activity.
- Consider ‘taster’ sessions for PE lessons, lunchtime activities and/or after school activities, for students to try different types of physical activity. Select the most popular activities and offer them on a weekly basis.
- Focus on encouraging participation in physical activity.
  - continue to encourage and support students with potential to become elite sports people while respecting, praising and rewarding all students for their effort and participation
  - provide equitable access to physical activity opportunities regardless of age, gender, size or ability; this might mean giving extra support to some groups or individuals.
- Involve students in the promotion of school-based physical activity events, for example ask students to design and develop resources to promote physical activity.

**Environment (physical, cultural, policies, procedures)**

- Seek support from all staff and school leaders for a whole-school approach to physical activity.
- Include physical activity as a priority in the school health and wellbeing policy.
- Ensure other school policies do not undermine students’ efforts to meet physical activity guidelines. For example, review policies that ban running in the school grounds or restrict access to drinking water.
- Ask for and incorporate student feedback as appropriate when developing PE and outdoor education policies and practices.
- Encourage and facilitate active transport.
- Recognise, reward and publicise participation and achievement in all forms of physical activity, for example dancing, gymnastics, archery, horse-riding, skateboarding, bushwalking and surfing – not just traditional, competitive sport.
• Develop and use school promotional material that encourages young people of all shapes and sizes to be involved in a range of activities and sports.

• Consider the impact school development or improvement plans may have on physical activity opportunities.

• If your school has a uniform policy
  • review uniform requirements, for example consider if the uniform is appropriate for a range of activities and body shapes and sizes, and enables students to stretch and be active
  • consider allowing students to arrive and leave in the school sports uniform if they use active transport or are travelling directly to sports training or other organised physical activity
  • involve students in decision-making about uniform changes.

• Provide a range of safe yet stimulating and challenging physical activity options including team, individual, competitive and non-competitive options.

• Provide a range of recreational areas (indoors and outdoors) that encourage physical activity. Involve students in the planning and design of these as much as possible.

• Promote positive attitudes to physical activity and outdoor education in the school. For example, identify physical activity champions or ambassadors among staff and students from each year level, and encourage them to promote and be involved in physical activity events and to speak at school assemblies, staff meetings and whole-school events. Include non-competitive activities like bushwalking.

• Hold a ‘Get Physical for Fun’ expo and showcase a range of physical activity options.

• Provide sports equipment and facilities for students and staff to access during recess, lunch breaks and before/after school.

• Ensure sports and recreational equipment and facilities are adequate and well maintained.

• Designate student leaders responsible for monitoring the care and storage of equipment, and for coordinating activities.

• Let the local media know of any special events or activities with a physical activity focus happening at the school or that the school is participating in.
Partnerships (students, families, wider community, businesses, organisations)

- Provide staff and students with information on grants and funding opportunities that could assist with physical activity ventures.
- Encourage school involvement in the *Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme* and the Medibank Active Tasmania Awards. Support students and staff to achieve the goals associated with these awards.
- Make school facilities and equipment available to local clubs and groups.
- Encourage staff to be positive role models.
- Have a staff health and wellbeing team.
- Encourage the school community, including staff and parents, to participate in physical activity, provide physical activity opportunities and follow school physical activity policies. Provide students and staff with information about what’s on and what opportunities are available. Invite feedback about activities.
- Develop links with local groups that have a focus on physical activity, including sporting groups, dance clubs and youth clubs.
- Invite sports representatives to the school to talk with students and provide introductory sessions.
- Allow students and families to borrow or rent specialist equipment such as tents and camp stoves on weekends and during holidays.
- Look for opportunities and funding to support staff, students and parents to gain relevant physical activity qualifications, for example coaching sports teams, and support them to use those qualifications to provide physical activity opportunities for students and the school community.
- Use physical activity events (for example, walk-a-thons) to raise funds for the school or chosen charities.
- Encourage whole-school events that incorporate physical activity for staff, students and other members of the school community. For example:
  - participate in *Clean Up Australia Day* – ask students to plan a walk around the local community to clean up public spaces
  - hold a physical activity promotional event, like *Ride or Walk to School Day*, at least once a term
  - hold a dance and movement festival and provide a rotation of dance and movement-related activities for students to try.
• Encourage inter-school activities focussed on physical activity.

• Access specialist physical activity facilities and/or skills in the community.

• Plan school and/or class excursions to local community spaces, places or facilities. Consider:
  o walking, bushwalking, orienteering and geocaching
  o mountain biking, BMX riding
  o surfing
  o kayaking
  o roller skating and skateboarding
  o tree planting and assisting with Landcare Australia Ltd activities.
  o rotation of dance and movement-related activities for students to try.

• Participate in national and international awareness days/weeks that have a focus on physical activity/moving and getting the heart really working out, for example:
  o Health and Physical Education Week (Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation): help students plan and participate in activities
  o Coastcare Week: visit a nearby beach or coastal area
  o Diabetes Awareness Week: provide information about how regular physical activity can help prevent type-2 diabetes and organise ‘taster’ activities from the list above
  o National Healthy Bones Week: provide information about the importance of weight bearing exercise for healthy bones (weight bearing exercise is physical activity done while you’re on your feet so you bear your own weight)
  o World Health Day
  o National Heart Week.