



Active Classrooms Evaluation Report 2016

BACKGROUND

During 2015 and 2016 Move Well Eat Well (MWEW) delivered the Active Classrooms Professional Learning Sessions to primary school teachers from Member schools across Tasmania. A total of 33 teachers from 19 schools participated in regional sessions during August and November 2015 and March 2016.

At the session teachers received:

- A one to two hour practical session guided by a PowerPoint presentation
- A picture pocket display of active games and energisers for display in the classroom
- Active play equipment tailored to lower primary and upper primary

Active Classrooms has been available to teachers from MWEW schools since 2012 with sessions facilitated in 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016. Since its inception, a total of 84 teachers from over 50 schools have completed the sessions. This means that over 30 per cent of all MWEW schools have participated in Active Classrooms.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

The objectives of the project were to:

- Increase classroom teachers knowledge and practice of active game ideas and energisers for their classes
- Increase the practice of short movement opportunities to break up long periods of sitting.

The purpose of the evaluation of Active Classrooms was to determine whether project objectives had been achieved. The evaluation will enable the MWEW team to review the Active Classrooms model, resources and delivery to identify how it could be best facilitated in Tasmania in the future.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

An impact evaluation was undertaken through the collection of data from Active Classroom participants through a:

- Post session survey: participants were asked to complete a short six question survey directly after the session.
- Follow up survey: A nine question online survey was emailed to participants 10-12 weeks following the session.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Post Session Survey Results

The 19 schools represented at the sessions were from a range of suburbs across the state. Of the 33 participants that attended the session 31 (94%) completed the post session survey.

- All respondents felt that the session was useful in providing information and resources about getting students moving more and sitting less.
- The most enjoyable part of the session was learning new practical activities and participating in them (74%, n=24).
- All respondents could see themselves including more moving and less sitting in their classrooms.
- All respondents would recommend the Active Classrooms session to other classroom teachers.

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Follow Up Survey Results

Of the 33 participants that attended the sessions, 14 (42%) completed the post session online survey. The main results were:

- All respondents had tried activities from the Active Classrooms session with their class with the most used activities being stretching or movement breaks (93%, n=13) and active games from the pocket display (86%, n=12)
- Around 80% (n=11) of respondents thought that the equipment supplied at the session was useful in getting students moving.
- All respondents believed that the energisers and/or active games had positive impacts on students' behaviour or concentration. Some teachers comments were:

'It has definitely helped some members of my class who find it difficult to remain focused for long periods of Time. I have also found that by letting students know there will be scheduled breaks has helped to increase their reading stamina.'

- All respondents had shared Active Classrooms information within their schools in some capacity, with most sharing it with other teachers (79%, n=11).

Some teacher comments were:

'As part of my PDP, I am supplying each teacher with a folder of resources--Energisers, Active games, Web sites, Stretching and Yoga activities. Along with a survey as to how useful the information and ideas are, especially for the winter months when daily PE is not such a feasible option.'

'I've shared the yoga site with parents to use with their children at home. One parent with a wriggly 6 and 4 year old has been using it at home with calming benefits for the entire family.'

- All respondents provided a brief summary of 'how students in your class are moving more and sitting less as a result of Active Classrooms'. Some teacher comments were:

'We have incorporated the Move Well Eat Well moves into our refueling break in the mornings and as an alternative at Daily PE time when wet weather games are usually more sedentary.'

'We have used the pocket display active classroom games in our guided reading program- practiced them and taught them in our school wide fitness fun program.'

'Go Noodle is a huge success in our classroom. My students particularly like the guided dance category but their favourite is stretching with Maximo. I'm very appreciative of the newly added activities for indoor recesses. We have also used active games to allow the students to have breaks during sitting sessions to a lesser degree.'

- If participating in Active Classrooms again, respondents would like to see more practical activities (57%, n=8).

THEMES

Theme 1: Highly appropriate session duration and content

There were no differences in the results on the appropriateness of session duration and content between the one and two hour sessions, in fact all respondents of the one hour session all said it was 'very appropriate'. All respondents found the content useful and liked the balance of information/theory and the practical moving activities.

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Theme 2: Practical components transfer to practice and behavior change within the classroom

At the 10-12 week follow up all respondents had tried activities from the Active Classrooms session with their class and all respondents provided summaries describing how students were moving more and sitting less as a result of Active Classrooms.

Theme 3: Displayable, classroom ready resources and ideas

Keeping up to date with new ideas and resources that were classroom ready were important to respondents. The games from the picture pocket display and the equipment were popular with the majority of respondents.

Theme 4: Stretching and movement breaks easiest for teachers to implement

Simple stretching and movement breaks were the most commonly implemented activity within classrooms 10 12 weeks post session. Almost all respondents had tried these activities with their classes.

Theme 5: Movement had positive impacts on students behaviour and concentration

Some respondents of the immediate post session survey believed that seeing positive impacts on students learning or behaviour would assist them to keep up the momentum with active games and energisers. Most respondents had not linked active games or energisers to classroom learning/curriculum directly but all respondents reported positive impacts to students behaviour and concentration.

Theme 6: Active Classrooms information shared informally with the school community

Sharing the information with other teachers and school staff occurred mostly through informal conversations as opposed to using the structure PowerPoint Presentation. Some had role modelled moving more and sitting less to their students and talked with students and their parents about the importance of moving more and sitting less.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of Active Classrooms has shown that as a result of participating in the professional learning sessions teachers have had increased knowledge and practice of active games and energisers within their classrooms. Active Classrooms has allowed teachers to create a classroom environment where students are moving more and sitting less.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Reduce the duration of the session to one hour to allow for more participants**
- 2. Continue to offer active game and energiser practice within sessions and provide plenty of examples of short stretching and movement breaks that can be performed with no equipment**
- 3. Offer 'take away' resources that a) can be easily displayed and prompt moving more and sitting less in the classroom and b) be used as handouts for other teachers at the school**
- 4. Reduce the focus on links to classroom learning/curriculum within the session and point to other resources and programs that already do this.**
- 5. Investigate the potential to record short clips of past Active Classrooms participants doing active games or energisers with their classes to share within future sessions.**

For more information on Active Classrooms please contact Move Well Eat Well movewelleatwell@dhhs.tas.gov.au