

# PHYSICAL LITERACY

## — APPROACH



### WHAT IS PHYSICAL LITERACY?

A person's physical literacy is a combination of their motivation, confidence and competence to be active, along with their knowledge and understanding of how being active contributes to their life.

Everyone has their own unique physical literacy that contributes to their overall wellbeing. It determines if and how they value and choose to be involved in physical activity throughout their life.

The more physically literate someone is, the more likely they are to be physically active for life.

It is important to note that a person's physical literacy:

- reflects their context, environment, culture and world
- is a holistic concept, involving physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions.



### HOW DOES A PERSON DEVELOP THEIR PHYSICAL LITERACY?

A person's physical literacy is the outcome of the many physical experiences they have, so is not static or linear.

It is an ongoing 'learning journey', constantly shaped by their experiences and interactions with others and their world. While all life stages are important and contribute, the experiences in childhood and adolescence are of particular significance due to the long-term impact of these developmental stages.

It begins with the joy babies, toddlers and children experience through play and opportunities to move freely in their environment guided by natural instinct. As the child grows, the learning in physical education (PE) becomes a crucial component of their physical literacy development (play and PE are the foundation of physical literacy). It continues to develop through ongoing experiences involving physical activity, including sport and active recreation.

To have the best effect possible on a person's physical literacy development, these experiences need to be high quality and represent value to the individual – the more positive the impact, the greater the likelihood of a lifelong commitment to being active.

Quality experiences:

- are rewarding, challenging, exciting and self-confirming
- focus on building more than skills, and emphasise motivation, confidence and the wider value of physical activity
- focus on the participant taking ownership and responsibility for being active (as appropriate to their life stage)
- impact positively on all elements of a person's wellbeing.



Physical Literacy is one of the Three Approaches promoted by Sport NZ: Insights, Locally Led and Physical Literacy are guides to creating better quality experiences for participants.



## PRINCIPLES OF A SPORT NZ PHYSICAL LITERACY APPROACH

To positively influence a person's physical literacy across their life, we think it is important to focus on understanding the person at the centre of the experience.

We believe this can be achieved through Physical Literacy Approach principles that:

- respond to the holistic nature of individuals (physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual) and recognise that this results in different physical activity needs across life stages.
- emphasise a lifelong journey with physical activity.
- focus on quality experiences that contribute to a person valuing and choosing to be physically active for life.

We acknowledge and respect other holistic approaches such as Sport NZ's Te Whetū Rēhua and the New Zealand Health and Physical Education Curriculums underlying concept of Hauora.

The way in which approaches are expressed, terminology used, and how they are 'brought to life' should be relevant and meaningful to the organisation and the people they work with.

Working together with our sector will, we believe, help create ongoing positive physical literacy journeys for New Zealanders.

