

# *Activating Communities through Active Schools*



*An introduction and guide  
for organisations, clubs,  
parents and volunteers  
supporting Active Schools.*



**SPORT  
NEW ZEALAND**

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# Activating Communities through Active Schools

## Introduction

### Giving children a head-start into an active life.

Active Schools is all about encouraging New Zealand children to choose and enjoy physical activity. In every community and region, the more that schools, organisations and clubs work together to achieve this goal, the more our nation's children will benefit.

As a club or organisation (or as a parent or volunteer) you can play an important role in supporting Active Schools. There are significant benefits. It's a win all round:

1. for the children,
2. for your organisation or club,
3. for the whole school community,
4. for your own skill-learning and involvement in activity – and ultimately for the next generation of New Zealanders.

This SPARC resource presents the thinking behind Active Schools, and offers you a guide to the successful implementation of an Active School community. You'll find proven strategies and ideas to support involvement through a whole school community approach.

To know more contact [activeschools@sparc.org.nz](mailto:activeschools@sparc.org.nz)



## Acknowledgement:

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# The 3 Key Drivers for all Active Schools

**Active Schools is a crucial part of New Zealand's commitment to inspire and support children to get active. Active schools is:**

- 1 Child centred.** Active Schools provides opportunities for physical activity based on children's needs, abilities and interests.
- 2 Owned by the whole school community.** An Active School involves the whole community. The whole school community takes ownership to create and sustain an active environment and offer programmes to enhance physical activity.
- 3 Ongoing – and lifelong!** An Active School is part of, and contributes to, an active community over time. Consistent messages and quality experiences encourage children into lifelong participation.

# Active Schools

## An overview

**Success depends most of all on sharing and embracing the Active Schools attitude, to encourage every child to stay active for life.**

Active Schools is a big step forward for the health and wellbeing of New Zealand children.

The ultimate goal is to boost the physical activity levels and the wellbeing of young New Zealanders. Physical activity refers to ALL movement: everyday living, recreation, exercise, and organised sport.

Active Schools targets both opportunities and the potential barriers to physical activity, IN AND AROUND school communities. It aims to build awareness, skills and knowledge about quality physical activity. It aims to strengthen the community connections that are crucial to making quality physical activity experiences happen.

Working together is vital. Active Schools is the responsibility of the WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY. Children are most likely to enjoy, benefit from and continue activity when they gain consistent messages and support – from everyone across the community.

The Whole School Community spans:

- All children
- Parents / whānau
- School teachers, senior management, Boards of Trustees
- Clubs and physical activity providers
- Regional sports trusts
- School support services
- National and regional sport and recreation organisations
- Local iwi
- District health boards
- Public health units
- Local and regional councils
- Community service / health organisations
- Commercial operators.

# What makes an Active School Community?

**An Active School community provides a wide range of physical activities and opportunities, in and out of school hours.**

While one Active School community may look very different from another, there are broad qualities for all. These include:

- Creating / maintaining processes to make physical activity a key part of the whole school community
- Having a physical / social environment that promotes enjoyable regular physical activity for all children
- Considering, planning and delivering programmes of learning to meet children's physical activity needs
- Providing opportunities for staff, families / whānau, community groups and all children to engage in quality physical activity
- Creating / managing mutually beneficial partnerships with community organisations and community members.

# The Benefits of Active Schools

The benefits of Active Schools are wide-reaching. Active Schools is designed to benefit New Zealand's children and getting involved can deliver significant benefits to your organisation or club, as well as yourself.

[Children](#)

[Parents / whānau](#)

[Schools](#)

[Councils and community groups](#)

[Sport / recreation clubs / organisations](#)

## The benefits for children

### Physical...

- Building and maintaining healthy bones, bodies and cardiovascular systems
- Developing movement control, co-ordination and competence
- Reducing risk of future health conditions such as heart disease, obesity, cancer
- Increasing stamina.

### Mental...

- Supporting academic achievement and discipline
- Offering new life experiences
- Enhancing brain development
- Reducing stress
- Building leadership, problem solving, planning and decision making skills
- Improving self-esteem, confidence and coping skills
- Learning to deal with times of success and failure.

### Social...

- Creating opportunities to make friends
- Developing values such as dedication, honesty, courage and fairness
- Building communication and peer interaction skills
- Supporting family / whānau involvement in learning
- Bringing communities together
- Having great fun!

## The benefits for parents / whānau

- Gaining valuable opportunities to take part in children's learning and development
- Valuing children's participation / increasing skill in physical activity
- Increasing positive activity / healthy living
- Gaining social interaction through schools, clubs, community groups and other parents
- Getting closely involved in planning / delivery of physical activity
- Gaining important new skills by leading activities, teams or events.

## The benefits for schools

- Developing mutually beneficial partnerships with parents, children, community groups, community facilities, and other schools
- Enhancing children's performance in physical activity in / beyond school
- Supporting confident and competent teachers of physical education
- Celebrating school physical activity achievements locally, regionally and nationally
- Establishing a physical activity culture that is owned and valued by the whole school community
- Linking with other educational initiatives
- Addressing requirements relating to physical activity as expressed in the [National Education Guidelines](#).

## The benefits for councils / community groups

- Gaining access to whole school community resources, such as play areas, sports equipment, community gardens
- Working alongside schools to promote community activity opportunities such as sports clubs and recreation events
- Enhancing school-community relations
- Boosting community profile
- Building understanding of children's needs
- Tapping into enthusiasm of young people to develop physical activity opportunities in the local community
- Helping reduce community social problems.

## The benefits for sport / recreation clubs / organisations

- Increasing the number of children choosing and enjoying the sport / recreation activity
- Enabling children to know where to go and who to contact, to get involved
- Creating opportunities to support children with talent (*a secondary consideration to getting ALL children involved*)
- Connecting with parents / whānau who have skills and enthusiasm to contribute
- Enhancing school-community relations
- Boosting community profile.

# Creating a whole school community approach

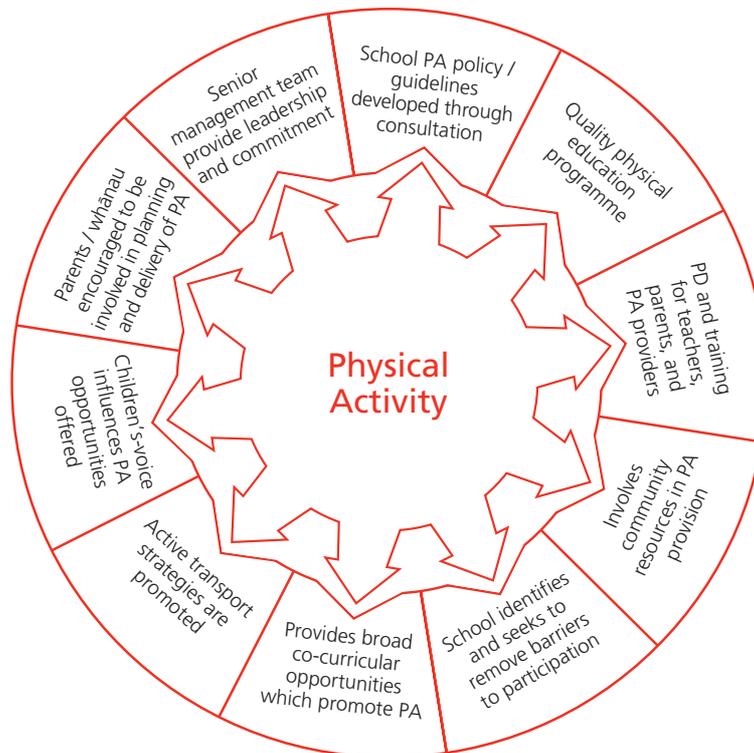
A successful whole school community approach sees ALL key partners collaborating to promote CONSISTENT messages and actions.

A whole school community approach will:

- Build physical activity into the school communities
- Create consistent policies and procedures for groups and organisations working with schools to deliver physical activity
- Create opportunities and structures to involve the whole school community in physical activity.

The benefits:

- Children gain regular quality physical activity opportunities
- Teachers, parents and other physical activity providers have more ability / confidence to provide opportunities
- Strong partnerships within communities which focus on children's well-being
- Consistent messages about physical activity across the whole school community and learning programmes within the school
- Creating an infrastructure where physical activity is a sustainable part of the school's culture.



There are clear areas for schools to focus on in creating a whole school community approach to physical activity. Other organisations and parents / whānau play a vital role.

For more information see [Guidelines for Sustainable Physical Activity in School Communities](#)

Having a clear plan greatly helps a school community in working out how to steadily improve their physical activity culture.

The ideal is for schools to plan to develop all aspects of the 'whole school community' at once. However this is a large task. In reality, planning may allow for different aspects to be developed over time.

The following are all things for schools and the community to consider:

[Commitment of school leadership](#)

[Policy / guidelines to ensure consistency](#)

[Physical Education programmes](#)

[Professional / personal development](#)

[Community resources / facilities](#)

[Co-curricular opportunities](#)

[Parent / whānau involvement](#)

[Children's voice](#)

[Active transport](#)

[Removing barriers to participation.](#)

These areas are each discussed in the following:

## Commitment of school leadership

School leadership (both principals and lead teachers) can commit to the whole school community approach in many ways, such as:

- Promoting physical activity in the school strategic plan
- Including targets for physical activity / education in the school's annual plan
- Having the principal / board of trustees actively support the [school community physical activity team](#), to act as a driving force
- Committing annual budgets for facilities and equipment for physical education / activity experiences; and for staff development in physical education.

## Policy / guidelines to ensure consistency

When developing and reviewing policies / guidelines, schools need to establish ways to involve the whole school community. It is important that individual roles and responsibilities across the whole school community are identified and described.

This planning will involve working with other organisations.

Policies / guidelines may include:

- Physical education
- Sport
- Daily physical activity sessions
- Break time and before / after school physical activity
- Education outside the classroom.

## Physical Education programmes

A quality physical education programme supports learning that is:

- Based on the [New Zealand curriculum](#) and children's needs
- Covering a range of physical activities
- Appropriate to each child's ability
- Clearly understood
- Monitored and reported.

For more information see [Guidelines for Sustainable Physical Activity in School Communities](#)

## Professional / personal development

Professional and personal development could include the support of teachers, parents, and other providers to:

- Attend training in running physical activity experiences for children
- Observe other physical activity providers
- Discuss best practices with other schools and physical activity providers
- Participate in physical activities and events (such as by supporting walking school buses, parent forums and 'Have a go' days).

## Community resources / facilities

There are many ways for school communities to make the most of resources, such as:

- Using facilities of sport and recreation clubs
- Offering school facilities to sport and recreation clubs
- Using local parks and community facilities
- Communicating information about school and community events, clubs and facilities via newsletters and / or notice board.

## Co-curricular opportunities

Broad co-curricular physical activity opportunities could involve:

- Senior students / parents / physical activity providers running lunchtime games and exercise sessions
- Whole school exercise sessions
- Senior students / parents / physical activity providers running activity events, for example challenge courses, exercise to music, interclass games.

- Sport and recreation organisations assisting inter-school competitions, such as kapa haka, skipping, sporting events
- Sport and recreation clubs supporting school clubs, such as gardening, hiking, martial arts clubs.

## Parent / whānau involvement

Parents and whānau can be involved in Active Schools in many ways such as:

- Policy development
- Joining the [school community physical activity team](#)
- Developing home-school partnerships for physical activity
- Running lunchtime games
- Taking children to sport events
- Managing road crossings and walking school buses to encourage active transport.

## Children's voice

Children's voice is all about involving the children in planning and decision-making.

This may be encouraged by:

- Gaining their views on ideal learning and activities
- Ensuring children are represented on the [school community physical activity team](#)
- Encouraging children to contribute to policy development through a student council
- Assisting children to share responsibility for some programmes / maintenance
- [More about children's voice](#)

## Active transport

Active transport strategies could involve:

- Providing bike sheds / stands, storage for scooters and skateboards, speed bumps to reduce traffic speed near children
- Territorial authorities influencing subdivision design to reduce road crossings
- No-parking zones near school
- Walking school buses.

## Removing barriers to participation

The physical and social environments of school communities can create barriers to participation. Examples of removing barriers may include:

- Increasing space to play
- Increasing children's access to equipment for lunchtime activity
- Offering ground markings or wall targets
- Having strategies to reduce put-downs / bullying
- Developing skills of teachers, parents and physical activity providers to provide quality opportunities
- Reducing costs, such as by accessing community sport and recreation facilities, getting help with sports equipment, transport costs
- Having equipment (and ideas for different uses) to suit different skill levels
- Providing ramps for children with disabilities.

Strategies to remove these barriers may become part of the school community's [physical activity action plan](#).

# Applying the School Community Planning Cycle

## Introduction

The school community planning cycle is a process to promote and manage physical activity opportunities. It leads to a clear action plan, allowing a school community to focus on priorities, monitor progress and evaluate results.

Whether the school community is planning a single event or a long term plan such as building a school hall / gymnasium – a school community planning cycle will support success.

The process assists community buy-in, agreed outcomes, shared planning, and celebrating achievement.

## Advantages

Developing, implementing and evaluating an action plan through a school community planning cycle will help to:

- Ensure quality opportunities for all children
- Create sustainable practices
- Engage the entire school and wider community
- Establish effective partnerships
- Reinforce positive messages about physical activity
- Identify areas to develop personal skills of teachers, parents, and other providers
- Promote the positive value the school offers children.

## 6 key steps



*School Community Planning Cycle, adapted from Healthy Schools Programme, England 2004*

The school community planning cycle generally involves six key steps.

[Secure commitment of school leadership](#)

[Identify a driving force](#)

[Carry out whole school consultation / review](#)

[Develop an action plan](#)

[Implement, monitor and evaluate](#)

[Celebrate success and share knowledge](#)

### 1. Secure commitment of school leadership

Commitment from school management, including board of trustees, is essential.

Without this, competing priorities can prevent targets from being achieved.

Commitment may require formal support at a board of trustees' meeting.

## 2. Engage a driving force: School Community Physical Activity Team

People who are prepared to drive the Active Schools approach form a School Community Physical Activity Team. This team should meet regularly to plan and oversee implementation, monitor progress, and evaluate results.

The team should ideally represent:

- Teachers
- Parents / whānau
- Children
- Community / iwi agencies
- Local sport and recreation organisations / physical activity providers
- Senior management / BOT.

All members of the team should have clearly defined roles, such as clarifying who is responsible for:

- Developing consultation processes
- Overseeing analysis of data from consultation
- Developing a school community action plan
- Monitoring implementation of the action plan
- Planning ways to celebrate achievement.
- The team may be formed as a result of Active Schools or be an existing health promoting schools committee focusing on physical activity.

## 3. Carry out school community consultation / review

Consultation should involve parents, teachers / other staff, children, community agencies, and sport and recreation organisations.

Consideration should be given to:

- How all members of the school community will be consulted
- How all aspects of the whole school community approach will be included
- Consultation methods – sometimes a few random phone calls are more useful than a formal survey
- Gathering key information only
- Using easily-understood language
- Analysing information
- Sharing results with the school community.

Questions that could be asked:

- What physical activities are currently available for children?
- Where / when do these activities take place?
- Who is responsible for offering the activities?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current approach?
- What other activities would most benefit the children?

Consultation methods could include:

- Face to face interviews
- Short questionnaires, post box
- Phone calls
- Observations
- Team meetings
- Parent consultation evenings.

## 4. Develop a school community physical activity action plan

A successful School Community Physical Activity Action Plan gives clear direction to how the school community aims to promote physical activity.

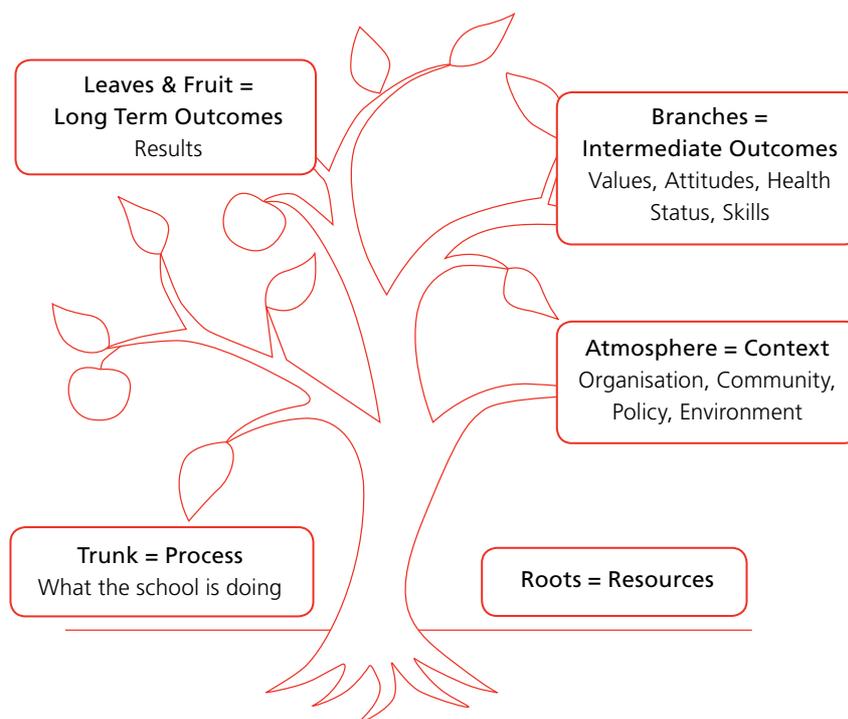
The School Community Physical Activity action plan should answer 8 questions:

1. Where are we now? *Baseline data*
2. Where do we want to get to? *Target*
3. Why do we want to get there? *Rationale*
4. How are we going to get there? *Actions*
5. What do we need to do to get there? *Resources*
6. Who will assist us to get there? *People*
7. How we will know we have got there? *Evaluation*
8. When will we review our progress? *Review date*

Key steps:

1. Produce a clear draft
2. Distribute the draft to relevant school community members (using school newsletter, web site, staff meetings, student councils etc)
3. Get feedback by a set timeframe
4. Revise action plan based on feedback
5. Distribute final action plan to ALL school community members – *with clear opportunities to contribute to the implementation.*

*Action planning for an Active School is like planting a fruit tree. The whole environment will affect how the tree grows. The tree will depend on a strong support structure. It will have many branches and bear fruit. If the environment is positive it will continue growing and fruiting season after season.*



*Developed by Kent Health & Education Partnership, England 2003*

## 5. Implement, monitor and evaluate plans

The completed action plan drives implementation. Success depends on:

- Gaining community support
- Ensuring people have / gain necessary skills with professional development or training
- Adequate resources allocated by school leadership or organisations from the whole school community
- Responding to any developments that impact on completing tasks within the timeframe.

Monitoring of progress is essential. Monitoring depends on ongoing collection of information such as:

- Budgets
- Timescales
- People input
- Progress towards targets.

Keeping an evidence portfolio is useful for ongoing monitoring. Evidence could be in the form of photographs and videos of successes, with written summaries of comments by children, parents and teachers.

Evaluating results shows whether or not targets are met, and the factors influencing this. Factors are considered and suggestions made as to how they can be addressed in future action plans.

## 6. Celebrate success and share knowledge

Achieving change in a school community takes time and effort from many people.

It is important to share and celebrate successes, across the whole school community. This gives recognition, offers thanks, and helps keep the ball rolling.

Success can be celebrated by:

- Articles / photos in local media
- Reports in newsletters, web sites and notice boards – of both club and other organisations in the whole school community
- Certificates
- Special events.

Sharing knowledge is about sharing what has been learned across the whole school community, and with other school communities.

If your organisation deals with a number of schools you can play a key role here, as knowledge and experience is built up over time.

Ways to share knowledge include:

- Encouraging school cluster meetings
- Running and promoting a school web site
- Supporting blog sites
- Establishing regional agency groups and forums.

# Developing school community organisation and environment

**By embracing a whole school community approach, schools and physical activity providers create an ethos and environment that supports learning, participation and success in physical activity.**

The ethos is the way the whole school community 'thinks': special character, values, attitudes and beliefs. The environment is the physical and social character of the school community – the areas resources and facilities that encourage activity.

[School community ethos](#)

[School community environment](#)

[Case study – Physical Activity Environment](#)

## School community ethos

An ethos that celebrates physical activity is developed through a [whole school community approach](#) and applying [school community planning](#). A school community that values the contribution of all children, staff, parents / whānau and wider community will be more successful in creating an ethos of physical activity.

A school community ethos that promotes physical activity celebrates:

- Participation of ALL children in many activities
- Achievement, commitment, enjoyment, positive behaviour.

The ethos can be seen in:

- School mission, charter, annual plans, physical activity policies / guidelines, physical education programmes, reports to parents, ERO reports, etc.
- Physical environment, for example, the grounds, facilities, equipment
- Social environment, for example by children and adults playing happily together
- Physical activity providers who are keen to develop their teaching / coaching skills.

Strong partnerships across the whole school community lead to consistent messages about physical activity and promote positive behaviour in / beyond school. Opportunities for the community to be involved with physical activity include:

- Parent / whānau involvement, for example at lunch times
- Community notice board
- Making school resources accessible to the community, for example by hiring equipment or buildings
- Initiatives such as community gardens in school grounds
- Home school partnerships
- Involving parents / whānau and community in school events and celebrations

- Recognising the contribution the local community make to the school
- Recognising children's involvement in the local community
- Facilitating parents / whānau and / or staff walking groups.



## School community environment

Most children spend around seven hours a week at school but not in formal lessons. If the school environment promotes activity – more time is spent outside, developing both physical and social skills.

Attractive and interesting school grounds and community facilities have a big impact on children's participation, enjoyment and achievement in physical activity. A well-planned and maintained environment which caters for all children provides opportunities to explore and develop skills, and can promote positive behaviour.

Ideas for a positive environment:

- Playground markings and murals
- Permanent, accessible and safe sports and recreation equipment
- Play time boxes of physical activity equipment for each class
- Both grassed areas and paved areas
- Garden areas
- Signs to encourage activity
- Activity trails
- Fencing to stop balls going out of bounds
- Covered and shaded areas
- Use of community facilities such as swimming pools, skateboard parks.

## Case study – Physical Activity Environment



The school community physical activity team involved children and staff in considering what physical activity opportunities they wanted. The team also collected data on accidents and negative playground behaviour. With this information, they developed an action plan to enhance the school playground and surrounding environment

Children helped to design games, murals and playground marking. They also suggested ways to improve the grounds.

The school approached local businesses for possible support. A local builder constructed a perimeter wall. A DIY store donated bags of compost, plants and seeds for a new garden area, and several benches.

Parents and children painted the murals. A fund raising event covered the cost of playground markings and activities. These included specific areas for ball games, individual activities, group or peer led activities, gardening and a quiet area.

Benches became buddy stops, where children could sit to show they wanted support or to be involved in activities. Older children were trained as peer leaders, to monitor these benches.



# Providing child centered physical activity experiences

The physical activity opportunities provided by an Active School should be based on children's needs, abilities, and interests.

To develop confidence and competence, children need a VARIETY of opportunities to learn and apply movement skills. Issues to consider include:

[Modifying activities](#)

[Providing variety of activities](#)

[Adapting to different learning styles](#)

[Environmental factors](#)

[Areas for interests / ability](#)

[Applying a child centred learning process](#)

[Children's voice in decision making](#)

## Modifying activities

Modifying activities may involve:

- Applying the same skills in a different game
- Using the same game, focusing on different skills
- Modifying rules or equipment to change the challenges.

## Providing variety of activities

Providing a variety of activities may involve:

- Competitive and non-competitive games
- Individual and team games
- Structured and spontaneous games / play
- Repetitive skill learning and applying skills in modified sports.

## Adapting to different learning styles

When teaching / coaching, it is a good idea to demonstrate movements, explain movements, and ask the children what movements feel like.

Children often have a preferred 'learning style' – stronger in visual, auditory or kinesthetic modes. For best results, use different styles of teaching / coaching depending on the child:

- **Visual learners** often find it easier to visualise movements. Show demonstrations, pictures and diagrams.
- **Auditory learners** often find it easier to follow the spoken word. Use clear, spoken instructions and questions.
- **Kinesthetic learners** often need to touch objects or feel movement. Give them the opportunity to experience movement in learning.

## Environmental factors

When planning and delivering physical activity learning experiences, it is important to consider factors impacting on children's enjoyment and success, such as:

- General environment of play area, grounds and equipment
- Social influences from home, family or peers
- Immediate influences such as a child being thirsty, hungry or tired
- School and family / whānau expectations
- Relationships with other children / adults
- Child's self-confidence in ability to perform and learn.

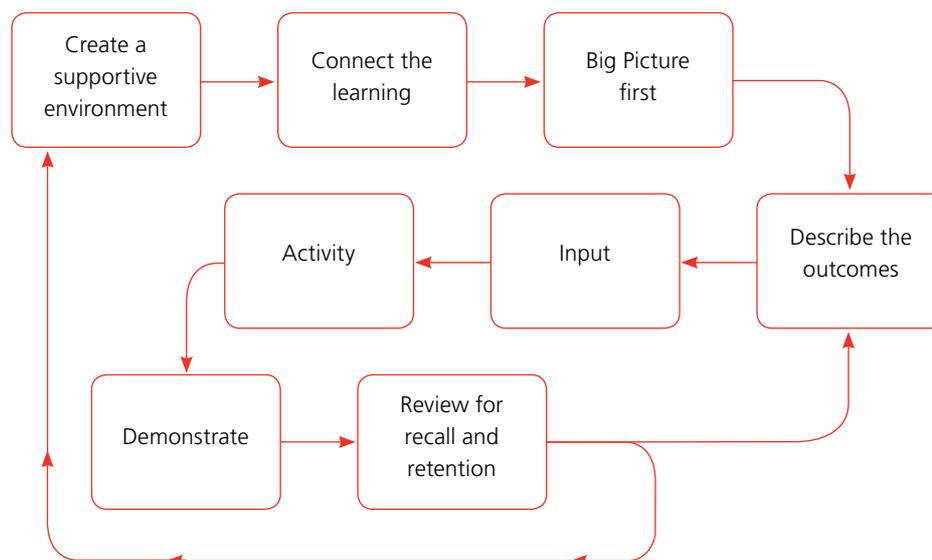
## Areas for interests / ability

A helpful strategy can be to group children based on interests / ability. For example, during break time it may not be ideal for children who enjoy low-activity games like gutterball to be in the same area as children playing high-activity games like tag.

Consider zoning the playground with a range of different activities in designated areas.

## Applying a child centred learning process

Applying a learning process assures children of quality physical activity experiences.



*A learning process adapted from Smith, A. (1998)*

Create a supportive environment

- Ensure all children feel valued and safe with the place / people
- Ensure they have clear expectations.

Connect the learning

- Ask children what they already know and what activities / skills they can already achieve.

Identify the big picture

- Help them identify why the learning is important.

Describe the goal outcomes

- Tell the children what you intend them to learn and how
- Introduce the learning
- Give children opportunity to explore / practice the new learning / skill.

Encourage children to get active

- Get the children to do the activity. Sometimes the 'getting there' is what matters most. For example if you are trying to promote cooperation skills this may be more important than the actual outcome of the activity.

Have the children demonstrate

- Get the children to demonstrate what they have learnt.
- This develops their reflection skills and helps them to remember what they have learnt.

Review children's learning

- Compare the children's demonstration with what you intended them to learn.
- Ask them to describe what they learnt
- Ask them to describe how they could use this learning in other situations / places.

## Children's voice in decision-making

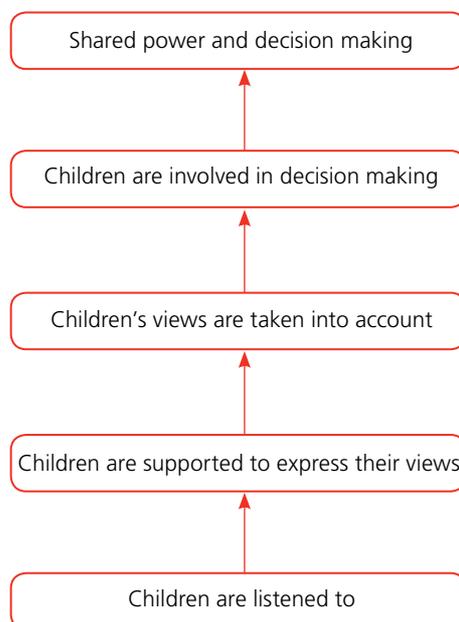
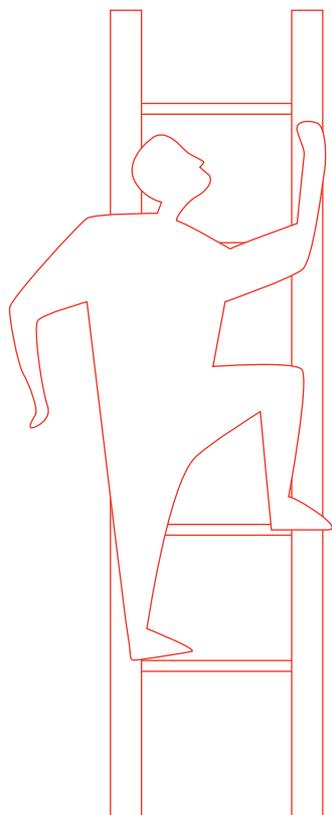
Children's voice is essential to a true child centred learning process. Children's voice is all about involving the children throughout planning and decision-making. Children are given the opportunity to contribute and take on responsibilities.

Children's voice can assist the teacher / coach in planning the best learning. The approach also helps children gain excellent skills and knowledge. It creates shared ownership and ensures the results are relevant to children.

Giving children a voice gives them opportunities to:

- Apply knowledge and skills in everyday life
- Learn how to balance individual rights and responsibilities
- Make a positive contribution across the school and wider community
- Learn that not everything is possible
- *Above all, take ownership of physical activity.*

## Supporting children's voice



*Pathway to Participaton, adapted from Shier. H. 1998.*

Children's voice can be represented as steps on a ladder. Each rung brings increased participation / responsibility in decision making.

Building children's voice takes time. Always encourage children to take small achievable steps up the ladder.

## Strategies to engage children's voice

The key is involvement! There are many proven ways of engaging children's voice, such as:

- student councils
- committees
- questionnaires / surveys
- peer work
- consultation evenings
- circle time.

## Getting started

By answering the following, a school community can help encourage effective use of children's voice.

- **What are we consulting about?**  
Be clear about the limitations and boundaries of consultation. For example, playground environment, sport clubs, equipment, school PE curriculum, expected behaviour at lunchtime, options for out of hours activities.

- **When do we engage children's voice?**  
While it may not be possible to involve children in all decisions, the earlier they are involved the more they will take ownership for what happens and why.
- **How much power should children have?**  
Be clear here. Some stages require more adult involvement. Children need to understand every decision relates to the next; meeting the needs of all is a SHARED process.
- **What are the benefits?**  
Make sure children understand the benefits of them being involved, for them, and for others.
- **How do we assure fair children's voice?**  
Make sure all children are represented. Don't just ask the academic pupils. Make sure boys and girls are equally represented. Make sure children from different cultures are equally represented. Involve any children with special needs.
- **What resources do we need?**  
Define adult involvement, and the budget.
- **What about feedback?**  
Children need to be kept informed about progress, including reasons why something has not happened.
- **How to show their contribution is valued?**  
Make sure children see their contribution is taken seriously or they are likely to lose trust and interest.

# Building community links and partnerships

The development of children is enhanced when children, teachers, parents / whānau, sport and recreation organisations, territorial authorities and community groups all have a shared vision – and work in partnership to achieve it.

Successful partnerships are all about mutual respect and understanding, with clear roles and responsibilities. Successful partnerships do not place unwanted demands on individuals / groups. They also do NOT replace responsibilities.

[Developing partnerships with parents / whānau](#)

[Developing partnerships between schools and community physical activity providers](#)

## Developing partnerships with parents / whānau

When developing partnerships across the whole school community, the involvement of parents / whānau is crucial. As members of a school community, you could consider:

- Current communication channels between schools / community groups, parents / whānau
- What other methods could be used, and when?
- What needs to be said?
- What needs to be asked?
- What will the benefits be?
- How can as many people as possible be motivated?
- How will the partnerships and communication with parents / whānau be kept working?

These questions should ideally be asked on an ongoing basis. There can never be too much communication across the whole school community.

## Case studies – parent / whānau involvement

Four examples of parent / whānau partnerships in action.

[Training for parents / whānau](#)

[Purchasing equipment](#)

[Parent / whānau – school / club links](#)

[Accessing CoachForce support](#)

## Case study – Training for parents / whānau

The school's consultation with parents and the wider community showed a number of grandparents were providing children with before / after school care.

The school established that some of these grandparents had a keen interest in a range of sporting activities, and a few had extensive hands-on experience. The school invited grandparents to the school community physical activity team meeting, to see if there were ways they could work together to promote children's activity out of school time.

Although keen, the individuals lacked initial confidence in delivery. Working through the [Regional Sports Trust](#), the school contacted the CoachForce officer, who helped train and mentor the grandparents, until they had the confidence and skills to run the after-school programmes themselves.

## Case study – Purchasing equipment

School consultation with the community about physical activity interests and opportunities identified a number of individuals, including children, with an interest in cycling as a family activity. Evaluating the feedback revealed that in many families only the child owned a bike and in some families no one had a bike. The school decided to apply to the local Council for funding and hold a school fund raising event with a focus on physical activity.

These efforts raised enough money to buy four adult bikes and four children's bikes. The school made the bikes available for hire to the local community. By charging a nominal amount they fully covered the ongoing cost of maintenance.

## Case study – Parent / whānau-School / club links

A member of [CoachForce](#) was assisting a school that had identified swimming as a key area for development. They worked with the school to gain parental involvement and start a programme to identify talented children.

The swimming programme was run at school with information sent home to parents about additional swimming lessons and clubs. The school hosted a swimming event and invited parents. The school identified children with swimming talent and passed their names on to the CoachForce member.

A communication channel was set up through the school from / to the CoachForce member and parents of keen swimmers. This promoted links between children and swimming clubs.

## Case study – Accessing CoachForce support

In a Regional Sports Trust, the CoachForce manager and Active Schools facilitator meet regularly.

The Active Schools facilitator works with a cluster of schools to assist them in identifying parents who are potential coaches. Names are passed on to the CoachForce manager who contacts the regional sports organisation and / or club. The RST and club ensure te parents receive on-going training and support as required.

## Developing partnerships between schools and community physical activity providers

An effective partnership between your organisation and school depends on everyone having clear expectations and responsibilities; with all participants being empowered to play a valuable and rewarding role. There are a number of important considerations.

[Considerations to help your initial planning](#)

[Agreeing a code of expectation](#)

[Considerations for programmes](#)

[Considerations for sports / physical activity providers](#)

[Considerations for Territorial Authorities](#)

[Looking ahead](#)

## Considerations to help your initial planning

- What are the school's / your organisation's needs?
- How do these needs relate to the wider community?
- What are the communication channels between school and your / other organisation(s), and how can they be developed? (A liaison person who talks with schools to understand their needs may be a good idea.)
- What are the benefits of the partnership(s)?
- How to best get started? (*Consider contributing to the school community's [physical activity action plan](#)*)
- How can you include the school in your organisation's consultation processes?

## Agreeing a code of expectation

A code of expectations is crucial to manage expectations, needs and responsibilities of schools and providers.

A code of expectation:

- Identifies how provider and school will successfully deliver physical activity learning to children
- Describes the school's / provider's roles and responsibilities
- Focuses on creating positive physical activity experiences for the children
- Establishes consistent delivery and expectation during / out of school time
- Reflects the school's values, and [ethos](#)
- Respects the provider's goals / aims.

Codes of expectation differ depending on needs but some elements are mandatory:

- Alignment with school / organisation practices
- Assurance of relevant learning for children and staff
- Provision of a safe learning environment
- Child centred and inclusive activities / programmes.

## Considerations for programmes

As a provider it is essential to ensure programmes / activities:

- Encourage participation and fun for ALL children
- Are inclusive and can be modified to meet different children's needs
- Are positive and focused forward
- Emphasise modified games rather than drills

- Focus on quality not quantity (it is better to provide thorough programmes in less schools than “have a go” session in many schools)
- Use a variety of equipment and approaches
- Recognise participation and achievement.

## Considerations for sports / physical activity providers

- Aim to cover fewer sports / activities in greater depth, enabling learning in clear steps
- Developing children should always come before developing the sport / activity – focus on who is coached rather than what is coached
- If necessary, support training of additional staff / volunteers to deliver programmes
- All people representing your organisation should receive professional development and use a child centred philosophy
- Programmes should not be used simply as opportunities to identify talent
- Ensure regular communication with schools
- Communicate all opportunities (*such as registration, events, training, volunteer opportunities*) and how the school community can be involved.

## Additional considerations for Territorial Authorities

- Aim for long term planning to remove barriers to participation
- Consult with / partner schools to develop multi-use facilities (*such as play areas on / near school property*)
- Support active transport initiatives (*for example, controlled crossings, walking school buses, split pedestrian islands, employing school travel planners*)
- Offer holiday programmes using school sites
- Ensure regular communication with schools
- Communicate all opportunities (*such as registration dates, events, resources / facilities available, costs and rebates for schools*) and how the school community can be involved.

## Looking ahead

Strong ongoing communications ensure everyone works to the same vision. Looking to the months and years ahead:

- Stay involved in the school community physical activity team
- Support clear communications across the school community, perhaps with a shared database of contacts
- Recognise the support of all participants
- Recognise the importance of your own work – by helping children to get active and enjoy it, you are helping make a difference to the future of New Zealand society.

# Resources

## to support your work

You can call on a range of publications as well as proven expertise, to support your work in activating communities through Active Schools.

You are welcome to call on the expertise of Active School Facilitators. These people are based in Regional Sports Trusts around New Zealand. Your region's Facilitator can help in establishing a successful whole school community planning process.

SPARC can also provide information about best practices in the sport and recreation sector.

To know more, or to find out your region's Facilitator call 0800 Active (228483).



### Active Schools Toolkit

This has been produced by SPARC (Sport and Recreation New Zealand). It is aimed primarily at schools, but the information may well be of value to your involvement in the whole school community. The toolkit includes:

- **Get Ready.** For principals, management teams and Boards of Trustees; introducing and maintaining a physical activity culture at the school.
- **Get Started.** For teachers looking at introducing physical activity into the classroom. Over 90 practical, fun activities for outside the classroom across the curriculum and with family / whānau.
- **Get Going.** Twenty curriculum-based activity cards offering ways to include physical activity in a planned programme.

- **Get into It.** A CD ROM with interactive activities, ideas, and physical activity options for children.
- **Outdoor Activities: Guidelines for Leaders.** This describes current accepted practice for more than 40 outdoor activities.
- **Healthy Eating in Active Schools.** This booklet uses a whole school approach to improve healthy eating for children.

To download a copy of the Active School's Toolkit, visit [www.sparc.org.nz](http://www.sparc.org.nz)

## ActiveMark

[ActiveMark](#) is a development tool schools can use to support / guide the development of the Whole School Community Physical Activity Culture. Using the ActiveMark tool will provide schools with guidance and direction in addressing physical activity programmes through the various stages using the action planning process.

## Other helpful publications

[Guidelines for Sustainable Physical Activity in School Communities.](#) This is a guide for school principals and teachers / managers of physical education programmes.

### It's all about children and young people

These guidelines assist providers to implement a child and young person centred philosophy in sport and recreation. To view them, visit [www.sparc.org.nz](http://www.sparc.org.nz)

### [Coach development framework](#)

These guidelines set the future philosophy and direction for coach development in New Zealand.

### [Coaches' code of ethics](#)

This sets out expectations for conduct and behavior for anyone involved in coaching.

### [Guide to Strategic Planning for Physical Activity](#)

These guidelines for territorial authorities assist with planning regional physical activity strategies.

### [Kiwidex Manual](#)

Fun, informal activities to promote daily physical activity and games for children.

### [Fundamental Movement Skills](#)

This resource uses play and simple activities to help children master basic movement skills through play and games.

## Contact Us

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*An Active School community is a positive community ... congratulations on your involvement.*



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