

# PLAY.SPORT



## FINAL EVALUATION SUMMARY (2016-2019)

Play.sport is a collaborative intervention led by Sport NZ intended to improve the quality of physical education (PE), sport, play and physical activity experiences in schools, and better connections between schools and their communities.

### SUMMING UP...

Play.sport has fostered positive system change in primary schools through supporting schools to develop an active culture, and improving teacher thinking, confidence and practices, and community connections. When teachers were invested, Play.sport resulted in positive changes for students. Whole school buy-in with all teachers using the same approach is critical to creating whole school improvement for students.



I truly believe that it is the best intervention our school has ever taken part in."

- TEACHER, UPPER HUTT



Teacher confidence has increased. No one feels like they need to be an expert in PE to talk HPE. The teachers are more explicit in what we are trying to teach."

- SCHOOL LEADER, UPPER HUTT



I like PE because you try different games and you can adapt them to make them fair and team up with people you haven't worked with, plus it helps the brain to let out energy."

- STUDENT, WAITAKERE

## WHAT ARE WE EVALUATING?

### 2016 BASELINE

- Participation
- Quality of opportunity
  - Teacher practice and confidence
  - Community connections
- Quality of experience for students
- Child wellbeing
- Quality of implementation

### 2017 PROCESS AND EMERGENT OUTCOMES

- Quality of opportunity
  - Teacher practice and confidence
  - Community connections
- Quality of implementation

### 2018 PROCESS AND EMERGENT OUTCOMES

- Quality of opportunity
  - Teacher practice and confidence
  - Community connections
- Quality of experience for students
- Quality of implementation

### 2019 PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

- Participation
- Quality of opportunity
  - Teacher practice and confidence
  - Community connections
- Quality of experience for students
- Child wellbeing
- Quality of implementation

### STUDENT SURVEY

**26** PRIMARY SCHOOLS

**2614** STUDENTS

### STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

**3**

NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

### EVALUATION SAMPLE

**26** WAITĀKERE SCHOOLS  
**18** UPPER HUTT SCHOOLS

### TEACHER/SCHOOL LEADER SURVEY

**179** STAFF SURVEYS FROM 30 SCHOOLS

**31** STAFF  
TEACHER/SCHOOL LEADER INTERVIEWS

**4**

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

STUDENT GROUP INTERVIEWS

**35** STUDENTS

**4** SCHOOLS IN UPPER HUTT  
**4** SCHOOLS IN WAITĀKERE

**4**

SCHOOL STAKEHOLDERS

**12** PLAY.SPORT WORKFORCE INTERVIEWS

## KEY FINDINGS

# SCHOOLS

**“ PLAY.SPORT HELPED SCHOOLS DEVELOP A CULTURE THAT VALUES BEING ACTIVE ”**

### SCHOOL BUY-IN

- 72% of school leaders considered Play.sport offered excellent or good value
- More school leaders agreed that schools had:
  - a clearly visible focus on physical activity in their charter and annual plan (74% in 2019, 25% in 2016)
  - a vision for student wellbeing that clearly includes a focus on physical activity (52% in 2019, 16% in 2016)
  - a long-term PLD plan for teachers in HPE (65% in 2019, 10% in 2016).
- 21% of teachers & school leaders reported that HPE and physical activity was a high priority in the school (5% in 2016)
- Teachers are spending more time on PE and physical activity:
  - PE (67 minutes a week on average, up from 52 minutes in 2016)
  - physical activity (77 minutes a week on average, up from 57 minutes in 2016).



Play.sport has been a huge part of moving our curriculum forward. Not only has it transformed our HPE but the ripples can be felt across our school culture, learning and curriculum. The Play.sport approach has had a significant impact on how we integrate learning and deliver culturally responsive curriculum....

- TEACHER, UPPER HUTT

### SCHOOLS ARE STRENGTHENING PE PLANNING, PROCESSES & SUPPORT

- In 2019, significantly more teachers reported they had 'High' or 'Medium' access to:
  - PE specialist teachers from our school to assist in planning (60%, up from 35% in 2016)
  - dedicated time to meet with others to plan PE learning (59%, up from 44% in 2016)
  - external PE advisors who assist in planning (52%, up from 19% in 2016).
- In 2019, teachers also reported more access to:
  - PE teaching resources that show how I can meet the needs of a range of students
  - appropriate PE resources and equipment to use for my classes
  - rooms that are suitable for inside physical activity.

### KEY ENABLERS FOR CHANGE

- School leaders who understand and support the intent of Play.sport
- School leaders and teachers are clear on how Play.sport supports other school goals
- School leaders support a whole-school approach
- Play.sport messages are clearly communicated to whole school
- Play.sport 'champions' and a lead team located in each syndicate
- A Play.sport workforce that teachers can easily access
- Appropriate equipment, resources and spaces that teachers can easily access
- Robust systems to induct new staff
- School uses collaborative planning processes

## KEY FINDINGS

# TEACHERS

## “PLAY.SPORT HELPED SHIFT TEACHERS’ MINDSETS ABOUT PE”

### TEACHER PRACTICE

- 58% of teachers provided examples of changes to their thinking and practice:
  - more focus with students on reflection, critical thinking, and learning intentions
  - more focus on hauora or integrating health with PE in planning
  - more student voice or choice
  - better understanding and confidence in PE (e.g., moving away from a skills or sports-based focus)
  - more focus on fun and engaging activities
  - better integration of PE activities with other learning areas, school values or goals.



Play.sport has helped me to explore with my students the different elements of hauora. How we can use what we know about hauora in our daily learning and express how we feel about things in a safe way.”

- TEACHER, WAITĀKERE



Teachers have a much better understanding of the pedagogy behind HPE. They know you don't have to always teach specific skills – it can be through playing and exploring.”

- TEACHER, WAITĀKERE

### TEACHER CONFIDENCE

# 71%

71% of staff reported increased confidence in planning and teaching PE

# 77%

77% of staff who feel confident in teaching mental health (65% in 2016)



In the past I was not so confident. The Play.sport workforce has really helped us unpack the curriculum. It really opened our eyes about what we need to do for the kids”

- TEACHER, UPPER HUTT

## TEACHERS ARE USING MORE EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

	2016	2019
General Teaching Practice ('agree a lot' or 'agree mostly')		
I give student feedback about how they are progressing with PE learning	24%	40%
PE learning is integrated with other learning areas or themes	31%	53%
In PE I use the same learner centred approaches I use for other learning areas	50%	65%
Effective PE practices ('every week or nearly every day')		
Students give and receive peer feedback	17%	39%
Students get to make up their own games, rules, strategies, and movement patterns	10%	24%
Students learn ways to solve problems or challenges, and manage risks	33%	52%

## EMBEDDING PRACTICE ACROSS ALL TEACHERS IS A WORK IN PROGRESS

- 69% of teachers considered Play.sport to be partially or slightly embedded (i.e. some teachers using Play.sport approaches)
- 0% of teachers considered Play.sport to be well-embedded

# KEY FINDINGS

# STUDENTS

“PLAY.SPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR STUDENTS, IF THEIR TEACHER IS INVESTED IN THE INITIATIVE”

## STUDENT OUTCOMES ARE MIXED

- Mostly no change in indicators of physical activity behaviour change and student engagement between 2016 and 2019
- 94% of students interviewed gave examples of transferring PE to other learning contexts
- Less students are feeling left out (14% in 2016, 8% in 2019)
- All sets of data showed:
  - students can describe a range of dimensions of PE learning
  - reluctant students are more confident to join in
  - more opportunities to explore cultural forms of movement.



All children are keen to take part in Hauora lessons - I have children with severe anxiety and behavioural issues but they take part enthusiastically.”

- STAFF SURVEY, UPPER HUTT



Most of the stuff we do is cultural which is really cool: Māori, Irish, te reo. We learn the traditional background at the start.”

- STUDENT INTERVIEW, UPPER HUTT



What are the different things you learnt in PE this year?

Our main two focuses were collaboration and cooperation and we try to include the hauora house. A long time ago PE was a separate thing. We used to just go out for a game. Now we have the hauora house and we try to include it in everything we do. Like when we did swimming, we had to do a reflection on how swimming strengthens the house.

Does that help your learning?

Yes, we get to reflect on how we are doing

- STUDENT INTERVIEW, UPPER HUTT

## BETTER STUDENT OUTCOMES WHEN TEACHER IS INVESTED

- Students have access to more effective learning\*:
  - did PE the day before (71% compared to 46% of all students)
  - had ‘heaps’ of opportunities to learn how to be a leader in PE (36% compared with 28% of all students)
  - got ‘heaps’ of feedback from their teacher about how to get better at PE or sports (33% compared with 25% of all students).
- Students are more likely to be active\*:
  - had ‘heaps’ of opportunities to do active things when they learnt about math, writing, or science (30% compared with 27% of all students)
  - were in a sports team or active club at school (59% compared with 52% of all students)
  - were in a sports team or active club outside school (59% compared with 54% of all students).

\* Comparing students of teachers who said they were invested to all students.

## MIXED IMPACT ON ENGAGEMENT AND ENJOYMENT

- Student survey data showed Play.sport approaches appeared to be decreasing student liking of, and engagement in, PE:
  - 84% liked doing PE in 2016, 77% in 2019
  - 80% were interested in what they are learning at school in 2016, 73% in 2019
  - 76% felt like they were making progress in PE in 2016, 70% in 2019.

However,

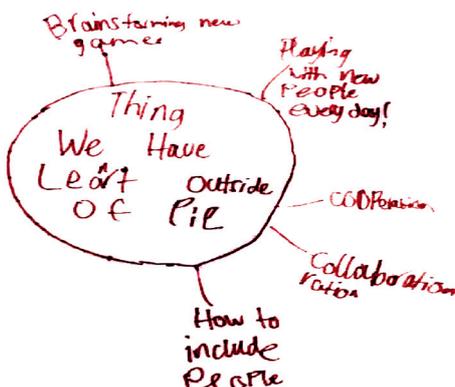
- The majority of teachers (71%) noted they were seeing improvements to students’ engagement in PE Learning.
- The Play.sport approaches to PE were valued by the majority of students interviewed
- Overall, some (more active/‘sporty’) students are still transitioning between old and new approaches and miss just being able to ‘play’ in PE. However, those previously disengaged are now enjoying the inclusive nature and learning component of PE.



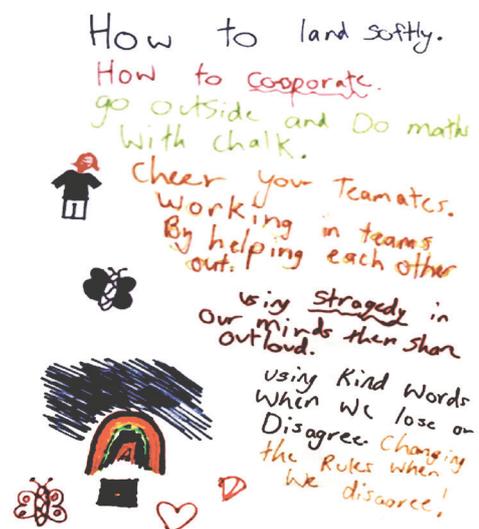
In PE, I like the ‘physical’, not the ‘education’.”

- STUDENT INTERVIEW, UPPER HUTT

## TRANSFERRING PE LEARNING TO OTHER CONTEXTS



## LEARNING IN PE



## KEY FINDINGS

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES

## “PLAY.SPORT (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ACTIVATORS) FOSTERS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY”

### PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- Play.sport assisted most schools (visited) to broaden the range of opportunities students had to be active.
- Primary activators, and the PE workforce, had developed some key focus areas that were highly valued by school staff including:
  - a focus on play which assisted schools to meet social and learning goals
    - most teachers (71%) agreed 'A lot' or 'Mostly' that their school actively encouraged play at lunchtime (e.g., offering a selection of equipment that encourages creative play or freedom to climb trees)
  - support to redesign active school events to make them more fun and participatory
  - 33% celebrated all physical achievements not just winning competitions (25% in 2016)
  - activities that made stronger and more culturally responsive connections to the local community, or between local schools
    - nearly half (46%) of teachers thought Play.sport had contributed to improving students' connections to physical activity opportunities in their local community
  - student leadership approaches through physical activity opportunities which assisted in building students' capabilities
  - support to think more critically about the relationship between schools and external providers.
- Schools developed new approaches to play
- Working across many schools was challenging for primary activators.



For athletics day we now have a bigger turnout [of parents] and heaps of positive feedback, even from traditional-thinking parents ... We have a strong, vocal, competitive group [of parents], so we still have an element of placings. We also have a pure fun run - a sprinklers obstacle course. It was a hot day, so all students went home happy!”

- SCHOOL LEADER, WAITĀKERE



We used the Sport NZ principles of play, such as, no focused learning intentions – let them be creative and just play... The play principles say mix up age groups so year 3/4 and year 5/6 went out together. So they had to negotiate. After this, we opened up [the Playpod at] lunchtime... The teachers found it really interesting to see how the different ages played... The Year 5 boys loved it.”

- SCHOOL LEADER, UPPER HUTT

### SECONDARY SCHOOLS

- Key focus areas highly valued by school staff were:
  - supporting schools to think more broadly about students' wellbeing needs through connecting physical activity with schools' bigger picture wellbeing goals
  - processes schools could use to hear student views about the activities they would like. This often involved strengthening student leadership groups and processes
  - support that assisted schools to have a wider view of physical activity and offer more non-traditional forms of activity that meet the needs of a wider group of students.
- Schools had an increase in physical activity opportunities for students and more students taking up these opportunities.
- Schools had a deepening understanding of community
- The activator role has strengthened student leadership processes
- There was some evidence of benefits for secondary students
- The activator role was as varied as schools' needs and priorities
- Success depended on the fit of the activator with school needs
- The focus of the activator role developed over time



[Among students there is a] sense of being listened to, to co-design a framework, and being able to see that the things they wanted happen. Trust grows. For example, a group of young men who were always in trouble, were engaging more [at school] by us engaging them in wellbeing activities. They show an increase in confidence.”

- SECONDARY ACTIVATOR

# COMMUNITIES

## “ COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS ARE STRONGER ”

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS - PRIMARY

- Community partners increased their understanding and improved alignment with Play.sport approaches



Our values proposition around schools has increased ten-fold. The understanding of what sport, PE, physical recreation, and play are has developed a lot more [in schools]. Also for us – it has allowed us to articulate our values proposition. People now see the line of sight [between what we offer and school needs].... Play.sport has been invaluable for our community – I can't speak highly enough of it. It has shifted our ability to work with schools and improve things for our tamariki.”

- COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER

- Schools have more strategic connections with external providers



We have moved away from [using providers in PE] as we have this focus on our own pedagogy in our own school. We used to have a lot of outside agencies – but quality differed. Some were good, some not. If the facilitator was not great – it was a waste of money ... We mostly ended up doing behaviour management. So it was not good learning for us as teachers.”

- LEAD TEACHER, UPPER HUTT

- Some schools have built stronger community and cultural connections



We are definitely more connected to local marae and working on developing Māori student leaders and a strong kapa haka team. This was not initially inspired by Play.sport but there is a connection.”

- SCHOOL LEADER, UPPER HUTT

## KEY FINDINGS

# SUSTAINABILITY

## “ STRONG FOUNDATIONS ASSISTS SUSTAINABILITY ”

### FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

- An effective Play.sport exit strategy is developed with schools
- Play.sport approaches align with the overall direction and goals of the school
- The school makes connections between Play.sport and other ongoing or new PLD
- The school has processes for inducting new leaders or teachers into Play.sport approaches
- Play.sport approaches are embedded in school processes
- The school has Health and PE leaders at a whole school and syndicate level
- Schools resource staff to continue building practice
- Play.sport approaches are built into teacher capacity building processes
- Student leadership processes are valued
- School staff have ongoing access to networks or resources that provide new ideas or resolve tensions
- Ongoing support is offered to schools that need it



Why are [Teacher education providers] not teaching this to trainee teachers? ... It took me 20 years down the line to find out what hauora means!”

- SCHOOL LEADER, UPPER HUTT



Our new [Play.sport related] strategies are now in our appraisal system. Every teacher has a goal which involves an inquiry into an aspect of the changes we have made in the strategic plan. Teachers meet with me once a term and we work together and highlight progress at the end of year. We have a good system of surveying and getting data each year [for review and needs-analysis] including parent surveys.”

- SCHOOL LEADER, WAITĀKERE

### SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ONGOING CHANGE

- Continued workforce support was the most common support suggested by school leaders and teachers (survey and interviews) to ensure ongoing change. This could take a variety of forms:
  - access to new ideas through refresher PLD or sharing practice at local workshops
  - visits by a mentor for individual mentoring or team planning
  - regular check in and review with school leaders or lead teachers
  - continued support to build culturally responsive and inclusive programmes
  - support to induct new staff (e.g., beginning teachers or new middle managers).



Ideally a facilitator available for those who want them in our cluster. Make use of what we have. There are lots of teachers in our region who are valuable resources.”

- SCHOOL LEADER, UPPER HUTT



Think we will always have a need for support, but whatever new system, it is important that we have check in points, say every 3-4 or 6 months, where we are asked ‘How’s it going, where’s your vision, is the vision still relevant? What about this group?’

- SCHOOL LEADER, WAITĀKERE

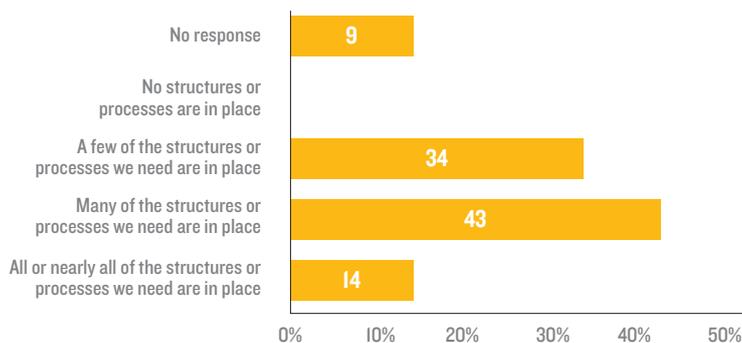


Next year the plan is to get all teachers onboard. We have a new AP role. In this role [the Play.sport lead teacher] will sit with each syndicate to do planning... We have some new staff... but we have some strong teachers in each syndicate... It is important to choose your leaders carefully so they can lead practice at your school.”

- SCHOOL LEADER, UPPER HUTT

### SYSTEMS TO SUSTAIN PRACTICE

- Primary schools have some of the systems needed to sustain practice
  - around half of schools (57%) had all or many of the structures they thought they needed to sustain Play.sport in the longer term.
  - Around one-third of schools only had a few of these structures in place suggesting it is likely they would require some form of ongoing support to avoid shifting back to old practices or to continue to build new approaches.



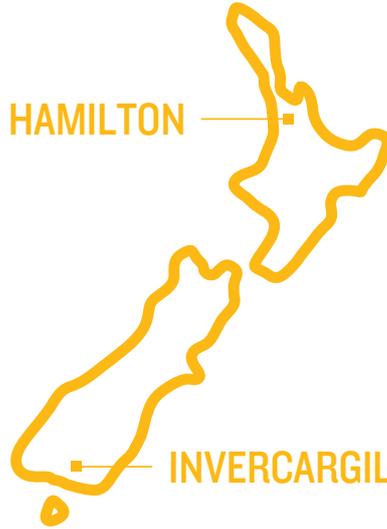
# NEXT STEPS

## EVOLVING THE APPROACH

# 4 YRS

Play.sport in Upper Hutt and Waitākere concluded in December 2019 after four years.

HAMILTON



Two new Play.sport sites were established in Invercargill and Hamilton in 2019 for a 3-year period.

INVERCARGILL

The two new sites have adopted an alternative delivery model that attempts to better leverage existing regional and local systems and structures.

# +2



In June 2019 as part of the Wellbeing Budget the Government invested \$47.6 million over four years into a new initiative called Healthy Active Learning.

Healthy Active Learning is a joint government initiative between Sport NZ and the Ministries of Health and Education to improve the wellbeing of tamariki and young people through healthy eating and drinking, and quality physical activity. This initiative has been informed by Play.sport and being led by Sport NZ.

To find out more, email [healthyactivelearning@sportnz.org.nz](mailto:healthyactivelearning@sportnz.org.nz)