

Active As

Evaluation summary – Year 2 implementation 2025

Active As is a Sport NZ initiative supporting 47 secondary schools and wharekura across 8 regions to provide positive and inclusive active recreation and sport opportunities for their students.

The programme is exceeding expectations, with clear signs of positive change and reduced inequities. Active As is already making a difference and is on track to deliver even greater impact for rangatahi, schools and kura over time.

What are the aims?



To enhance the wellbeing of rangatahi through physical activity



To increase the physical activity levels of rangatahi, particularly those that are less active



To demonstrate the value of physical activity to educational priorities

“ MC Active didn’t just change how active I am, it changed how confident I feel, how social I’ve become and how balanced my lifestyle is. ”

Safa, Year 13 student leader
(MC Active is Māngere College’s Active As initiative)

Impact

Active As has had a significant impact on students’ physical activity levels, wellbeing and learning. Schools involved in Active As show greater improvement across the following areas, compared with those not involved. Highlights include:

More students are active

Rangatahi are moving more during the school day, especially those who were previously less active.

2.4%

Increase in students who are physically active for at least 60 minutes per day

2.3%

Increase in satisfaction with physical activity at school

Strong wellbeing impacts

Rangatahi and staff at schools and kura consistently report stronger relationships, improved school culture and a greater sense of connection.

6.6%

Increase in sense of belonging at school

4.7%

Increase in confidence to participate

3.4%

Increase in happiness

Positive education outcomes

Rangatahi show increased interest in learning, greater enjoyment of school and improved regular attendance. While attendance is influenced by many things, schools involved in Active As show stronger improvements than those not involved.

10.4%

Increase in school attendance *

7.5%

Increase in feeling happy about going to school

6.6%

Greater interest in learning at school

All results are statistically significant and are based on the difference from the baseline data collected in 2023 to the end of 2025.

* Schools not involved in Active As also saw improvements, but these were smaller than the increases seen in schools involved in Active As.

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Opportunities

The evaluation highlights opportunities for schools and supporting organisations to ensure the ongoing success of Active As:

Strong support and leadership in schools



A dedicated activator role within schools, backed by strong senior leadership, plays a key role in how well Active As is delivered.

Understanding school capacity



Schools are navigating significant change. Being flexible and considering school capacity supports better delivery.

Keep a student-led approach at the centre



Inclusive, student-led design and delivery of physical activity are central to achieving wellbeing and equity outcomes.

Impact story

Redefining physical activity at Te Aute College

Trampolines have become a standout feature at Te Aute College in Central Hawke's Bay. Since being installed earlier this year, demand has been so high that students have set their own rules to manage use at breaktimes.

The initiative came about through Te Aute College's Active As programme, supporting rangatahi to shape physical activity at their school.

Alongside the trampolines, students now have access to a new gym, table tennis in the wharekai and more opportunities to play netball – with the school's teams growing from 2 to 6 in 2 years.

Jamie, a Year 13 student and member of the Active As leadership group, says choice has made a real difference.

"Having your own sense of will and knowing what you want to do and being able to do that – it's just a good way to express ourselves," he says.

He's seen physical activity increase, especially for students who were previously less active.

"When I was Year 9 ... if you didn't play rugby, or you didn't play a certain sport, you didn't have to really do much physical activity at all. Now everyone gets up and gets moving."

 [Watch the video to learn more](#)

Adapted from an article originally published in the [Education Gazette](#), 13 October 2025

“ There has been a huge increase in physical [activity], mental wellbeing and everything. We do think Active As has been a huge part of that. ”

Jamie, Year 13 student leader

The impact is also showing up in the classroom. In 2024, Te Aute College reported a 100% pass rate for Years 11-13, with a record number of merit and excellence endorsements.

Jamie says Active As has played a crucial role, reinforcing just how important physical activity is for his overall wellbeing.

"I love being active. It just helps me ease my mind through tough times," he says.

