



Section 2: Teachers

Organization

This section includes information for teachers in regards to Daily Physical Activity and is organized into the following topics:

- **Considering the Needs of Students**
- **Female Students and Physical Activity**
- **Planning for Implementation**
- **Linking Cross-curricular Outcomes**
- **Involving Parents/Guardians and the Community**
- **Active Living for Staff**
- **Walking Ideas and Information**

Considering the Needs of Students

Students with Special Needs

Daily physical activity benefits all students, regardless of ability, gender, socio-economic status or ethnic origin. Some students with special needs may require different types of changes to programming that will create optimal conditions for them to participate and be successful.

Teachers should get to know the needs and strengths of their students so they can plan activities and provide appropriate equipment that best meets the individual needs of students. Students with extensive special needs or health conditions may require changes to activities and equipment. This may require specialized research and consultation with specialists. If a student has a specific physical disability, contact a health professional who is trained in the related area.

Strategies for Ensuring Maximum Participation of All Students

Using the following general strategies can help students with special needs achieve success in physical activity and physical education.

Simplify Tasks

For example:

- Suspend a beach ball or sponge ball so that the path of the ball is more predictable. Students can then work independently at striking, kicking and catching.
- Make targets larger to increase the chances of success for students with motor or sight impairments.
- Increase response time and decrease the need for accuracy; e.g., fix equipment to a stable location like a ball placed on a T-ball stand.
- Adapt success criteria to meet individual student needs.

Make Changes to Equipment

For example:

- Use lighter or larger balls so that less effort is required. Under-inflated balls move more slowly, are less likely to roll away and can reduce the fear of catching.
- Large, light inflatable balls can be dribbled along the floor beside the front caster of a wheelchair.
- Use ribbons to add tails to balls. This would allow them to travel more slowly through the air and on the ground.
- Use scarves, towels or beanbags as substitutes for balls.
- Use visual cues. Flags may be waved with a whistle to indicate that an activity is to start or stop, that the participant's name or number is being called, or that the music has stopped.
- Use equipment to extend a student's reach in tag-type activities; e.g., with a piece of foam.
- Conduct activities on hard, flat, smooth surfaces, such as floors or blacktop, to allow easier movement of wheelchairs, crutches or walkers.

Adjust the Time

For example:

- Build in frequent breaks.
- Permit students to hold onto an object, such as a ball, for longer periods of time.
- Allow students extra hits and/or bounces; e.g., in volleyball.
- Decrease the length of the game.
- Allow a student to start ahead of the other group members.

Modify the Playing Area

For example:

- Decrease the size of the playing area.
- Have a greater number of players on a team so that less movement is required for each student.
- Use barriers around a group to decrease the distance the ball may travel.
- In throwing or catching activities, position students in front of a wall to stop the ball if they miss.

Use a Buddy System

For example:

- Have peers or adult volunteers assist the students.
- For games involving running, have a buddy run part of the way and have the student run the rest of the way.
- For tag games, have the student and the buddy run separately. Both must be tagged before they are out.

Provide Varied Programming Options

For example:

- Set up daily physical activities using stations to make a variety of activities available.
- Offer a variety of activities for all skill levels.
- Provide opportunities for adequate practice when students are learning and performing skills.
- Focus on activities that do not require a great deal of specialized skill.

- Introduce preparatory games to develop skills and increase the student's opportunity for success.
- Suggest the student kick or throw a ball instead of hitting it.
- In games that involve passing a ball or other object, ensure that each student has a chance to complete a number of passes.
- For rhythmic activities, use sticks, balls, tambourines, ribbons or scarves to help students express rhythmic movement.

Ensure Individual Students Understand Instructions and Rules

For example:

- Ensure that you have a student's undivided attention before instructions begin; e.g., establish eye contact.
- Ask a student to repeat the instruction back to ensure that he or she understands the rules and procedures.
- Send a written description of the activity home with students so that they may practise at home before participating with peers.
- Keep instructions specific, precise and brief.
- Demonstrate the skill, verbally describing each movement.
- Ensure that opportunities for review and repetition are provided.
- Use cooperative games to teach new skills.
- Break an activity into a series of smaller tasks to make the activity more manageable.

Review Students' Individual Program Plans (IPPs)¹

For example:

- Become familiar with:
 - information about the student's areas of strength and need
 - information from various assessments, including skill assessments
 - information about any medical conditions and any activities that should be avoided
 - any accommodations required by the student
 - any equipment or equipment adaptations required by the student
 - any other important considerations.
- Establish class routines that include the student.
- Be flexible in your instructional approach.
- After each unit, reflect on the student's participation, giving special attention to appropriateness of the activities, facilities and equipment used. Consider whether the student is participating at an appropriate level.
- Work closely with other teachers to share information and coordinate instructional strategies.

1. Adapted from Ontario Education, *Daily Physical Activity in Schools: Grades 4–6* (Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2005), p. 15. © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2005. Adapted with permission.

When planning for specific sports, consider how small changes can maximize the participation of all students.²

For example:

Golf, Croquet, Hockey

- Decrease the lever length and weight of the striking implement.
- Increase the surface area of the contact face of the striking implement.
- Substitute other objects; e.g., pool noodles for striking implement.
- Increase the size of the object to be struck.
- Decrease the weight of the object to be struck.
- Provide a variety of target sizes.

Racquet Games

- Increase the surface area of the racquet.
- Decrease the lever length and weight of the racquet.
- Tether a ball to the racquet to make retrieval easier.
- Vary items to be struck.

Soccer

- Use pylons to designate a lane or position in the field.
- Substitute a brighter coloured ball or one that provides more visual contrast.
- Decrease the size of the goal area or increase the number of goalies.
- Use a slightly deflated ball to slow down the pace of the game.

Softball

- Vary the length of the bat.
- Use a bat with a flat striking area.
- Choose a bat with an appropriate sized grip for the students' hand sizes and grip strengths.
- Use a tee.
- Adjust the size of the ball.
- Allow students to kick the ball.

Basketball

- Use a well-inflated ball for dribbling.
- Adjust hoop height so that it is appropriate for the height and strength of the students.
- Substitute targets, such as a large hoop over a basketball hoop.
- Allow students to use a bounce and catch instead of a dribble.

Parachute

- Participate while seated or with support from an adult.
- Try using objects with an auditory component (e.g., beanbags, balls with bells) to toss on the parachute.

Skipping

- Those who cannot maintain a grip on the rope can participate by having it tied around their waist.

2. This section adapted from Edmonton Public Schools, *ABCD's of Movement 2* (Edmonton, AB: Resource Development Services, Edmonton Public Schools, 2002), pp. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23. © Adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools.

Dance

- Place large speakers on the floor so that students can feel the vibrations.
- Use visual cues, such as footprints or painted/taped pathways on the floor.
- Encourage students to take their turn providing stimulus for the dance; e.g., beating a drum, shaking a tambourine.

Running Activities

- Allow students to wheel or walk instead or use a piece of equipment, such as a bicycle or stationary bike, treadmill or arm ergometer.
- Use roped lanes.

Throwing Activities

- Provide a stable base of support from which to throw.
- Ensure that the size and weight of the object to be thrown is appropriate for each student.
- Use targets with an auditory component that indicates when the target has been successfully struck.

Walking/Hiking

- Consider varying routes so some students walk or hike over hard surfaces rather than gravel or sand.
- Provide adult support when students are negotiating uneven terrain, inclines or declines or when travelling extensive distances.

Skating

- Investigate the availability of alternative equipment such as ice sledges, which can be borrowed from the Paralympics Sports Association.

Snowshoeing

- Provide extra assistance with buckling the shoes.
- Encourage students to wear sunglasses to reduce the glare from the snow or make ski goggles available to make it easier to recognize the contours of the snow surfaces.

Resources



Daily Physical Activity in Schools: Grades 1–3, 4–6 and 7–8, Ontario, 2005.
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/dpa.html>

The *ABCD's of Movement* resource (LRC # 471053) provides teachers with tips for the active inclusion of students with special needs in physical education.

Female Students and Physical Activity

Quick Facts about Girls and Physical Activity



Between the ages of 12 and 19, girls are significantly less active than boys, with 64% of girls compared to 52% of boys considered physically inactive. Estimates suggest that as many as 84% of Canadian youth are not active enough to meet international guidelines for optimal growth and development (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute 2001).



Girls who participated in after-school activities that included physical activity were more likely to have a more positive sense of self than girls who participated in nonphysical activities or did not participate at all (Jaffee and Wu 1996).



Females are interested in physical recreation pursuits and are more likely than males to want to increase their rate of participation (Smale & Shaw 1993).



Females report more constraints to participation than do males, including lack of time, money and resources, as well as attitudinal constraints and safety concerns (Smale & Shaw 1993).



If a girl does not participate in sport by the age of 10, there is only a 10% chance she will be physically active when she is 25 (Melpomene Institute 1993).



Beginning at the age of 12, girls' involvement in physical activity declines steadily until only 11% are still active by age 16–17 (Hay & Donnelly 1996).

What Can Schools Do to Encourage Physical Activity in Girls?

- Build school spirit with physical activity and sport programs that include everyone.
- Support female students' involvement.
- Provide a wide range of physical activity choices.
- Offer female-only gym time and programs.
- Ensure equity in sport posters, photographs, award systems and assemblies.
- Encourage females to take leadership roles.

10 Suggestions for Increasing the Participation of Female Students:

1. **Emphasize fun and social aspects.** Physical activity needs to be a fun experience, building a foundation for active living. Emphasize participation over skill.
2. **Provide female-only opportunities.** Many females feel uncomfortable participating in front of males. Add female-only gym classes and activities to the timetable and provide girls and young women with access to the school's facilities.
3. **Create a positive environment.** Creating a positive environment means making sure that students feel safe and supported. Think about your own and others' actions and listen to students' concerns and needs.

4. **Choice of clothing.** Allowing students to wear their choice of safe clothing will increase their comfort and participation.
5. **Teach the basics.** Helping girls and young women to develop their skills will increase their confidence and interest in pursuing lifelong physical activity.
6. **Value student input.** Value the interests and ideas of girls and young women. Create opportunities for them to plan and make decisions. Taking the time to incorporate some of their ideas will increase their interest and contribute to their overall experiences.
7. **Program to a variety of physical and academic interests.** Respect the different skill levels and interests of your students. Peak their interests and participation by working with other teachers and examining the social and physiological aspects of physical activity.
8. **Encourage leadership opportunities.** Encourage female participation at all levels of sport and physical activity as coaches, tournament organizers and officials; promote certification and training opportunities.
9. **Partner with community facilities and explore local parks.** Promote the diversity of opportunities within your community and add some excitement to your program by visiting pools, arenas, courts, climbing gyms and parks.
10. **Be a positive role model** for students, colleagues and parents/guardians.

Resources



CAAWS, the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity, is a national nonprofit organization working to encourage girls and women to participate and lead in physical activity and sport. **On the Move** is their national initiative designed to increase opportunities for nonactive girls and young women (ages 9–18) to participate in fun-filled, supportive, female-only, recreational sport and physical activity. <http://www.caaws.ca>

Planning for Implementation

Student Safety

Developing habits and routines early in the school year and reinforcing them throughout the year can help reduce the risk of injury. Consider the following when planning physical activities:

- **Include age-appropriate activities in program preparations.**
- **Plan and continually reinforce safe practices.**
- **Use logical teaching progressions.**
- **Use common sense observation.**
- **Maintain a safe environment.**

All activities, regardless of the complexity or simplicity of the action, have an inherent level of risk. Such factors as skill level, previous experience of the students and teacher, weather conditions, facilities and available equipment may all affect the level of risk of any activity. Schools should be familiar with and follow safety policy as defined by their school authority. For further information related to safe practice in physical activity, see *Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools*.

When considering the safety of your students, ask yourself:

- ✓ Is the activity suitable to the age and mental and physical condition of the participants?
- ✓ Have the participants been progressively taught and coached to perform the activity properly and to avoid the dangers inherent in the activity?
- ✓ Is the equipment adequate and suitably arranged?
- ✓ Is the activity being supervised properly for the inherent risk that is involved?

Resources



Safety Guidelines for Physical Activity in Alberta Schools, October 2003 Grades K–12. Available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre
<http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca>
LRC # 517063

Also available in French: *L'activité physique dans les écoles de l'Alberta*
LRC # 543919.

To download these guidelines in English and in French, go to:
<http://www.med.ualberta.ca/acicr/>.

Setting Class Expectations

At the beginning of the year, a list of classroom rules for physical activities can be generated by teachers and students, then posted and reviewed on a regular basis. These may include expectations related to fair play, respectful change room behaviour and attitudes, treatment of equipment and facilities and safety considerations. Reinforcement of the established rules is important for maintaining a positive and safe environment.

Changing Student Attitudes and Behaviour³

One of the challenges to introducing physical activity into an instructional setting can be changing existing student attitudes and apprehensions related to physical activity. It is important to remember that the introduction of physical activity can require a significant change to the existing behaviours and lifestyles of students.

Listed below are five key actions that can help encourage students to try new behaviours and build new life patterns.

Develop Awareness

Make young people active participants in the process. Students are more motivated when they are part of the decision-making process and not just passive recipients of instruction. Help them become aware of how much activity they do now and how inactive they may be. This helps them pay attention to what they do with their time.

Set Goals with Students

Goal setting is part of any change process and helps students monitor themselves and measure their own progress. In a classroom situation, this may include a class goal to which all the students in the class can contribute. Encourage small incremental steps. Try to reach the goal, assess, revise, reset and try again. Help students negotiate their own goals as they are involved in making suggestions and revisions to their plans.

Give Specific Feedback and Praise

Provide helpful, specific feedback about activities tried and goals set on a regular basis. Praise and reward small steps.

Get Students to Commit

Talk about the activity goals frequently and publicly to strengthen students' commitment to the plan.

Reward and Recognize Change

Reinforce behaviour change and celebrate successes through rewards and recognition.

Motivating Your Students

Consider tracking your students' progress to help motivate them and to let them see the progress they are making. Use creative ways to chart and display your students' progress such as those described on the following page.

Appendix

See **Appendix 3: My Daily Physical Activity Log** and **Appendix 5: My Fitness Shoe Activity Log** for sample student logs.

3. Source: *Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living: Teacher's Guide to Physical Activity for Youth 10–14 Years of Age*, Health Canada (2002), p. 5. © Adapted and reproduced with the permission of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2006.

Active Living Chart (Health Canada 2002)

Make and post a big chart of all physical active living activities that the students have been involved with, such as soccer, dance, chores, tag at recess, walking to school. Get all students to put their name beside activities on the list that they have already tried. Encourage students to try new fun and healthy activities. With every new activity the students try, add their name beside that particular activity. After trying five new activities (or another appropriate number), reward them with a sticker or certificate.

OR

Hand out a copy of My Daily Physical Activity Log (see Appendix 3) to each student. Instruct students to take home the log and fill it in for one school week. Emphasis should be placed on accumulating physical activity time and trying new activities. Students return the log the following week (a reward for returning the sheet may be offered).

The total number of active/inactive minutes should be tallied and posted. Any new activities should be added to the log. In a few weeks the log is handed out again. The goal is to exceed the total number of active minutes and decrease the total number of inactive minutes from the first trial.

Physical Activity Rainbow

Choose a wall that can be easily viewed. Create a large rainbow using the colours green, blue and yellow. Each colour on the rainbow represents a different component of physical activity:

- Endurance: green (outer segment)
- Flexibility: blue (middle)
- Strength: yellow (inner segment)

The rainbow arches can be made by attaching a pencil to a piece of string; the other end of the string should be stretched out and tacked or taped down. Trace out one arch of the rainbow by keeping the string taut while moving the pencil along the paper. Shorten the string to create smaller arches. Take pictures of the students performing the above activities or have the students draw themselves doing the activities. Post the pictures on each appropriate section of the rainbow.

Activity Tree

All students are given the image of a sneaker (see Appendix 5: My Fitness Shoe Activity Log) separated into approximately 10 sections. Students are to take home the shoes and colour in one section for every accumulated 30 minutes they are active outside of the school day (younger students may need help from their parents/guardians).

When a sneaker is filled in the student brings it back to school, where it will be posted on the Activity Tree. Challenge the students to change the colour of the Activity Tree every month by colouring their sneakers with the current month's colour. When a completed sneaker is brought back, a sneaker from the previous month can be taken down and replaced by the shoe from the current month.

Linking to Seasonal Topics and Events

If possible, link the physical activities you are planning to seasonal topics and events from the school and community. This can provide a meaningful context by connecting the activity to experiences the students may have outside of class.

Fall



Labour Day

Terry Fox Day – September

AIDS Walk Canada – September

International Walk to School Day – first week in October

Visibility Awareness Campaign – mid to late October

Thanksgiving

Halloween

Oktoberfest

Winter



Remembrance Day – November 11

National Home Fire Safety – November

Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan and New Year

National Non-smoking Week – January

Weedless Wednesday – January

Heart Smart Month – February

School Traffic Safety Week – first week of March

Family Day – February

Winter Olympics

WinterActive – January/February

Spring/Summer



Easter

Earth Week – Third Saturday of April and following week

World Health Day – April

Canada Health Day – May

World Red Cross Day – May

World No Tobacco Day – May

National Sneaker Day – Second Friday of May

Bike Month – June

Canadian Environment Week – first full week of June

Clean Air Day – Wednesday of Environment Week

Bike to School Day – Thursday of Environment Week

World Environment Day – June

SummerActive Initiative – May/June

Resources



For more information regarding activities, opportunities to share resources and lesson plans, and monthly themes, see <http://www.yearofsportandpe.ca>.

Physical Activity Tracker

Have students track their participation by using an electronic tracker, such as the one available on Physical Education Online. Have students choose “Download Tracker” to load a database on their home computers so that they can keep track of their activities. <http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/PhysicalEducationOnline/HomeEducation/student/index.htm>

Lesson Planning

For information on lesson planning, see the *Physical Education K–Grade 12 Guide to Implementation*, 2000.

http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bysubject/phised/phisedgi.asp

DPA and Recess

Activity at recess is a possible strategy to meet the DPA requirement of 30 minutes daily. Having teachers, playground supervisors and peer leaders promote physical activity during recess is a viable solution to reducing the sedentary behaviour of young children (McKenzie et al. 1997).

An organized approach to an active recess will vary from school to school, depending on existing programs, staffing resources and the actual playground itself.

Benefits of an Active Recess

An active recess will assist in achieving the following:

- increased physical activity
- development of movement and manipulative skills
- promotion of fair play
- reduction in bullying
- improved creativity and problem-solving skills
- development of cooperation and respect for others
- equal opportunity and inclusion for all students
- promotion of multiculturalism and respect of diversity
- fun and participation.

Tips for Promoting an Active Recess

- Use senior students as Recess Ambassadors or Play Leaders to encourage students to be more active. Student mediators on the playground drastically reduce playground conflicts (Cunningham 1998).
- Use the tarmac areas and paint them to provide another active area.
- Provide “kits” or equipment in containers for each class or for each division.
- Use assemblies to introduce and promote more active recesses.
- Extend an afternoon recess and organize a whole group activity and then break into smaller group Playday stations. Use seasonal themes throughout the year.
- Modify equipment, skills and distances/space/location to include all students.
- Post and enforce your Playground Rules.
- Do a safety check on equipment and playground structures regularly.

Resources



Adapted from *Recess Revival: An Implementation Guide to an Active Recess*, downloadable from Canadian Intramural and Recreation Association (CIRA) Ontario. This resource is an implementation guide for the promotion of physical activity and cooperative play for elementary-aged students.

<http://www.ciraontario.com>

Linking Cross-curricular Outcomes

The potential benefits of cross-curricular linking include:

- enhancing and enriching students' learning and literacy skills
- giving more meaning to what students learn
- helping to make concepts more relevant and stimulating
- helping to meet the different learning styles of children
- increasing information retention
- enhancing the possibility of success for students
- facilitating the connections between information, experiences and skills in a child's daily life
- adding an element of fun to your programs.

Cross-curricular Approaches to DPA Delivery

Below are two approaches to how DPA can be delivered in conjunction with various subject areas.

Approach One: Cross-curricular Linking

Start with specific subject area outcomes and identify a theme, skill or concept that can be linked to a physical activity. For example, Story Starters (Classroom or Small Space Activities, page 56) can be used to address story writing outcomes in English language arts:

Story Starters

1. Give each student a piece of paper and choose a theme related to a topic covered recently in class.
2. Have the students begin writing a story (the first few lines).
3. After one minute, stop the students and have them crumple up their paper and throw it to the other side of the room. Students then move around the room, using a different locomotor movement each time, to find a new piece of paper.
4. On a signal, students pick up a paper that is close to them and read the story starter. They continue writing the story for the next minute.
5. Continue this for several rounds, then have the students share their stories in groups.

This activity can also be linked with other subjects, for example:

Mathematics

Instead of stories, have the students start a number pattern and continue adding to the patterns of the other students. Have the students create a song with actions about number operations.

Science

Have the students write stories about the life cycle of a plant, frog or butterfly; e.g., A year in the life of They could write a story that takes place in a science-related environment—tour of a factory that uses simple machines, a forest ecosystem, wetland ecosystem, outer space.

Social Studies

Have the students write stories as a witness to an historic event or the meeting of a historical figure or a person from another culture of the past or present.

Specific cross-curricular linking ideas are included under Physical Activities with Cross-curricular Ideas in Section 3. General ideas for cross-curricular linking include:

Language Arts

- **Write and perform** poetry, songs, rhymes and role-plays as part of the physical activity.
- **Review and practise** punctuation, spelling, writing, verb conjugation, idioms, analogies, metaphors and similes, parts of speech and other skills and knowledge as parts of clues, trivia questions and challenges within the physical activity.

Mathematics

- Use equipment from physical activities as **manipulatives** to enhance the formation of sound, transferable mathematical concepts.
- **Review and practise** mathematics content, such as estimation and mental mathematics, counting, arithmetic operations, constructing/extending patterns and summarizing patterns as parts of clues, trivia questions and challenges within the physical activity.

Science

- **Explore and observe** the environment during outdoor activities.
- **Review and practise** science content, such as buoyancy, magnetism, plant growth, ecosystems, chemistry and electricity as parts of clues, trivia questions and challenges within the physical activity.

Social Studies

- Use **mapping skills** in orienteering and obstacle course activities.
- **Review and practise** social studies content, such as historic dates and people, geography, cultural beliefs and values, and rights and responsibilities as parts of clues, trivia questions and challenges within the physical activity.

Health

- Draw awareness to the **physical affects** of activity before, during and after the activity, such as increased heart rate.
- **Review and practise** health content, such as nutrition as parts of clues, trivia questions and challenges within the physical activity.

Approach Two: General Linking to Learning Activities

Start by thinking of how subject area curricular outcomes can be linked in general ways to physical activities. For example, links can be made to cross-curricular outcomes in the following ways:

Language Arts

- **Respond** to physical activity experiences in journal writing, connecting to prior knowledge and personal experiences.

Mathematics

- Develop and implement a plan for the **collection, organization, display and analysis of data** based on student participation and accomplishments.
- Solve problems involving **perimeter, area, surface area, volume and angle measurement** related to the space, playing area and equipment used.
- Explore and classify **3-D objects and 2-D shapes**, such as equipment and playing areas used, according to their properties.

Science

- Use equipment from physical activities to **illustrate and explore scientific concepts**, such as simple machines, aerodynamics, building objects, and structures and forces.

Social Studies

- Encourage students **working in groups** to value the diversity, respect the dignity and support the equality of fellow students.
- Encourage students **participating in community-based physical activities** to gain an evolving sense of identity and a sense of belonging to their communities.

Health

- Describe the **health benefits** of physical activity and explore the connections among physical activity, emotional wellness and social wellness.
- Use knowledge of a healthy, active lifestyle to promote and encourage family, peer and **community involvement**.
- Develop personal **relationships** and encourage inclusion of all students.
- Identify the steps of the **goal-setting** process, and apply these components to short-term and long-term personal goals.

Involving Parents/Guardians and the Community

Informing Parents/Guardians and Community Members

It is important to keep parents/guardians and others in the community informed about class DPA events and to encourage them to participate. Sixty minutes of the student's recommended 90 minutes of daily physical activity is encouraged to be done at home and in the community, with the remaining 30 minutes at school. Some ideas for informing parents and the community include:

- Create a newsletter that defines and explains DPA. Have parents/guardians/community members submit articles about how they are getting active to the school newsletter. Inform parents/guardians/community members monthly of new physical activities they can try at home.
- Invite parents/guardians/community members to an information evening with local experts to explain what DPA is, what the school will be doing and how they can help their children at home. Encourage parents/guardians to model daily physical activity for their children and reinforce why it is important for everyone.

This Handbook contains a variety of summaries and samples that could be used to create parent/guardian information packages or included in the school newsletter, for example:

- Quick Physical Activity Facts about Canadians (page 3)
- Ideas for Daily Physical Activity at Home (page 23)
- Ideas for Community Participation in Daily Physical Activity (page 24) and
- the appendices listed below.

Appendix

See **Appendix 22: Sample DPA Letter to Parents/Guardians** and **Appendix 23: Sample DPA Parent/Guardian Survey**.

Inviting Parents/Guardians to Take an Active Role

Volunteers

- Ask for volunteers to host walk to school events, bike clubs and noon hour fitness activities.
- Invite parents/guardians to host a winter carnival with activities, such as skating, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- Have parents/guardians organize a kite-flying event in which families come to school, make kites and then fly them.
- Ask parents/guardians to volunteer for track and field, triathlon or play day circuit events.
- Host a parent–student or guardian–student activity night with beanbag games, beach volleyball or other low-organization activities.

Guest Speakers/Leaders

- Ask parents/guardians to host an activity day in which families can come and try out activities such as yoga, tai chi and karate.
- Ask parents/guardians to share their expertise with students during class time, an evening event or a Saturday activity.
- Host a school assembly event in which parents/guardians can lead students in activities of interest, such as bowling, biking or walking.

Resources



Encourage parents/guardians to get involved in challenges, such as:

Live Outside the Box
<http://www.liveoutsidethebox.ca>

SummerActive Challenge
<http://www.summeractive.org>

WinterActive
<http://www.winteractive.org>

Ideas for Daily Physical Activity at Home

Set the Tone!



- Provide opportunities for your child to try new activities and have fun doing them.
- Reinforce the importance of physical activity through discussions and activities at home.
- Balance structured sports and activities with unstructured play opportunities.
- Praise your child when they participate in physical activities.

Active Chores and Household Help



- Ask your child to help with household activities that require physical activity, such as mowing, raking, sweeping, vacuuming, gardening, washing the car, walking the dog or washing windows.
- Limit the time your child spends in front of the television or computer screen. Encourage your child to go outside and play instead.
- Encourage your child to help a neighbour with his or her chores.
- Give your child their own garden space to prepare, plant and tend.

Organized Activities



- Participate with your child in physical activities, such as skiing, snow boarding, biking, walking, running and badminton.
- Encourage your child to take public lessons to teach them the basics of new activities, such as golf, badminton, rock climbing or dance.
- Encourage your child to participate in active after school sporting events or clubs.
- Plan family outings that involve activities like hiking, cycling, skating or skiing.
- Make vacation plans that include physical activities, such as swimming, biking, hiking, golf or white-water rafting.

Daily Fun



- Take time to play catch, jump rope or hopscotch with your child.
- Take your child on a bike ride.
- Go tobogganing, skating, swimming or inline skating with your child.
- Plan routes for your child to walk or bike to the neighbourhood store, library, school or a friend's house and then encourage them to walk rather than you driving them.
- Make sure your child has access to equipment, such as bikes, balls, trampolines and swimming pools.
- Encourage caregivers (e.g., grandparents, baby-sitters) to include physical activities in their daily routines.

Activity Events and Challenges



- Include physical activities during birthday parties, such as skating, swimming, rock climbing or golfing.
- Include opportunities for physical activities, such as bocce, croquet or baseball at family gatherings.
- Participate in local charity fun walks/runs with the whole family.
- Participate in a *Live Outside the Box* challenge (<http://www.liveoutsidethebox.ca>). Turn off the television and do activities with your family, such as walking, biking or gardening.
- Participate in the *SummerActive Challenge* (<http://www.summeractive.org>).
- Record all physical activity done by your family and encourage them to increase their activity levels every week or month.
- Participate in WinterActive (<http://www.winteractive.org>).

Ideas for Community Participation in Daily Physical Activity

Volunteers



- Organize a walking school bus (walk to school program).
- Build or maintain an outdoor ice rink.
- Advocate for increased child safety in neighbourhoods, playgrounds, parks and on the roads.
- Work on a “Communities in Bloom” campaign.
- Help students prepare a “Fitness Tip of the Day” for the school public announcement system, local radio stations and newspapers.
- Volunteer to lead hikes in nearby nature areas and parks.
- Volunteer to supervise activities at the local playground.

Participants



- Join school-organized activities, such as fitness, learn-to-run, bird watching and walk-to-school clubs.
- Participate in events at school, such as bike rodeos and play days.
- Participate in community physical activity challenges and encourage others in the community to get involved; e.g., Commuter Challenge, SummerActive Challenge or Earth Day.
- Host charity walks or runs and advertise in school newsletters.

Sponsors



- Sponsor a particular event, for example by providing pedometers for a walking challenge or prizes for a bike rodeo.
- Build additional trails and bike paths to provide more opportunities for physical activity. Mark and maintain bike and walking paths in the community that schools can use.
- Provide bike racks for students to lock up their bikes.
- Donate items to be used as prizes for students who successfully meet a physical activity challenge.

Guest Speakers/Leaders



- Be a sports coach or leader of physical activities at the school or community level.
- Provide expertise in a particular activity to students and staff; e.g., gardening, bird watching or lawn bowling.
- Present your efforts to stay physically active at the school’s activity fair.
- Demonstrate games from your culture at the school in International Language and Culture classes or at a multicultural fair.

Community Guest Speakers for Your School

Guest speakers are an engaging and inspiring way to get students and others in the school community interested in physical activity. Invite guest speakers to the classroom, an assembly or an open house and prepare a display of physical activity organizations and resources in the local community.

Group or Association	What they can talk about ...
Regional Health Authority	Talk to parents/guardians about how they can support DPA and/or talk to students about importance of physical activity, healthy nutrition, bike safety and trampoline safety.
Be Fit for Life Centres	Talk about fitness and the importance of physical activity and encourage students to participate in events they are hosting at the school.
Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere (SHAPE)	Talk to parents/guardians and/or students about walking or biking to school. They could also host bike clubs, bike rodeos, walk to school event days and walking school buses.
various clubs	Talk to students about their programs, provide free trials or advertise in school newsletter; e.g., rowing, rock climbing, synchronized swimming, diving, marching bands and bird watching.
local health community members	Talk to students and or parents/guardians about health issues related to a lack of physical activity; e.g., Canadian Diabetes Association and In Motion Network.
local sports participants	Talk about daily physical activity and why it is important.
local physical activity experts and recreation organizations	<p>Talk about their sports facilities and the after school clubs or courses offered; e.g., swimming and basketball.</p> <p>Encourage students and their families to participate in events at school, demonstrations and free trials; e.g., karate, tai chi, yoga, fencing, pilates, aerobics, kickboxing, weight training and learn to run.</p> <p>Talk about after school activities offered by local recreation departments, such as swimming, gymnastics and soccer.</p>
provincial or local sports associations	Talk to students about joining a sport-specific club at school hosted by their organization; e.g., learn to run clinics, non-contact rugby, lacrosse, baseball, yoga and fencing.
local media personalities and celebrities	Participate in a school's physical activity challenge and then talk about the experience; e.g., challenges and benefits. Local newspapers can attend events, demonstrations and clubs and interview active students to discuss why they are involved.

Community Activity Map

It is important for students to see and recognize opportunities for physical activity that exist in their school communities. One way to clearly illustrate these opportunities is by creating a community activity map.

Photocopy, draw or print a map of your community and mark various community facilities that offer physical activities for school and student access. Also determine the best routes for pedestrians and cyclists to take to school from the nearby neighbourhoods and mark them on the map.

Include places on your map, such as:

curling rinks	ball diamonds
tennis courts (indoor and outdoor)	golf courses (for golf, disc golf)
bowling/lawn bowling	golf driving ranges
rock climbing	gymnastic facilities
walking/running tracks	community centres, such as YMCA
swimming pools	skateboard parks
weight rooms	ski hills (snow boarding, skiing, tobogganing)
ice rinks (indoor and outdoor)	volleyball (outdoor or indoor)
soccer fields (indoor and outdoor)	badminton clubs
racquetball and squash courts	yoga studios
bike courses	martial arts studios
dance studios	aerobics facilities
parks (hiking trails, playground equipment, fields)	sports facilities

When mapping the best routes for students to take on their way to school, consider:

- where most students live who are walking or riding their bikes to school
- volume and speed of traffic on surrounding streets
- whether or not there are sidewalks and their condition
- pedestrian-crossing devices
- number and position of safety patrollers, if any
- types of buildings around the school
- location of public spaces near the school; e.g., parks, community centres
- Block Parent™ or Neighbourhood Watch™ communities
- lighting on the streets, parking lots and other spaces near the school
- maintenance of walkways; e.g., snow or ice removal, muddy areas.

Resources



Alberta's Active and Safe Routes to School: Resource Manual, Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere (SHAPE)

Way to Go! School Program Manual, Action Schools! BC, pp. 10–16.

Appendix

See **Appendix 11: Sample School Community Activity Map.**

Active Living for Staff

Active living is a key determinant of health and well-being and an important component of Health Canada's health and disease prevention strategies. Active living is more than just physical fitness or exercise; it means making physical activity a part of daily living.

Why Live Actively?

Quick Physical Activity Facts about Canadians



Recent data on physical activity in Canada tell us that over half of Canadians are not active enough to attain optimal health benefits (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute 2002).



Lack of time, energy and motivation are most frequently given as barriers to being active by Canadian adults, followed by long-term illness or disability, cost, feeling uncomfortable or ill at ease, lack of skill and fear of injury (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute 2002).



Almost half of Canadians aged 20 to 64 are classified as overweight (33%) having a body mass index of 25.0 to 29.9, or as obese (15%), having a body mass index of 30.0 or higher (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute 2002).



The proportion of Canadians classified as overweight or obese increases with age, ranging from 21% overweight and 8% obese among those aged 20 to 24, to 40% overweight and 19% obese among those aged 55 to 64 (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute 2002).



Men are more likely than women to be classified as being overweight or obese and the greatest difference between men and women occurs in those classified as overweight in the 35 to 44 age group (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute 2002).



Each year in Canada, more than three-quarters of deaths result from four groups of non-communicable diseases: cardiovascular, cancer, diabetes and respiratory. Risk factors that lead to these diseases, such as physical inactivity and unhealthy eating, are growing, particularly among some vulnerable groups.

Increasing physical activity levels in Canada will not only improve the health and well-being of Canadians, but also has the potential to produce substantial health care savings.

Physical activity has been found to contribute to:

- better health and improved fitness
- better posture and balance
- better self-esteem
- weight control
- stronger muscles and bones
- feeling more energetic
- relaxation and reduced stress
- continued independent living in later life.

Resources



The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute *2002 Physical Activity Monitor*.
<http://www.cflri.ca/cflri/pa/surveys/2002survey/2002survey.html>

Active Living at Work, at Home and in the Community

There are 1440 minutes in every day ... schedule 30 minutes at work for physical activity.

Consider being active for one hour of the 15–19 hours a day you are awake, for example, 20 minutes at work and 40 minutes outside of work. Add up your activities 10 minutes at a time to achieve a daily total of 60 minutes.

If you are just beginning to become active, start slowly and build your activity. If you are already doing some light activities, attempt more moderate ones.

Active Transport

You can incorporate physical activity into your day with moderate physical activities, such as walking to the bus and cycling. Research has shown that achieving the equivalent to walking for an hour throughout the day can reduce the risk of premature death, heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure and many other diseases and disorders.

Here are a few suggestions for incorporating physical activity into your day:

- **Participate** with the students during daily physical activities.
- **Become a fitness role model!** Lead and support student athletes involved in school sport teams and clubs. Start or join a student and staff club based on your own fitness interests.
- **Devise a simple routine** that includes bending and stretching exercises for spare moments during the day.
- **Put “gusto” into your chores** in and around the house.
- **Choose active hobbies** during your leisure time and include family members.
- **Leave the car at home** whenever you can. Walk or wheel for short trips to the corner store, the mailbox or the park. If distance and safety permit, consider cycle commuting. For variety, try combining modes such as walking and cycling with public transit.

Appendix

See **Appendix 15: Healthy Workplace Week Personal Planner** for more ideas on how to plan for active, healthy living.

Resources



For more ideas, go to:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/work/index.html>

http://www.goforgreen.ca/home_e.html

Walking Ideas and Information

One of the easiest ways to get physically active is walking. Daily walking can make a significant contribution to the 30 minutes of exercise needed as part of a healthy lifestyle.

The benefits of walking include:

- improved health and well-being
- strengthened bones and muscles
- the promotion of good posture
- the reduction in stress and tension
- strengthened heart and lungs
- increased energy levels and reduction in fatigue
- an opportunity to meet friends and socialize
- maintaining and achieving a healthy body weight
- improving your outlook on life
- improving your fitness level.

Walking is an easy way to add physical activity to a daily schedule, as it:

- does not require special clothes
- does not need supervision or training
- does not require a gym membership
- can be done alone or with friends
- is inexpensive
- is convenient
- can be done at almost any age.

To incorporate walking into your daily routine:

- take a walk once a day at lunch or after supper
- reduce time in front of the television or computer
- walk short distances to the store, coffee shop or a friend's house
- find out about walking trails in your neighbourhood and use them.

Walking Safety⁴

Point, Pause and Proceed Method of Crossing the Street

Traffic safety must be taught to students at a very young age to provide them with the knowledge and attitude for making responsible decisions. It is important that students know the basic crossing procedures that will allow them to cross the street safely when no adults or crossing guards are present. Once the students have found a safe place to cross, such as an intersection or marked crosswalk, they should follow the point, pause and proceed method of crossing.

POINT to indicate to drivers that they want to cross the street.

PAUSE to check if the road is clear and to make eye contact with any drivers that are stopped.

PROCEED when it is safe to do so, while continuing to look both ways for other approaching vehicles.

4. Adapted with permission from Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere (SHAPE), *Alberta's Active and Safe Routes to School Resource Manual* (Edmonton, AB: SHAPE, n.d.), p. 40. Point, Pause and Proceed method is not owned by SHAPE.

Pedestrian-activated Signal Indicators

Students should also be taught how overhead pedestrian-activated amber flashers or pedestrian-activated signals operate. This includes an awareness of how and when to activate pedestrian traffic control signals and what indicators such as flashing amber lights, walk signals, hand signals and flashing hand signals mean.

Appendix

See **Appendix 7: Walking Safety** for a student handout on safe walking practices.

Tips for Walking

Planning a Walk

- 1. Determine the safest route to walk.**
 - Are there sidewalks or walking paths?
 - Are there traffic signals or crosswalks to cross busy streets?
 - Is there any difficult terrain?
 - Are there any places with uneven ground?
 - Are there any safety hazards?
 - Are there any perceived or actual dangerous areas?
 - Has someone been told your route and estimated time of return in case of emergency?
- 2. Dress appropriately.**
 - Is reflective clothing appropriate?
 - Is dressing in layers appropriate?
 - Is it colder than -25°C ?
 - Is sun screen necessary?
 - Is a hat necessary?
 - What type of footwear is appropriate?
- 3. Consider whether or not water should be brought.**
 - Is it hot out?
 - Are there places to stop for water along the way?
 - How long will the walk take?
- 4. Invite a friend or family member!**

Drinking Water

Staying hydrated is vital to keeping body temperature and electrolyte levels balanced. When dehydrated, fatigue, headaches, nausea and dizziness may be experienced. Heat illness and heat stroke may also result.

How much water should a person drink?

Divide a person's weight in half and that is how many ounces of water to drink per day to be adequately hydrated. An athlete with a high level of muscle mass should drink even more, about two-thirds of their body weight in ounces per day.

Drink about 8 ounces every 15 minutes while exercising. Drink smaller amounts (4 ounces) at a time to keep from getting that uncomfortable sloshing feeling.

Tips for Faster Walking

- 1. Stand tall** and do not slouch the shoulders or lean forward from the waist or have an exaggerated arch in your back.
CUE: Keep eyes on the horizon.
- 2. Focus on quicker, not longer steps.** Strides naturally become longer as the walk gets faster, so concentrate on taking faster steps.
CUE: Count how many steps are taken in a minute, trying to take over 135 steps/minute.
- 3. Bend at the elbow.** Bend the elbows at a right angle, making quick, compact arm swings.
CUE: Hands should trace an arc from waistband on the back swing, to chest height on the up swing.
- 4. Push off the toes.** Consciously push off the toes and generate as much boost as possible at the end of each step.
CUE: Walk as if showing the bottom of the shoe on every step.

