



ACTIVE HEALTHY KIDS
AUSTRALIA

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (aka YAC!)

SUMMARY: Meeting #5, Tuesday, December 14th



1. Welcome

Thanks again to those of you who were able to attend. Needless to say, we missed those of you who couldn't but we look forward to speaking to all of you again in 2018!



2. Your 'Best' physical activity ideas

At this meeting, we asked if you could each think about one of the 'hurdles' (= barriers) to physical activity that has been mentioned in a previous meeting (or another hurdle that you have thought of) and to see if you could come up with a way of jumping over it (= solving it) so that more kids can be active. This is what you had to say:

Hurdle: For kids who are not good at sports it gets increasingly difficult for them to get involved & be active as they get older because they get more self-conscious and PE tends to get more focused on achievement & competition.

Solution: To encourage these students to get involved, the classes could be made more inclusive by mixing things up a bit, doing team-based activities that provide the same level of activity but with more of a focus on enjoyment than serious sporting achievement. This would involve a shift in focus for assessment from performance to participation.

Hurdle: Some boys don't like participating in PE because they know they can't run as fast as the fastest girl. (There is an expectation that they should be faster because they are boys!).

Solution: One way to overcome this might be to give them a choice (to race or not race) that could encourage them to participate in the activity without having to race or be timed.

Hurdle: A lot of kids don't do sport outside of school unless one of their friends is doing it also.

Solution: One possible solution might be to highlight how many friends you can make by joining a sports club!

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2.Cont. Your 'Best' physical activity ideas....

Hurdle: The financial cost associated with children joining and/or participating in physical activities and sports might not be affordable for some families.

Solution: Clubs could have days where they offer coaching for free and/or add a small amount on the cost of regular memberships to help subsidise (= pay) the cost of membership for those who might not otherwise be able to afford it.

Hurdle: Not being able to access equipment before school starts and/or not being able to bring personal equipment to school.

Solution: Making equipment available before school might encourage more students to be active and to play outside for as long as possible before classes start.

Hurdle: In PE classes there are different levels of skills & competitiveness – some people take things really seriously, whereas others only do it because they have to.

Solution: Rather than having just one group activity, allowing the class to divide into smaller groups so that students who are less competitive or less serious about sport still have the opportunity to be active and to enjoy what they are doing!

Hurdle: A lot of people don't fully understand how much activity they should be doing each day/week and also, quite often, they think they are doing more activity than they really are!

Solution: Having a way for children to record the amount of activity they're doing might help them understand how much more they might need to be doing (e.g. an activity diary).

Hurdle: At school, the same activities are often repeated over and over again regardless of whether anyone likes doing them.

Solution: Teachers could communicate better with students to decide what activities/sports are played so students will want to participate. Giving the students some degree of choice would help.

Hurdle: Sometimes parents' priorities (surrounding education) can prevent children from being physically active e.g. when a child says they would like to go out riding their bike but they are told they can't and have to stay home and do study &/or homework instead.

Solution: This is a tricky one – somehow need to balance both!



3. What does physical activity teach you...cont.

A couple of meetings ago we asked you what physical activity taught you, this is what you all said:

- > not to give up
- > balance & coordination
- > information about sport
- > resilience
- > discipline & teamwork
- > skills, fitness & fun
- > to try your best
- > balance & mood control
- > patience
- > life skills

This week we asked if you had actually experienced these benefits or whether you had just heard them mentioned by others? To this question, you all said that you had experienced (at least some of) them yourselves.

We then asked if you were physically active because of the things you could learn, or whether you were active just because you enjoyed it? To this question you all said that it was a bit of both but that it depended a little on what you were doing e.g. if it's a group activity then the focus might be more on fun, whereas for singular or competitive (high performance) activities, the focus might be more on the effect and benefits. Some of you also thought the benefits represented a 'bonus' but were not the main reason for being physically active.

Last of all, we discussed if you thought the benefits of physical activity could be used as motivators to get other children interested in physical activity? We all agreed that the way in which these potential benefits are packaged or presented to the children would be important but we didn't know if just knowing the benefits would be motivation enough.



4. Next meeting & goodbye

We wish you all a very safe, happy holiday and a very merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you again in the New Year!