



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #1126: Structuring Before-School Recreation Opportunities

Overview

Well-structured before-school recreation can provide a purposeful, play-based start to the day that develops movement competence, supports learning through movement and promotes social connection. These short, supervised sessions align with the curriculum HPE focus on planned physical activity and the development of fundamental skills while contributing to broader wellbeing goals. Thoughtful organisation ensures activities are inclusive, scaffolded and manageable within school duty constraints, and can complement whole-school approaches to daily activity promoted by national agencies.

Key Teaching Ideas

Creating before-school opportunities requires clear pedagogical intent brief, sequential tasks that build fundamental movement skills and confidence. Teachers can act as facilitators who set boundaries, model expectations and provide targeted feedback to accelerate skill progression and safe participation. Practical management with defined start and finish signals, simple equipment stations and differentiated challenges, keeps sessions efficient and scalable across student ages and abilities. Embedding assessment-for-learning strategies such as observations, simple checklists or progression cards helps track growth and inform classroom HPE programs.

Practical Application

- **Low-Stakes Mini-Games:** Run brief mini-games such as three-versus-three target tag or obstacle relays with rotating teams and simplified rules to emphasise movement competence and fair play. Limit games to ten to twelve minutes to maintain intensity and supervision while providing frequent success experiences.
- **Active Check-In Routine:** Use a two to four minute teacher-led Unofficial Start activity and a one-question movement prompt such as "which skill will you improve today?" as an attendance routine to signal transitions, teach self-monitoring and build awareness of activity choices.
- **Skill Progression Cards:** Provide laminated cards with incremental challenges for a fundamental movement skill, for example, level one: two-hand catch stationary; level two:



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catch while moving; level three: catch with distraction. Students self-select a level and tick progress each session so teachers can record targets quickly and celebrate improvement.

Next Steps

[Anywhere PD](#) has resources on structuring before-school recreation and skill circuit design. The [Active Education Australia website](#) also offers practical tools for managing student-led activity sessions.

References and Research

1. Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. *Australian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines* - How regular opportunities for physical activity throughout the day support health, wellbeing and active lifestyles.
2. Australian Sports Commission. (2019). *Australian Physical Literacy Framework* - How regular movement experiences develop physical, psychological, social and cognitive capabilities that build confidence, competence and lifelong participation.
3. Heart Foundation. *Active Living Resources* - How supportive school environments and everyday movement opportunities encourage active participation and healthy habits.
4. Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2022). *Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (Version 9.0)* - How planned movement experiences develop movement competence, personal and social capability, and lifelong engagement in physical activity.