



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #1140: Building Broader Recreation Partnerships

Overview

Schools that connect their physical activity programs to community organisations, local clubs, and recreation providers give students access to a wider range of activities, expertise, and pathways than any single school can deliver alone. Community partnerships also create continuity between school-based physical activity and the options available to students outside school hours, increasing the likelihood that students remain active beyond the school gate. Building these relationships takes time, but the programs they produce tend to be more varied, more sustainable, and more responsive to local student interests.

Key Teaching Ideas

Effective community partnerships begin with a clear understanding of what the school needs and what a partner organisation can realistically offer. Teachers can start by mapping local clubs, recreation centres, and community organisations and identifying those whose activities align with student interests or curriculum goals. A "come and try" pipeline, where community coaches run a short introductory session at school before inviting students to visit their facility is one of the most effective ways to convert school-based interest into community participation. Formalising partnerships through a simple agreement that outlines roles, responsibilities, and communication channels reduces the risk of arrangements finishing when key contacts change.

Practical Application

- **Local Club Mapping:** Identify community sport clubs, recreation centres, and outdoor activity providers within reach of the school and note which align with current student interests.
- **Come and Try Pipeline:** Negotiate with local clubs to run short introductory sessions at school, then follow up with an invitation for interested students to visit the club's facility.
- **Shared Equipment Arrangements:** Explore equipment-sharing agreements with local clubs or recreation providers to expand the range of activities available without additional school expenditure.
- **Partnership Agreements:** Formalise key partnerships with a simple written agreement that outlines roles, communication expectations, and review dates to keep arrangements active and accountable.



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- **Community Showcase Events:** Host a termly recreation expo where local clubs and organisations set up information stations, giving students direct contact with community activity options.

Next Steps

[Anywhere PD](#) covers community partnership frameworks and local club liaison strategies for HPE programs. See also [Active Education Australia](#) for broader community engagement resources.

References and Research

Australian Sports Commission: Physical Literacy Framework — Evidence supporting community-connected approaches to school physical activity programs.