



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #1142: Developing Student Event Leadership

Overview

School sport carnivals and recreation events are among the most visible physical activity experiences in the school calendar. They also provide valuable opportunities for students to develop leadership skills.

When students take on meaningful coordination roles, such as managing stations, briefing participants, overseeing the schedule and solving problems on the day, they strengthen their organisational, communication and decision-making skills. These capabilities can support them well beyond the event itself.

By progressively scaffolding leadership opportunities, teachers can develop a confident and capable group of student leaders who are ready to take on increasing responsibility throughout their school years.

Key Teaching Ideas

Student event leadership develops most effectively through clear support, purposeful opportunities and gradually increasing responsibility. Teachers might begin by inviting students to manage a single station during a carnival, supported by clear instructions and a teacher nearby. As students build confidence and demonstrate their capabilities, their responsibilities can expand to include briefing participants, managing the run sheet and making real-time adjustments when plans change. Giving a student team responsibility for the run sheet, while the teacher takes on an advisory role, is an important step in developing confidence, independence and leadership capability.

Following the event, teachers can provide students with opportunities to reflect on their contribution. Specific feedback that highlights their strengths, acknowledges the challenges they managed and identifies future growth opportunities helps consolidate learning and prepares students for greater responsibility in future events.



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Practical Application

- **Single Station Management:** Begin by assigning students responsibility for one activity station during a carnival, with clear instructions and a teacher available for questions.
- **Run-Sheet Handover:** Give a student leadership team the event run-sheet and ask them to manage the schedule, with the teacher stepping back to an advisory role.
- **Participant Briefing Roles:** Have student leaders deliver the opening briefing to participants, explaining rules, safety expectations, and the event format.
- **Real-Time Problem Solving:** When issues arise during an event, direct them to the student leadership team first, giving students making decisions under mild pressure.
- **Post-Event Debrief:** Hold a structured debrief with student leaders after each event, focusing on specific decisions they made and how they would approach similar situations in future.

Next Steps

[Anywhere PD](#) has resources on scaffolding student event management and carnival leadership.