



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #1156: Building Sustainable Equipment Systems

Overview

Establishing sustainable equipment systems within physical education and sport programs is paramount for fostering enduring student engagement and promoting long-term physical literacy. By strategically managing resources, schools can ensure equitable access to diverse equipment, thereby enriching participation opportunities and cultivating a sense of belonging for all students. This proactive approach not only enhances the quality of movement experiences but also instils valuable lessons in environmental stewardship and resource management, aligning with broader educational goals for a sustainable future. Effective systems minimise waste, maximise utility, and support continuous program delivery, ensuring that every student benefits from well-maintained and appropriate equipment for active learning.

Key Teaching Ideas

Integrating sustainable practices into equipment management requires a holistic approach that extends beyond mere acquisition. Educators can implement robust inventory management systems, leveraging digital tools to track equipment lifecycle, usage patterns, and maintenance schedules. Fostering student leadership in equipment care and distribution empowers young people with responsibility, enhancing their organisational skills and promoting a shared sense of ownership. Furthermore, developing a culture of preventive maintenance, including regular inspections and timely repairs, significantly extends the lifespan of equipment, reducing replacement costs and environmental impact. This integrated strategy ensures that resources are optimised, supporting a dynamic and inclusive physical activity curriculum for all learners.

Practical Application

- **Equipment Audit Cycles:** Conduct a structured term-by-term audit of all physical education resources, recording condition, quantity, and storage location to ensure nothing is overlooked and replacement needs are identified well in advance of program delivery.
- **Student Equipment Monitors:** Assign rotating student roles responsible for the daily setup, pack-down, and basic care of equipment, building a sense of collective ownership while developing organisational and leadership capabilities in participants.
- **Preventive Maintenance Protocols:** Schedule bi-annual cleaning, inflation checks, and minor repair sessions for all equipment, involving students where appropriate, to extend longevity and identify faults before they compromise safety or program delivery.



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- **TREE Model Equipment Modifications:** Apply the Teaching style, Rules, Equipment, and Environment framework to adapt equipment by varying size, weight, texture, and colour, ensuring all students can participate safely and successfully regardless of ability.
- **Sustainable Procurement Practices:** Prioritise purchasing equipment constructed from recycled or sustainably sourced materials, and investigate repair-over-replace policies to reduce environmental impact and extend the working life of existing resources.

Next Steps

Visit the [Active Education Australia website](https://www.activeeducationaustralia.edu.au) to access comprehensive professional development and physical education resources. Explore [Anywhere PD](#) for flexible, practical learning modules designed to support educators in delivering high-quality programs. Explore the Australian Sports Commission's resources on inclusive practices and the TREE Model to further enhance equipment accessibility and sustainability within your physical education programs.

References and Research

1. Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (v9) – Establishes the framework for sustainable resource management and inclusive equipment access across all physical education and sport contexts.
2. Australian Sports Commission: TREE Model (Teaching style, Rules, Equipment, and Environment) – Provides a practical framework for adapting and modifying equipment to support inclusive participation for all students.
3. Australian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines – Highlights the importance of accessible and well-maintained equipment in supporting consistent physical activity participation across school settings.
4. Playing for Life Philosophy (Australian Sports Commission, 2015) – Supports the development of sustainable, student-centred equipment systems that promote lifelong physical activity and community participation.