



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #1206: Designing Student-Led Recreation Orientation Opportunities

Overview

Using student leaders to design and deliver recreation orientations is a practical strategy for building leadership capability while easing the transition for new students. When incoming cohorts are introduced to the school's physical activity culture by their peers, it creates a welcoming environment grounded in shared experience. Student-led orientations demystify the use of school facilities and equipment, reduce anxiety, and promote early engagement in physical activity. For the leaders themselves, the process provides an authentic context to practise empathy, organisation, and clear communication.

Key Teaching Ideas

Teachers can guide student leaders to focus orientation activities on connection and familiarity rather than intense competition or complex skill assessment. The goal is to ensure new students understand where, when, and how they can be active safely, and that they leave feeling welcome. Supporting leaders to anticipate the anxieties of new students helps them design low-stakes, cooperative activities that build immediate peer connection. When leaders reflect on how new students responded during the orientation, they develop the perspective-taking skills that make their future leadership more responsive and inclusive.

Practical Application

- **Facility Treasure Hunts:** Have student leaders design an active orientation game where new students navigate the school to locate key physical activity areas.
- **Come-and-Try Sessions:** Task leaders with running low-pressure introductory sessions during the first weeks of term so new students can experience typical recess games.
- **Equipment Borrowing Tutorials:** Have leaders explicitly teach new cohorts the procedures for accessing and returning recreation resources.
- **Cooperative Icebreakers:** Guide leaders to facilitate physical team-building challenges that require communication and cooperation.
- **Peer Q and A Sessions:** Incorporate a structured time during orientation where new students can ask leaders questions about the school's sports culture and activity options.



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Next Steps

[Anywhere PD](#) has resources on student-led orientation programs and transition support. See also the [Active Education Australia website](#) for broader school transition frameworks.

References and Research

Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education – Developing personal and social capability through peer-led transition and orientation programs.