



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #433: Lunchtime Activities Made Easy

Overview

Lunchtime is one of the most underused opportunities for student movement in the school day. With minimal planning, schools can turn break times into active, socially connected experiences that benefit students across all year levels. The key is simplicity. Activities that require little setup, no elimination and no specialist knowledge are the ones students return to. When lunchtime programs are easy to run, they are more likely to be sustained by staff and embraced by the whole school community.

Key Teaching Ideas

Sustainable lunchtime programs share a few common features. They offer choice rather than a single prescribed activity. They are inclusive by design, with no elimination and no requirement for prior skill. They need minimal equipment and can be started and stopped at any point. Teachers and duty staff do not need to run the activities. Their role is to set the conditions and step back. When students have ownership of the activity, participation rates increase and the program runs itself.

Practical Application

- **Activity Starter Bag:** Duty staff can carry a small bag of beanbags, ribbons or chalk to start quick, informal games that students can join or leave at any time.
- **Partner Coordination Tasks:** Encourage simple partner activities such as mirroring movements or hand-clapping sequences that build rhythm and social connection without equipment.
- **Chalk Pathway Challenges:** Use chalk lines or existing playground markings to create simple follow-the-path challenges that invite varied movement without teacher instruction.
- **Non-Elimination Group Games:** Offer large-group games that keep all students active throughout, such as cooperative tag variations or follow-the-leader sequences across year levels.
- **Student Activity Roster:** Invite students to nominate and lead a lunchtime activity for their year group on a rotating basis. Student-led options build ownership and reduce reliance on staff.



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Next Steps

Access resources for lunchtime program planning and break-time activity design through [Anywhere PD](#), or visit activeeducationaustralia.edu.au for whole-school movement tools.

References and Research

1. Australian Sports Commission. (2019). Australian Physical Literacy Framework – Defines physical literacy as the development of physical, psychological, social and cognitive capabilities that support lifelong participation in physical activity.
2. Australian Sports Commission. Playing for Life – Promotes game-based, inclusive and student-centred approaches that maximise participation, enjoyment and skill development.