



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #835: Flexible Learning Spaces Supporting Movement

Overview

The physical environment of a school significantly influences how much and how well students move. Flexible learning spaces, classrooms with moveable furniture, corridors with activity prompts, outdoor areas with varied surfaces and equipment, invite spontaneous and structured movement throughout the school day. When teachers and school leaders audit and redesign spaces with movement in mind, they create environments that normalise physical activity as a natural part of learning rather than a separate subject.

Key Teaching Ideas

Designing movement-friendly spaces requires teachers to think beyond the gymnasium and consider how every area of the school can support physical activity. Simple changes, such as removing unnecessary furniture to create floor space, adding activity prompts to corridors and painting games on concrete areas, can significantly increase incidental movement. Teachers can involve students in auditing and redesigning their own learning spaces, developing student ownership of the physical environment and a shared commitment to an active school culture. The goal is an environment where movement is the default and begin to embed this into the school culture.

Practical Application

- **Classroom Space Audits:** Students work in small groups to map their classroom and identify areas where furniture could be rearranged to create more floor space for movement breaks and active learning tasks.
- **Corridor Activity Prompts:** Install simple physical challenges in corridors, including balance beams, hopscotch grids or stretch station posters, that students can engage with during transitions between classes.
- **Outdoor Space Activation:** Paint games, activity trails and movement challenges on underused concrete areas, giving students structured options for physical activity during unstructured time.



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- **Flexible Furniture Arrangements:** Establish a classroom routine where furniture is rearranged at the start of active learning sessions, normalising the connection between physical space and movement-based learning.
- **Student Space Design Projects:** Challenge students to design an ideal movement-friendly learning space for their year level, presenting their proposals to school leadership and advocating for changes they believe would increase activity.

Next Steps

For guidance on flexible learning space design and movement-friendly environments, visit the [Active Education Australia website](#). [Anywhere PD](#) covers space audits and practical strategies for activating underused school areas.

References and Research

1. VicHealth. *Physical Activity & Health Promotion Resources* – Highlights how well-designed environments and school settings can increase physical activity, wellbeing and social connection.
2. Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (Version 9.0) – Encourages schools to provide environments and learning experiences that support active participation, movement competence and healthy, active lifestyles.