Tip #870: Creating Community Consultation Through Movement

Overview

Consulting with the broader school community students, families, local sport organisations, and community groups in the design of movement-based programs ensures that the program reflects the needs, interests, and values of the community it serves. Community consultation builds trust, generates diverse perspectives, and creates advocates for physical activity within the school and beyond. When community members feel that their input has shaped programs, they are more likely to support and participate in it.

Key Teaching Ideas

Effective community consultation requires teachers to ask genuine questions and be prepared to act on the answers. A survey that asks families about their child's physical activity interests and barriers is only valuable if the findings actually influence program decisions. Teachers can involve students in the consultation process, asking them to design and conduct surveys, analyse findings, and present recommendations, developing research and communication skills alongside a sense of ownership over programs.

Practical Application

- **Student Needs Surveys**: Survey students at the start of each year about their physical activity interests, barriers, and goals, then share how the findings have influenced program design decisions.
- **Family Interest Mapping**: Ask families to identify the physical activities their children engage in outside of school, then use this information to build connections between school-based and community-based physical activity.
- **Community Organisation Partnerships**: Consult with local sport and recreation organisations about how the school's HPE program can connect with and support community physical activity opportunities.
- **Student Program Design Projects**: Involve students in designing a new component of the HPE program, a lunchtime activity, a community event, a new sport offering using a structured design process that includes community consultation.

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- **Annual Community Forums**: Host an annual community forum where families, students, and community members can provide input into programs, share their experiences, and contribute to program planning.

Next Steps

Anywhere PD has resources on community consultation and stakeholder engagement in school sport. The Active Education Australia website also offers tools for co-designing programs with local communities and families.

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