

QUALITY INTRAMURAL

Program Guidelines



INTRODUCTION

in•tra•mu•rals:

Physical activity, play, and games within your school community for staff and students.

Objective

To support school communities in developing and delivering quality intramural programs.

Definition

PHE Canada defines quality intramural programming as a physical activity-based program which aims to support the development of physical literacy and wellness within the school community and includes all students.



Overview

Who?

Intramurals are available to all students to participate, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture or socio-economic status. Instructional and leadership opportunities are available for students, volunteers, and all staff members.

What?

Intramurals are fitness, sport or physical activity-based, small-group or whole-school events, clubs, programs or leagues.

When?

Intramurals can be before or after school, during recess or at lunch. These activities happen outside the regular Physical Education program.

Where?

Intramurals take place indoors or outdoors, in the gymnasium, classroom, field or court space - wherever the optimal space is for the program to occur.

Why?

Intramurals offer a non-competitive, inclusive, social and physical activity-based alternative to competitive sports within the school environment, encouraging physical activity participation of all students.

How?

Intramurals occur as a result of volunteers, leaders, teachers and administrators encouraging and supporting additional physical activity for students outside the regular Physical Education program.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Physical Literacy

Physical Literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities (Whitehead, 2016).

Given the low proportion of Canadian children and youth currently meeting recommended physical activity guidelines, there is a need to develop increased opportunities for children to participate in physical activity (Vu-Nguyen K., Kukaswadia A., & Moher D., 2016). Children report that not having the skills to play is one major reason they stop participating in physical activity (Canadian Sport for Life). School-based intramural programs are an excellent solution to help reverse this trend and also supports the development of physical literacy in participants.



Consider students' fundamental movement skills and physical literacy when planning intramural programming. The development of fundamental movement skills is an important component of physical literacy. Fundamental movement skills are critical to establishing the foundation for participation in many physical activities. A student who has not had the opportunity to develop these basic motor skills often experiences difficulties or barriers when participating in sport experiences or school-based programs that involve a combination of skills. Fundamental movement skills are the building blocks of physical literacy and support the development of a healthy mind, body and spirit.



A well-planned intramural program should encourage the development of affective, physical, cognitive and behavioural elements for the development of physical literacy. Successful intramural programs offer a wide range of activities, includes everyone, emphasize personal and social growth, are fun, and provide the opportunity for students to gain confidence in their abilities and to become more proficient at movement and fitness skills. Intramural programs engage students who may not be active and encourages them to participate in all forms of play and physical activity throughout their lives.



Character Development

Intramural programs support the creation of a safe and supportive environment for everyone. They build a community of caring learners, who can support each other in growing to become responsible, respectful, and compassionate individuals who are tolerant of differences. Successful intramural programs plan activities that allow students to face challenges, develop good character through fair play, accept success and defeat with grace and poise, and provide opportunities for leadership.

Conflict Resolution

Reduce conflict by implementing the following into your program policies:

- Promote a culture of respect and acceptance
- Accept differing values, cultures and abilities
- Develop new ways of communicating and understanding
- Discuss and agree upon acceptable behaviour and consequences during the first session

When conflicts arise, encourage participants to discuss how the conflict made them feel and how to improve the behaviour or reaction. Conflict resolution allows students to gain essential skills such as teamwork, active listening, confidence, and decisiveness - all helping to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.



ACTIVITY VARIATION

Variation is an important component of a successful intramural program. Allowing students to choose activities is also important. Consider having students choose the activities they participate in at different times in the program. While there are certainly tried and true favourites, it is always meaningful to try something new.

Play small-sided games with younger students. Small-sided games are games with fewer players competing on a smaller sized playing area. An example is playing 3-on-3 basketball on a half-court. These games allow players to develop their technical and tactical skills (Capranica et al., 2001).

Get everyone moving – no students waiting on the sidelines!

See the table below for activities you can vary. Consider using them when planning an intramural program.

Special Events or Themes	Sports	Non-Traditional Games	Clubs and Activities
Jump Rope for Heart	Floor Hockey	Teaching Games for Understanding	Walking/Running
Stack Up!	Flag Football	Tag Games	Dance
Right to Play Event	Indoor Soccer	Relay Races	Cheer
Terry Fox Run	Volleyball or Beach Volleyball	Kin-Ball	Tennis
Winter Carnival	Badminton	Playground Games	Fitness
Spring Fling	Cricket	Rubber Chicken Games	DrumFIT
Aboriginal History Month	Tchouckball	Cooperative Games	Dragon Boat
First Nations Outdoor Games	Team Handball	Parachute Games	Skiping
Inuit Target and Agility Games	Ultimate Frisbee	Pool Noodle Sports	Downhill Skiing
RBC Sports Day in Canada	Basketball	Seated Volleyball	Cross Country Skiing
Canada Games Day	Gym Ringette	Scooter Sports – Hockey, Team Handball, Canoe/Kayak	Snow Shoeing
Paralympic Sports Day	Broomball		Orienteering
Beat the Winter Blues Day			Yoga
Beat the Clock Day			

INCLUSION AND MODIFICATIONS

Everyone Plays!

Inclusion in intramural programs allows all students to participate. It ensures that:

- All people feel welcome and accepted
- All necessary supports for full participation are available
- No one is excluded unless they choose to be (City of Ottawa, 2015)

Activities should meet the needs of students of all skill levels and physical abilities, including those with disabilities, to maximize participation.

Take time to think about the types of activities to offer. Ask students their opinion. Students should have a voice in the types of intramurals offered. This will also empower a variety of students to participate. Be creative about how you promote the programming to get as many students as possible to participate!

Consider:

- Opportunities for boys, girls and mixed gender programs
- Appropriate age, physical development and skill level
- Inclusion of children of all cultures, backgrounds and abilities (NASPE, 2001)

Modifications

All students should have the opportunity to participate in intramural programs regardless of ability. Keep in mind that including children with disabilities can require special considerations and supports. Activities need to be modified and individualized to the student's ability level. Consider the following when modifying activities:

- Be aware of the individual's abilities and disability (discuss with the student, parents, teachers and other professionals)
- Provide help only to the degree needed. Encourage students to take risks and to make choices when appropriate
- Modify the program only as necessary
- Help students find their strengths to build self esteem
- Create a relaxed, supportive and fun environment

Common Disabilities

Physical Disabilities –

Spinal cord injury, amputation, cerebral palsy and brain injury are the most common causes of physical disability. The level of ability can vary greatly.

Developmental and/or Behavioural Disabilities –

Persons with developmental and/or behavioural disabilities may have below average functioning, less capacity for adaptive behaviour and lower basic motor skills. Persons with developmental and/or behavioural disabilities may experience challenges in the learning, social and emotional domains.

Sensory Impairments –

The most common sensory impairments are visual impairments or deaf or hard of hearing. These impairments may be partial or total. Persons with sensory impairments will have different needs and learning requirements.

(Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability)



Policies

Intramural programs should have regulations to govern the program. When developing policies, refer to the school and school board's policies. Consider developing policies for the following:

- Registration and eligibility
- Code of conduct
- Clothing and footwear
- Facility and equipment safety and maintenance
- Adult supervision
- Filing a complaint or dispute
- Safe and supportive programming
- Accidents, first aid response, emergency action plan

Safety

All intramural programs must adhere to the safety guidelines outlined by the school board and/or province or territory. This includes guidelines for equipment, clothing and footwear, facilities, rules and instructions, as well as supervision for each activity. Refer to safety guidelines in your region before implementing an intramural program.

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY



A key component to any successful intramural program is youth leadership. Leadership in this context would refer to having an intentional positive influence on the lives and behaviour of others (Leading the Way, Physical and Health Education Canada).

When youth take on leadership responsibilities and the ownership of their own programs, overall participation in the groups' activities increases (Canadian Intramural Recreation Association).

An intramural program that incorporates youth leadership as part of the purpose of program delivery helps to develop lifelong skills that benefit youth in all areas of their life. Skills such as co-operation, trust building, commitment, responsibility, decision making and problem solving are reinforced through these real-life experiences (Leading the Way, Physical and Health Education Canada).

Youth leaders can support programming by:

- Developing and implementing promotions for the program
- Ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all participants
- Planning program activities and organizing necessary equipment

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Available for purchase from PHE Canada at canada.humankinetics.com/collections/phe-canada

Active Living After School: How-To Guide (PHE Canada)

Leading the Way Youth Leadership Guide (PHE Canada)

We Belong: A How-To Guide (PHE Canada)

Intramural Recreation: A Step-by-Step Guide to Creating an Effective Program (John Byl)

Available for purchase from CIRA Ontario

Active Playgrounds (Pat Doyle)

Extra Ordinary Games (Chris Wilson)

Follow the Leader (CIRA Ontario)

Just Another Great Games Book (Pat Doyle)

PlayDay MayDay (Chris Wilson)

Tick, Tock, Beat the Clock (Andy Raithby)

Winter Play (Pat Doyle)

Useful websites and resources

Action Schools! B.C.:

<http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/key-resources-equipment/supplementary-resources/daily-physical-activity-pages>

Active for Life:

<http://activeforlife.com/lesson-plans-and-resources/>

Canadian After School Partnership:

www.activeafterschool.ca/activities

Ever Active Schools:

<http://www.everactive.org/physical-activity>

Free Download: Intramurals: How? Why?

(John Byl and Herwig Baldauf) https://cdn2.sportngin.com/attachments/document/0091/7946/intramurals_high_school_resource.pdf

Free Download by Googling:

101 Field Day Games

(CIRA Ontario)

PHE Canada:

<https://phecanada.ca/activate/intramurals>

PlaySport:

<http://www.playsport.net/>

Raise the Bar Intramural Program –

<https://raisethebar.ophea.net/>

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Vu-Nguyen K., Kukaswadia A., & Moher D. (2016). **Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario)**. *Evidence Brief: Barriers to physical activity for children and youth in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

The word "Canada" in a serif font, with a small Canadian flag (red maple leaf) positioned above the letter 'a'.

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