

Awareness and Community Resources

If students don't know about an activity, there is no chance they will take part in it. For lifelong health, finding an activity that students enjoy is critical to developing a positive attitude towards activity and the habit of daily activity.

Building Awareness

While some physical activities – such as tag – are well-known to many students, there are many physical activities that are not.

Ideas for building awareness

- Use notice boards to post photographs or posters of different physical activities – and ensure that the photos you use show:
 - children of diverse genders participating in physical activity;
 - people of different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds enjoying the activity;
 - some very low cost activities so children from low-income families see things that they could take part in; and
 - persons with diverse abilities taking part in the activity as genuine participants, not just officiating or playing a supportive role.
- Invite local sport clubs to visit your school (ensuring you have followed appropriate school board protocol for visitors) and give demonstrations of their sport. Include:
 - individual and team sports,
 - summer and winter sports,
 - indoor and outdoor sports, and
 - recreational activities.
- Invite local sport celebrities to speak to your students. Have males and females, athletes with disabilities, and athletes from different cultures if at all possible.
- In academic classes have students research different physical activities, as part of projects, in subjects such as language arts and social studies.



Community Resources

Students often get their first involvement in a number of well-known physical activities directly through scheduled physical education classes and, possibly, intramurals.

Community groups can help enhance learning experiences within the school setting by providing children with different opportunities to be physically active, one opportunity being organized sport. There are a variety of ways in which community groups and schools work together.

Local clubs

Local sports clubs are often delighted to be invited to schools to demonstrate their sport, and will often bring child-sized equipment so that students can try the sport. This works well for sports that don't have specialized facilities.

National and provincial sport organizations

A surprising number of national and provincial sport organizations have programs for schools to try out their sport. Such programs often offer to:

- provide equipment loans, low-cost purchase, or outright equipment gifts;
- supply grade-appropriate lesson plans and skill progressions; and
- send a qualified instructor.

Outside activities

Many school districts have traditionally offered students First Involvement opportunities in partnership with outside service providers.

The two most commonly offered programs are:

- **Learn to Swim** programs, offered by local swimming pools using certified swimming instructors supported by certified lifeguards, and
- **Learn to Ski** programs offered at local ski hills by certified ski instructors.

Care should be taken to make sure that students with diverse abilities are not excluded (unless there are legitimate individual safety concerns). Some students are modest and feel uncomfortable in athletic wear, so don't let clothing stop physical activity.



A Great Example

Curling Canada's Rocks and Rings Program is a great example of a national sport program that allows students to try out a sport in school. In this case, there is no need for an ice surface.



www.curling.ca/about-curling/getting-started-in-curling/rocks-rings

