

THE ACTIVE TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS (ATS)

The Active Tools for Schools companion will help you assess where your school is at when providing physical activity opportunities for students at the school. It will also provide direction in taking the next steps.

USING ATS TO PLAN AND CARRY-OUT A COMPREHENSIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ACTION PLAN IN YOUR SCHOOL

STEP 1: Form a Healthy School Committee

STEP 2: Identify strengths and needs

- Complete the ATS checklist
- Use the results of your checklist to identify a priority area

STEP 3: Develop and carry out the action plan

- Consider including some ideas from the school-based interventions provided

STEP 4: Evaluate and celebrate

The school environment is an important setting for physical activity promotion in children and youth, since they spend much of their time on weekdays in school with many contexts for physical activity¹. These include a variety of physical activity behaviours and sources of influence.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEHAVIOURS

Children and youth should participate in a range of school-based physical activities, such as active play, organized sport and physical activity programs (including Daily Physical Activity), and active school travel.

ACTIVE PLAY

Access to daily active outdoor play is essential for healthy child development¹. Schools are encouraged to regularly embrace the outdoors for learning, socialization and physical activity opportunities - in various weather conditions. Consider ways you can promote active outdoor play before school, during recess, during class time, and after school. For example, encourage teachers to bring the classroom outdoors, or plan an extra recess.

Public Health

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DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (DPA)

The Ontario Ministry of Education's Daily Physical Activity (DPA) mandate stipulates every elementary student will take part in a minimum of 20 minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. Consider ways you can support your school in meeting this DPA mandate.

ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL

Using active modes of transportation like walking or biking to/from school helps kids build more physical activity into their day. Active travelers are more physically active than children who are driven to school — not just during the trip to and from school but over the course of the entire day¹. Reducing car trips helps the environment too! Consider ways you can increase the number of students who actively commute to/from school (e.g., starting a “walking school bus” or school travel planning).

SOURCES OF INFLUENCE

Physical activity is influenced by people, such as school staff, family and peers, as well as practices in the school.

ACTIVE FUNDRAISERS, CELEBRATIONS AND REWARDS

Often funds are needed to help increase physical activity for the school community. The **Active fundraisers element** is about raising funds to promote physical activity as well as keeping the school's fundraising efforts consistent with the messages of a healthy active school environment. When physical activity is celebrated, and when rewards include or encourage physical activity, the message is very clear — physical activity is a valued part of the whole school environment. The **active celebrations and rewards element** demonstrates the value of physical activity.

POSITIVE ROLE MODELING AND REINFORCEMENT

Many people in a position of influence in the school community including school staff and parents already model types of positive behaviours. The **Positive role modeling and reinforcement element** involves leadership and commitment that reinforces the importance of being physically active. This can greatly contribute to an overall healthy, active school environment. Role models show an openness and consistency of action when it comes to being physically active.