

Physical Literacy: *The Basics*

Why are we interested in physical literacy?

Sport and active recreation can create happier, healthier people, better connected communities and a stronger New Zealand.

For this to happen we need to provide quality experiences that support people valuing and choosing to be active for life.

Quality experience are those that grow and continually progress our participants' confidence, competence and motivation for a lifelong love of physical activity.

We need to focus on wider outcomes than participation numbers and activity targets – we need to focus on our participants' *physical literacy*.

What is physical literacy?

Everyone has their own unique physical literacy, which affects how they value and choose to be physically active throughout their lives. The more physically literate someone is, the more likely they are to have a lifelong love of being active

A person's physical literacy is a combination of their motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding about physical activity which ultimately affects how they value and choose to be physically active throughout their lives.

It's important to note that a person's physical literacy

- reflects their context, their environment, their culture and their world
- Is a holistic concept, involving physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual dimensions.



Motivation • Confidence • Physical Competence • Knowledge & Understanding

To value and choose physical activity for life



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How does a person develop and progress their physical literacy?

An individual's physical literacy is the outcome of the many movement and physical activity experiences a participant has, and begins with the holistic learning and joy babies, toddlers and children experience through play (play is the foundation of physical literacy). We continue to develop it through ongoing experiences involving physical activity, including physical education, sport and recreation, and simply involving movement and physical activity in daily activities.

Physical literacy is not static or linear. Rather, it is an ongoing 'learning journey', constantly shaped by our experiences and interactions with others and our world. While all life stages are important and contribute, the experiences in the childhood and adolescent years are of particular significance due to the developmental impact of this stage.

The more physical activity experiences are quality and represent value to an individual, the more positive the impact on a person's physical literacy and, in turn, their lifelong commitment to an active lifestyle.

Experiences that are quality and valuable:

- are rewarding, challenging, exciting and self-confirming
- build skills, knowledge, confidence, understanding and motivation around participating
- help people realise their potential and grow in self-esteem
- understand and respond to the holistic nature of people.

They are experiences that leave them wanting more.

What is the Sport NZ *Physical Literacy* Approach?

To positively influence a person's physical literacy across their lives, we think it's important to focus on building a system together with our partners that ensures our participants experiences with physical activity are quality and bring value to them.

This comes from an approach that:

- recognises and responds to the holistic dimensions of individuals (physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual), and acknowledges that these vary across life stages
- considers a lifelong journey
- focuses on quality.

We consider this a Physical Literacy Approach - taking this approach can support our sport sector to align and partner with others that utilise a similar holistic model, such as Sir Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā concept of hauora or wellbeing.

A key purpose of the Physical Literacy Approach is to ensure aligned understanding of the concepts and principles of physical literacy and work together with our sector to develop ongoing capability in embedding an approach that helps ongoing positive physical literacy in individuals as a result of our work.

How it is expressed and demonstrated should be relevant and contextualised to organisations and the people they work with.

Put simply: we need an approach that understands that people don't come in bits, and they don't live in a vacuum!



Vision:
To value and choose being
physically active for life

For more information visit www.sportnz.org.nz/physicalliteracy



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