



## The education domain and physical activity

### Key messages

- Every aspect of education should be conducive to physical activity where possible.
- Both structured and unstructured physical activity should be promoted, accessible and supported throughout all education phases for better student performance and lifelong health.
- School-based physical activity interventions are cost-effective.
- Schools need to be encouraged to achieve the recommended standard of children being physically active for at least 50% of allocated physical education (PE) time.
- There is an urgent need for programs to build physical literacy at preschool, with reinforcement in primary and secondary school.

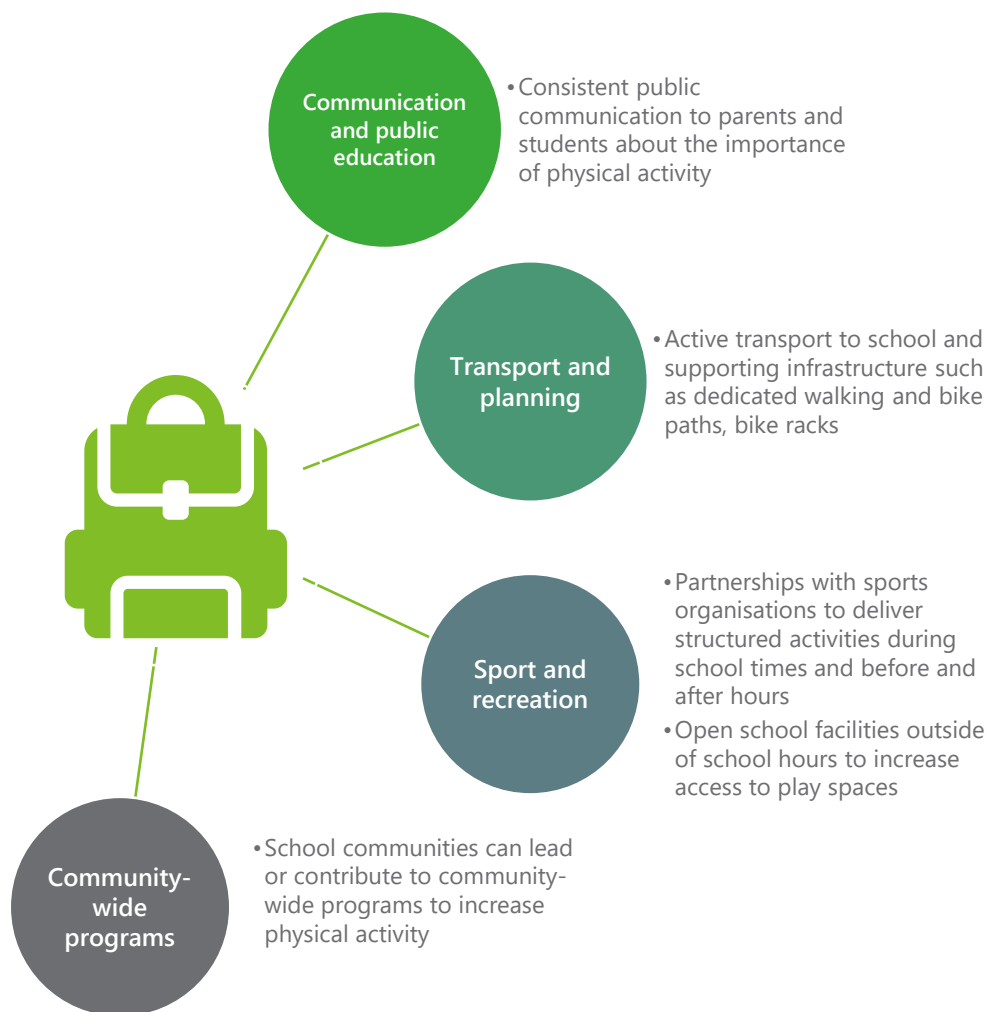
### Why is it important to address the education domain?

Learning how to be physically active is as important for students' life trajectories as literacy or numeracy. Educational settings offer an opportunity to reach a large section of the community over many years. Quality PE helps establish lifelong active lifestyles, with mutual physical, social, psychosocial and cognitive benefits. Physical activity also improves students' concentration and academic performance.

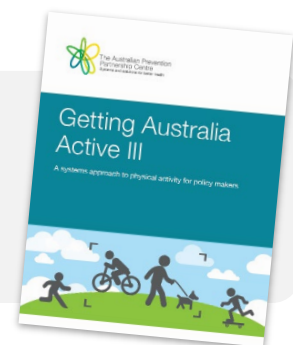
### What are the recommendations for action and investment?

<b>Physical activity policies for education settings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish physical activity policies with clear language</li> <li>• Specify monitoring and accountability mechanisms specific to each sub-category (including PE, physical literacy, active school transport, school environment)</li> </ul>
<b>Use of theory and/or logic models</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use theory and/or logic models to inform planning, implementation and evaluation of school-based approaches to physical activity [see Table 14 of GAA III for recommended design specifications for whole-of-school programs]</li> </ul>
<b>Increase compliance with recommended standards for PE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage more schools to achieve the recommended standard of adolescents being physically active for at least 50% of allocated PE time</li> <li>• Mandate delivery of high-quality organised physical activity, including scheduled PE that focuses on developing physical literacy</li> <li>• Provide targeted support to support PE teaching in disadvantaged areas</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate funding to programs and environmental improvements to enable physical activity</li> <li>• Fund professional development to equip primary and secondary teachers with the necessary competence to deliver innovative programs</li> </ul>
<b>Physical literacy continuum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress students along the physical literacy continuum through structured curricular activities and ensure accountability by reporting against standards</li> <li>• Support early intervention programs for 3-6 year-olds to build physical literacy (including Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS)) in preschool</li> <li>• Strengthen FMS acquisition in primary school and into secondary school</li> </ul>
<b>Standardised surveillance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop standardised surveillance for physical activity across the life course</li> <li>• Regularly measure children's height and weight, fundamental movement skills and physical activity at key stages of primary and secondary schools, with opt-out (passive) consent</li> </ul>

## What are examples of strategies that intersect with the education domain?



**Getting Australia Active III (GAA III)** is an Australian guide for policy makers to support the implementation of a whole-of-systems approach to increasing population physical activity. This policy brief summarises key points from **Chapter 3.1** of this guide. For more detailed guidance and supporting evidence, you can access the full report at: [preventioncentre.org.au](http://preventioncentre.org.au)



Funding for this research has been provided from the Australian Government's Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF). The MRFF provides funding to support health and medical research and innovation, with the objective of improving the health and wellbeing of Australians. MRFF funding has been provided to The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre under the MRFF Boosting Preventive Health Research Program. Further information on the MRFF is available at [www.health.gov.au/mrff](http://www.health.gov.au/mrff)