

# POLICY

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS

Responsibility of: Student Services Division

2004/1242

Effective Date: 1 January 2008

DOC2007/06258

Next Review Date: December 2008

Actual Date Reviewed

VERSION NUMBER: 1.0

### 1 POLICY

Schools in the Northern Territory (NT) are required to provide at least two hours of physical activity in the curriculum each school week for students in the primary and secondary years of schooling.

From 2008, this reporting requirement will relate to students undertaking education in the primary and middle years of schooling.

This commitment is subject to a commonsense exemption policy to allow for children who are restricted or unable to undertake any form of physical activity.

### 2 BUSINESS NEED

In accordance with the *Schools Assistance (Learning Together – Achievement Through Choice and Opportunity Act (2004)*, the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) is required to certify to the Australian Government that Northern Territory schools have met this physical activity requirement.

The importance of physical activity is well documented particularly in terms of preventing overweight and obesity, cardio-vascular related diseases, and improving mental health outcomes including increased self-esteem, self-efficacy, improved mood and reduction in anxiety and stress.

Participation in Physical Education and sport programs also provides students with an opportunity to develop their decision-making, problem solving and social skills through a health enhancing environment which contributes to enjoyment, increased mental alertness and an understanding about the importance of physical activity for life long benefits.

### 3 RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy has been developed by the Manager Health Promoting Schools NT, in consultation with the school cluster Physical Education Co-ordinators. The policy will be maintained and reviewed by the above position/s. Executive Board is responsible for approving the policy.

Seven Physical Education Co-ordinator positions have been allocated to school clusters to assist teachers implement Physical Education and sport programs in NT schools.

DEET is required to certify to the Australian Government under the Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines (Appendix E – Commitments in Funding Agreements for 2005-2008) that schools have met this physical activity requirement.

Principals are responsible for ensuring that the school syllabus complies with this policy.

## **4 DEFINITION**

For the purpose of this policy it is recommended that the minimum requirement of two hours of physical activity each week, be in the form of a Physical Education program to assist the progression of students' motor skills, kinaesthetic awareness, ability to play games and participate in a range of sports and physical activity pursuits which are identified in the Health and Physical Education Learning Area of the NT Curriculum Framework.

## **5 RELATED POLICIES (if applicable)**

goNT Physical Activity Strategy and Action Plan for the Northern Territory 2006-2007 (available at [http://www.nt.gov.au/health/docs/goNT\\_strategy\\_and\\_first\\_year\\_action\\_plan.pdf](http://www.nt.gov.au/health/docs/goNT_strategy_and_first_year_action_plan.pdf))

Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Action Plan 2007-2012 (available at [http://www.nt.gov.au/health/comm\\_health/food\\_nutrition/nutri\\_phys.shtml](http://www.nt.gov.au/health/comm_health/food_nutrition/nutri_phys.shtml))

## **6 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS (if applicable)**

Australia's Physical Activity Recommendations for children and young people (available at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-active-recommend.htm>)

Getting Australia Active II: an update of the evidence on physical activity and health (available at [http://www.nphp.gov.au/publications/wa\\_index.htm#sigpah](http://www.nphp.gov.au/publications/wa_index.htm#sigpah))

Systematic review: Enhanced physical education classes in schools are recommended to increase physical activity among young people (available at <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/pa-int-school-pe.pdf>)

## **7 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

This policy will be made available through the DEET website: <http://www.deet.nt.gov.au/corporate/policies/>

## **8 REVIEW**

Review of this policy will be undertaken by the Manager Health Promoting Schools NT, Student Services DEET in December 2008.

## **9 GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES (when required)**

Schools requiring assistance to implement this Physical Activity Requirements for Schools Policy can contact the Education Officer Physical Activity (Health Promoting Schools NT, Student Services DEET) on 89994252.

Assistance can also be sought from the following school cluster Physical Education Co-ordinators and Executive Officer School Sport NT as follow:

Northern Suburbs – 89451899

PARCS – 89359055

City – 89481163

Central Australia – 89529920

Arnhem – 89870456

Rivers – 89712643

Group Schools – 89480025

Schools Sport NT - 89480025