



Australian Capital Territory

ACT Department of  
Education & Training  
ABN: 71 506 957 312



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Dr Ian Holland  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

Thank you for your letter of 3 August 2006 about the inquiry into women in sport and recreation in Australia. In reply to your questions about physical education and sport in ACT schools I am able to provide the following information.

**1. What physical education classes are required and what are available (but non-compulsory), in each year of school?**

The ACT Government schools policy on Health, Physical Education and Sport includes mandated hours for each student in years K-10.

The policy states that “for each child from years K-10 there are mandatory times to be devoted to the areas of health, physical education and sport/recreation,” and includes the following table:

K-2	20 – 30 minutes of physical activity per day
years 3-6	A minimum of 180 minutes per week, of which at least 150 minutes must be active physical education or sport
years 7-10	A minimum of 180 minutes per week, of which at least 150 minutes must be active physical education, including sport

In primary schools, a variety of programs are offered to students to enhance their physical education programs. These include:

Feat for Feet, Health & PE week, Swim Smart, Sports Coaching, Sports Leadership, Dance, Active After Schools Community Program, Blue Earth Discovery, The ‘Look’ program, Smart Start, Sports Ability, Sports Development Programs.

In high schools, students are offered:

Sports Coaching, Sports Science, Outdoor Education, Talented Sports Programs and Recreation Programs.

## **2. What proportion of physical education classes are required to involve exercise activity?**

Physical education classes are active and lessons usually commence with a warm up period of 'exercise activity'. Approximately 10 – 15 minutes of warm up activities generally include stretching exercises and a vigorous running activity. Most physical education lessons are of approximately 50-60 minutes duration.

## **3. What school sport during regular school hours is required, and what is available (but non-compulsory), in each year of school?**

Sport education is included in physical education programs to allow students to be involved in competition as a member of a team in a variety of sports.

Sport that is widely available in schools but is not compulsory includes:

- intra school competition eg. lunch time
- inter school competition. eg. school vs school

ACT schools have an extensive range of opportunities for students to participate in sport at the interschool level. Each year a calendar of events is published for sporting days during school hours. Major sports carnivals are provided in Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country as well as a range of other sports. Students can also represent the ACT in a variety of sports.

## **4. What other obligations are there to participate in school organised sporting activity outside regular school hours?**

There is no obligation to participate in school organised sporting activity outside regular school hours. Some schools organise teams to represent their school in community-based sport on weekends or after school. Some school sport is also held after school hours (4-6pm).

The Active After Schools Communities program run by the Australian Sports Commission employs community sports groups to work with primary age children in after school care programs.

## **5. In each of the above cases, what is included in the meaning of sport, physical activity or exercise?**

In the ACT, sport is considered as vigorous physical activity. The physical activity may be for the purpose of discovering the limits of one's capabilities, or for fun, amusement and diversion. It involves competition against oneself or another, or a confrontation of natural elements.

Physical education is education through physical activity. It is a comprehensive term, including fitness, skills, movement, dance, recreation, health, games & sport plus the appropriate values and knowledge of each.

Physical activity or exercise refers to any activity that involves significant movement of the body or limbs. Moderate intensity physical activity will cause a slight, but

noticeable, increase in breathing and heart rate and may cause light sweating in some people.

**6. In each of the above cases, who determines whether schools and students are complying with the relevant policy?**

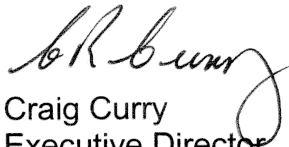
As the times are mandated, school principals are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

**7. Does the regulation of any of the above matters vary according to the type of school (for example, public, catholic or other private)?**

Each education sector has its own requirements. The Catholic sector suggests children must be active for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. The independent sector suggests 120 mins/week physical education plus sport.

I trust this information will assist your inquiry into women in sport and recreation.

Yours sincerely



Craig Curry  
Executive Director

31 August 2006