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## Sport Australia releases Position Statement on Physical Literacy to support our nation's health

Sport Australia has released a national *Position Statement on Physical Literacy* to continue our efforts to prioritise the health and wellbeing of Australians.

Broadly and enthusiastically endorsed by sporting organisations, physical activity providers and education bodies, the Position Statement is a commitment to help all Australians, especially our children, bring out their best through physical activity.

Statistics show eight in 10 Australian children are not active enough and **Sport Australia CEO Kate Palmer** said it was especially crucial to help children develop physical literacy - the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for healthy lives.

"Physical literacy is far bigger than just teaching our children how to play sport, it's about putting them on the path to healthier, happier and more active lives," Palmer said.

"You don't give a young child a book and expect them to understand it confidently without first teaching them how to read, so why can't we place a greater emphasis on teaching every child to be active, which is a fundamental skill that will benefit them every day, for the rest of their lives?"

"Society often talks about the role of physical activity in combatting health issues like obesity, which is true, but there's so much more to be gained by teaching our kids the necessary skills to be active, including improvement to mental health. That means things like helping kids learn better in school, building their confidence, self-esteem and motivation, helping them form social connections and friendships, plus boosting their strategic and critical thinking skills.

"Physically literacy is about holistic development – physically, psychologically, socially and cognitively.

"The Australian Government has set a goal in the national sport plan to decrease physical inactivity by 15 per cent by 2030, and so improving physical literacy in children is vital. The quality of life for this generation and for future generations depends on it."

The Position Statement complements Sport Australia's release earlier this year of *The Australian Physical Literacy Framework*.

Some 50 sports and physical activity providers have already added their endorsement to the Position Statement, including the below organisations:

**Craig Tiley, CEO of Tennis Australia:** "The Physical Literacy framework will help provide kids with the necessary tools to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. Tennis is a sport which can be played for life by everyone and it all starts in schools where children are given their first taste of how sport can contribute so much more to their lives."

**Football Federation Australia (FFA) CEO David Gallop AM:** "FFA is working closely with Sport Australia and football stakeholders in redeveloping its Whole of Football Schools Framework, linked to the Sporting Schools program, to align with physical literacy outcomes. A strategic objective for Football in Schools will be to get more kids active and developing social skills through quality football program experiences."



**Todd Greenberg, CEO of the National Rugby League:** “This framework lays the platform for happier, healthier and more engaged communities. The NRL congratulates Sport Australia on this initiative. As a code, we are committed to delivering both physical and psychological health benefits through the various contact and non-contact forms of our game across a variety of age groups.”

**Raelene Castle ONZM, CEO of Rugby Australia:** “We understand the importance of sport in the lives of all Australians and the role it has in developing our young people not just physically but also developing them socially, cognitively and psychologically. Rugby has always seen its role in our communities as building good people and strong communities and this is why we are fully supportive of Sport Australia’s Position Statement on Physical Literacy.”

**John Stokes, CEO of The Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation:** ACHPER believes Physical Literacy is a concept that can play an important role in the promotion of active and healthy living across the lifespan. Whilst Physical literacy is a lifelong process, the development of physical literacy capabilities begins early in life.”

**Dr Natasha Schranz, Co-Chair of Active Healthy Kids Australia:** “Developing a person’s physical literacy across the lifespan is crucial if we want more Australians to live active, healthy and happy lives. The leadership Sport Australia has shown in this space has created a strong foundation on which we can strive to be better and move forward.”

**NHMRC Senior Research Fellow at the University of Newcastle Professor David Lubans:** “Physical inactivity is a global problem and helping young Australians to improve their physical literacy should be a national priority.”

For more information on *The Australian Physical Literacy Framework* and to access the Sport Australia Position Statement on Physical Literacy visit [www.sportaus.gov.au/physical\\_literacy](http://www.sportaus.gov.au/physical_literacy)

### **Position Statement on Physical Literacy**

*Sport Australia is committed to improving the lives of all Australians through sport and physical activity. We want more Australians moving more often because we know the enormous benefits to our health and wellbeing – physically, socially, psychologically and cognitively.*

*Success depends on generational change, with an emphasis on young Australians. Today’s environment and increasingly sedentary lifestyles mean many children are missing out on learning fundamental movement skills, like how to run, throw, kick, catch or jump. This is a vital first step in developing the physical literacy required to get Australians moving more.*

*Physical literacy is about developing knowledge and behaviours that give children the motivation and confidence to enjoy active lifestyles. Establishing active habits in children sets them on the path to happier and healthier lives, paving the way for a more productive Australia.*

*Educators, coaches and families all play a crucial role in promoting and developing physical literacy in children. This can be achieved through quality physical education, school and community sport programs and embracing daily play and physical activity.*

*Movement skills, like numeracy, reading and writing, can be learned. Research shows that children who engage in regular physical activity and improve their physical literacy, reap the numerous health benefits and also learn better academically.*

*Sport Australia wants all young Australians to benefit from these opportunities. We are committed to leading and collaborating with the sport, education and health sectors to ensure physical literacy is a core component of every child’s development and education.*

*Through this commitment we will strive to create a healthier generation of more active Australians.*

