

SPORTING Schools



EVALUATION OF THE SPORTING SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Key findings for Sports



89% or more of people using Sporting Schools strongly endorse the program and want to stay involved

"This program is fantastic for kids who don't choose to do sport normally... It's actually been brilliant ... you're all in groups and everyone has a different skill set and everyone gets to have a turn."

Teacher

What's working well?



School staff like that Sporting Schools benefits children through:

- > increased physical activity
- > the chance to try different sports
- > the impact on their health and well-being



Children enjoy Sporting Schools most when it:

- > Avoids drills and emphasises games
- > Allows children to practice the sport at their own pace and according to their own ability level
- > Allows for at least one 'match' where they can use the skills they had learned.



The program is most successful when it:

- > Delivers a well-designed junior product
- > Is delivered by an experienced, trained and organised coach
- > Provides parents with written information about pathways for participation in community sport

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Building on success

Creating more consistent, high quality experiences benefits everyone involved in Sporting Schools. The evaluation highlights opportunities to improve the way we deliver sport in schools, including:

Product design

Delivering junior products in Sporting Schools that are designed specifically for schools. The best products:

- > emphasise a games-based approach to learning,
- > minimise waiting times,
- > explicitly promote inclusivity, and
- > are suitable for large mixed-ability groups of varying ages, including being adaptable to different skill levels.



Equipment

Providing flexibility to allow schools to choose packages (with or without equipment) that meet their needs.



Value for money packages

Considering what schools determine is value for money when developing Sporting Schools packages. The top four considerations for schools are:

1. Total no. of children participating
2. Total no. of sessions
3. Total no. coaching hours
4. Lesson plans and games ideas for school to keep



Communication between school and sport

Communicating with the school prior to commencing program delivery is crucial to:

- > Understanding the school's needs and characteristics
- > Agreeing on the objectives of the program
- > Establishing expectations for delivery



Pathways to community participation

Communicating to families about opportunities for ongoing community participation.

50% of external coaches said they communicated directly with parents about opportunities, either verbally, or in writing. However 26% of teachers saw the coach do this, and 16% of children said they were given something to take home to their parents



Coach skills

Ensuring coaches delivering in schools have qualities that are highly valued by schools. The top six coach qualities for schools are:

1. Ability to get all children participating
2. Coach's approachability and enthusiasm level
3. Flexibility to adapt the program to the group
4. Behaviour management and large group control skills
5. Deep knowledge and understanding of the sport
6. Deep knowledge and understanding of effective teaching methods



Coach development

While 85% of external coaches are trained in the rules and techniques of sport:

- > 66% are trained to encourage participation,
- > 68% in making sport fun for children,
- > 59% in effective teaching methods for children,
- > 51% in behaviour management and large group skills, and
- > 48% in teaching fundamental movement skills



Benefits of co-delivery

Engaging teachers as co-deliverers of the program enhances two-way knowledge transfer. In schools where this happens:

- > Schools value game ideas and information about sport techniques
- > Teachers view Sporting Schools as an opportunity for them as well as their students
- > Coaches are more effective at engaging and teaching children



The Australian Sports Commission engaged ORIMA Research to undertake an independent national evaluation of the Sporting Schools program during 2016.

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