EVALUATION OF THE SPORTING SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Key findings for Sports

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 wellbeing

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

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

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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.

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

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