



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

Active After-school Communities

Helping kids and communities get active

Fact sheet



What is the Active After-school Communities program?

Active After-school Communities (AASC) is a national program that provides primary school-aged children with access to free, structured physical activity programs in the after-school timeslot of 3.00pm to 5.30pm. The program is designed to engage traditionally non-active children in structured physical activities and to build pathways with local community organisations, including sporting clubs.

What were the key factors that prompted the development of the Active After-school Communities program?

- The increase in rates of childhood obesity and sedentary behaviour
- Societal changes that have impacted on the ability of families to support extracurricular activities
- The decline in daily physical education in Australian schools due to crowded curriculum

Who can be involved in the Active After-school Communities program?

The program is open to all Australian primary schools and childcare benefit-approved out of school hours care services (OSHCS). Approved long day care and family day care services may also apply, subject to meeting the following requirements:

- The children participating in the program are primary school-aged children only
- The program delivered is offered in the after-school timeslot
- The site has access to suitable facilities to conduct the proposed program.

What are the objectives of the Active After-school Communities program?

- To enhance the physical activity levels of Australian primary school-aged children through a nationally coordinated program
- To provide increased opportunities for inclusive participation in quality, safe and fun structured physical activity
- To stimulate local community involvement in sport and structured physical activity

What is the emphasis of the Active After-school Communities program?

- To encourage local community partnerships
- To promote a local community approach to increase participation in structured physical activity
- To provide schools/OSHCS with support to determine programs that meet the needs of their community
- To focus on mobility skills and motor-skill development
- To structure the program on Playing for Life principles and resources



What is structured physical activity?

In relation to the AASC program, structured physical activity consists of modified sporting games and other energetic activities that are organised and managed by AASC registered deliverers.

What is Playing for Life?

Playing for Life is an approach to coaching that uses games as the focus of development. By concentrating on game-based activities, children are able to:

- develop skills in a realistic and enjoyable context, rather than practising them in isolation and from a technical perspective
- engage in dynamic game-based activities that use a fun approach to developing a range of motor skills.

Will there be a cost to families for their children to be involved in the program?

The AASC program is a free service, as part of the Australian Government's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of Australian children. Where children are enrolled in an OSHCS, the program will not incur any additional costs above the cost of the child care.

What are the parameters for delivery of the program in schools/OSHCS?

The program:

- will be delivered in the after-school timeslot of 3.00pm to 5.30pm
- must offer between 2–3 sessions per week
- will require a minimum of 15 participants per session.

It is important to note that these parameters may be modified where necessary to meet local needs (for example, remote/Indigenous communities, low enrolment numbers, etc.).



Who will deliver the program?

Deliverers must be registered with the Australian Sports Commission to be able to deliver programs in schools/OSHCS. Anyone may apply for registration — school teachers, OSHCS staff, development officers from national and state sporting organisations, local club personnel, local government staff, parents, private providers, university students, high school students, etc.

How can schools/OSHCS become involved?

During Term 3, all Australian primary schools and childcare benefit-approved OSHCS will be sent an expression of interest form inviting them to participate in the AASC program during 2008.

How will schools/OSHCS be selected?

Where the number of expressions of interest exceed the capacity for a given region, schools/OSHCS will be selected against the following criteria:

- Equitable regional representation
- Diversity and equity across identified parameters, including socioeconomic status and school/OSHCS type
- Capacity to meet the AASC program objectives based on the details provided within the expression of interest
- Clearly identified supervision/coordination plan to run the program on an ongoing basis
- Date of receipt of expression of interest.

All expressions of interest will be assessed against the above criteria based on regional, state/territory and national need.

What do schools/OSHCS receive if they are selected to participate in the program?

Schools/OSHCS participating in the AASC program will have access to the following:

- Funding to support the delivery of the AASC program
- A free Playing for Life Resource Kit with over 100 Playing for Life game cards that can be used in the delivery of the AASC as well as by a school's teachers during curriculum time
- Free professional development for teachers and staff
- Australian Sports Commission registered coaches to assist with the delivery of the AASC
- The AASC Secure Web Gateway, available only to AASC schools/OSHCS and registered deliverers
- Ongoing support provided by an Australian Sports Commission-appointed regional coordinator.

What is the role of the regional coordinator?

The role of the regional coordinator is to:

- link suitable Australian Sports Commission registered deliverers from the community with the school/OSHCS to meet their program requirements
- assist schools/OSHCS to plan and develop suitable programs to engage traditionally non-active children
- train and identify suitable deliverers in the community to meet the quality standards set by the program
- monitor, assess and provide feedback to deliverers on the quality of program delivery
- explore and identify opportunities for unique community initiatives to enhance the objectives of the program.



Who decides what programs are delivered in the school/OSHCS?

The school/OSHCS, in consultation with their regional coordinator, determines what structured physical activity programs are delivered. These may include modified junior sport programs or multi-skill based activities. The only requirement is that the school/OSHCS use Australian Sports Commission registered deliverers. The choice will be determined by a number of factors, including environment, age/ability level of children, identified barriers to involvement in physical activity, inclusion principles, special-need considerations and local community resources.

Who assumes the duty of care for the students?

As the AASC program provides a grant to the school/OSHCS to assist with the delivery of their proposed physical activity program, the responsibility and duty of care rests with the school/OSHCS.

Conditions of the grant will require that the school/OSHCS, in their proposal, demonstrate how they will meet their duty-of-care requirements. It is important the school/OSHCS verify that their insurance covers all activities engaged in as part of their program and that they have coverage for volunteers. It is also important that school/OSHCS staff appropriately supervise the roles and responsibilities given to volunteers and ensure they are set according to the volunteers' capabilities.

To obtain further information on the program, visit the AASC web site (www.ausport.gov.au/aasc) or contact the regional coordinator in your area.

