

ACHPER NATIONAL POSITION STATEMENT:

Support of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education

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| Date developed: | November 17, 2014 | Review date: | NRF, 2017 |
| Audience: | Teachers, parents and caregivers, school principals and administrators, kindred scientific, professional and service organisations | | |
| Principle Positions: | <p>The position of ACHPER toward the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (HPE) learning area is briefly summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACHPER asserts that all young people in Australia are entitled to be educated in the area of HPE. • ACHPER considers that the Australian Curriculum: HPE was developed by an inclusive and extensive consultation process and deserves the opportunity to be fully supported, endorsed and then implemented in all Australian schools. • ACHPER states that the purpose of the HPE learning area is to provide ongoing, developmentally appropriate and explicit learning about health and movement. • ACHPER supports the Australian Curriculum: HPE in its current form with curriculum content identifying what teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn in HPE from Foundation to Year 10 (F-10). • ACHPER asserts that it is necessary for schools to provide opportunities for physical activity participation throughout the entire school year. • ACHPER supports the use of focus areas in the HPE curriculum to meet the individual needs of students. • ACHPER states that teachers are responsible for the delivery of HPE curriculum and have to ensure that any level of engagement in programs delivered by external providers enhance existing HPE programs within the school. • ACHPER advocates for high quality well-resourced professional development opportunities for teachers focused on improving confidence and competence in planning and delivery of HPE curriculum content and knowledge of valid and authentic assessment practices in HPE. • ACHPER recognises the need for further development and enhancement of teacher preparation in the University sector in relation to delivery, planning, programming and assessment of HPE curriculum content F-10. • ACHPER supports an on-going review process by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), including continuing consultation with ACHPER as the leading professional association for Health and Physical Education. • ACHPER supports future evidence-based endeavours to strengthen the Australian Curriculum: HPE. | | |
| Rationale: | <p>ACHPER is the leading professional association in Australia representing the HPE learning area in Australian schools. This Position Statement has been developed for the purpose of stating ACHPER's position toward the Australian Curriculum: HPE. ACHPER presents this position for the benefit of its members as well as for productive and ongoing future partnerships with HPE learning area stakeholders.</p> <p>ACHPER's position is based on the knowledge that an educated nation, comprising of active and healthy young people, is a strong investment in the future of the Australian population. ACHPER recognises that the school is a significant setting to support children's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development with specific</p> | | |

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| | <p>opportunities to strengthen the health and wellbeing of young people. The assertions of this position statement have strong foundations in research related to children and adolescents and also in current curriculum.</p> |
| <p>Definition of the Health and Physical Education learning area:</p> | <p>Health and Physical Education is the curriculum area that engages students in worthwhile learning experiences to develop skills, knowledge, understanding, self-efficacy and dispositions that will enable young people to live healthier, safe and active lives.</p> <p>The Health and Physical Education learning area draws on a number of sub-disciplines including, but not limited to physical education, health education, personal development, outdoor education and recreation, nutrition, home economics and dance. Each of these is acknowledged as providing distinct learning opportunities. Contexts of physical activity and sport are central to HPE, but HPE is distinguished from 'physical activity' and 'sport' by virtue of its core focus on learning.</p> |
| <p>Background Information:</p> | <p>The <i>Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians</i> is strong and clear in its intention for all young people to be supported through education to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2008). The Australian Curriculum: HPE has been developed with this goal central to its construction and applied significant review to all iterations of the curriculum, which strengthened the curriculum through rigour and validity to the educational needs of all young people in Australia.</p> <p>ACHPER considers that the Australian Curriculum: HPE was developed by an inclusive and extensive consultation process and deserves the opportunity to be fully supported, endorsed and then implemented in all Australian schools. ACHPER representatives and members from all States and Territories worked closely with ACARA in the development of the Australian Curriculum: HPE and were included in all aspects of the design and consultative process. ACHPER acknowledges that ACHPER feedback was highly regarded by ACARA and ACHPER also recognises that ACHPER members are individuals with their own perspective on aspects of the curriculum, which at times can be in conflict with the views of ACHPER as an organisation.</p> <p>ACHPER asserts that the purpose of the HPE learning area is to provide ongoing, developmentally appropriate and explicit learning about health and movement. An evidence based HPE learning area curriculum teaches students how to enhance their own and others health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity participation. ACHPER believes that the benefits of a strong and well-supported HPE curriculum will strengthen lifelong health-enhancing decisions and impact on all young people and communities beyond school. ACHPER acknowledges that the HPE learning area has an important role to play in the advancement of life skills. The two strands of the Australian Curriculum: HPE support a wide variety of learning opportunities and authentic integration of the seven general capabilities including literacy, numeracy, ICT capability, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, and ethical understanding. The diversity and life-based orientation of the Australian Curriculum: HPE supports natural alignment with cross-curriculum priorities and other learning areas.</p> <p>ACHPER supports the Australian Curriculum: HPE in its current form with curriculum content identifying what teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn in HPE from Foundation to Year 10 (F-10). Recognising the position/view of the Students First <i>Review of the Australian Curriculum Final Report (2014)</i>, ACHPER strongly advocates for HPE curriculum content in Foundation to Year 10. ACHPER believes implementation of the Australian Curriculum: HPE in the early years of schooling Foundation – Year 2 (F-2) is imperative to ensure that holistic child development outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) are transitioned into the Australian Curriculum through HPE. This includes ongoing</p> |

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| | <p>development of children’s social and emotional competence, language and communication skills, fine and gross motor development, creative thinking, health, safety and wellbeing. Building on the foundation early years, the learning opportunities in HPE curriculum content and contexts will support young people with informed decision-making and contemporary skills to navigate their life journey.</p> <p>ACHPER asserts that it is necessary for schools to provide opportunities for physical activity participation throughout the year. Australia’s Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines highlight the need for minimisation of sedentary behaviour and engagement in regular physical activity to gain health and wellbeing benefits (Australian Government, 2014a). Childhood and adolescence are important periods for establishing lifelong physical activity participation by fostering opportunities to appreciate and value movement.</p> <p>ACHPER supports the use of focus areas “providing teachers with the flexibility to personalise learning and cater for the diverse needs of students across Australia” (ACARA, 2014). The Australian Curriculum: HPE outlines focus areas to provide the breadth of learning across F-10 (ACARA, 2014). The variety of contexts within these focus areas is flexible and responsive to the needs of learners and ensures that students learn in a range of contexts.</p> <p>ACHPER states that teachers are responsible for the delivery of HPE curriculum and have to ensure that any level of engagement in programs delivered by outside providers enhance existing HPE programs within the school.</p> <p>ACHPER believes that learning in HPE is enhanced when teachers are cognisant of the five interrelated propositions underpinning the Australian Curriculum: HPE; focussing on the educative purposes, developing health literacy, including a critical inquiry approach, taking a strengths based approach and valuing movement. ACHPER advocates for high quality, well-resourced teacher professional development opportunities focused on improving teacher confidence and competence in HPE curriculum content, planning, programming, assessment and reporting. This is essential for supporting contextualised understanding and application of the propositions.</p> <p>ACHPER emphasises the critical need for the tertiary education sector to establish teacher confidence and competence to teach the Australian Curriculum: HPE F-10. ACHPER recognises the need for further development and enhancement of teacher preparation in the tertiary education sector in relation to HPE curriculum content F-10. ACHPER supports the inclusion of HPE curriculum within all early childhood, primary and secondary teacher education courses.</p> <p>ACHPER asserts that learning in HPE is an entitlement for all young people in Australia and critical for physical, social and emotional development. Learning in HPE should be a regular experience for all students occurring every week of the school year. ACHPER supports an on-going review process by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), with part of the process including continuing consultation with ACHPER as the leading professional association for Health and Physical Education. ACHPER supports future evidence-based endeavours to strengthen the Australian Curriculum: HPE.</p> |
| <p>Links to Curriculum:</p> | <p>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2014), <i>Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</i>.</p> <p>Rationale, Aims and Content structure</p> |
| <p>References and Further Reading:</p> | <p>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2012), <i>Australian Curriculum Design Paper v3.1</i>.</p> |

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| | <p>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2012) <i>Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education</i>.</p> <p>Australian Government. (2014a). <i>Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines</i></p> <p>Australian Government. (2014b), <i>Students First Review of the Australian Curriculum Final Report</i>.</p> <p>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (2008), <i>Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians</i>.</p> |
| Appendices: | None. |