

International Position Statement on Physical Education

November 2010

Physical education develops physical competence so that all children can move efficiently, effectively and safely and understand what they are doing. The outcome, physical literacy, is an essential basis for their full development and achievement.

Physical education in school is the most effective and inclusive means of providing all children, whatever their ability/disability, sex, age, cultural, race/ethnicity, religious or social background, with the skills, attitudes, values, knowledge and understanding for lifelong participation in physical activity and sport.

It is the only school subject whose primary focus is on the body, physical activity, physical development and health; and helps children to develop the patterns of and interest in physical activity, which are essential for healthy development and which lay the foundations for adult healthy lifestyles.

It contributes to children's confidence and self esteem; enhances social development by preparing children to cope with competition, winning and losing; and cooperation and collaboration. It is increasingly being used as a tool in development, including recovery from trauma and conflict; and encouragement for school attendance and retention.

ICSSPE reaffirms the 1978 UNESCO International Charter on Physical Education and Sport and the Berlin Agenda for Governments, agreed at the 1st World Summit on Physical Education in 1999 in Berlin, and endorsed by the Declaration of Punta del Este at MINEPS III in the same year, which calls on governments' commitment to:

- implement policies for physical education as a human right for all children;
- recognise that good quality physical education depends on well qualified educators and scheduled time within the curriculum, both of which are possible to provide even when other resources like equipment are in short supply;
- invest in initial and in-service professional training and development for educators;
- support research to improve the effectiveness and quality of physical education;
- work with international financial institutions to ensure physical education is included as part of their aid programmes in education;
- recognise the distinctive role of physical education in health, overall development and safe, supportive communities.