

Title of Practice

The Physical Schoolbag

Short description

The Physical School bag is a program that encourages schoolchildren to be more physically active. The program offers various activities, such as ball sports, games, orientation activities, relay race, sensory exercises, activities with music and dancing. There are also courses that provide a basic understanding of the relationship between health and lifestyle, and activities involving making equipment from 'worthless materials'. The courses lasts from 1 hour to 3- 4 hours and are specially adapted for school needs. The activities are planned with a focus on the fun of movements and ability to cope and various activity themes. The program has a website with information about the project, courses, lectures, idea bank and other useful links.

Schools and staff at after-school (recreational) programs can book various activity courses, teachers' training courses and lectures. There are also education courses for adults who have responsibility for children and youth with disabilities. Each participating school are given a backpack containing a portfolio called "Learning in the outdoors" that provides concrete tips on hundreds of outdoor activities. Through providing courses in physical activity, nature experiences and increasing environmental awareness among children, the program hopes to inspire children to become more active in their everyday life and use the outdoors for more environmental friendly activities.

Practice Topic

Moving- Active mobility

Practice Characteristics

Neighborhood, Local/Regional Intervention, national, public

Country/Countries of implementation

Norway

Aims and Objectives

The Physical Schoolbag aims to improve and increase physical activity levels among schoolchildren, through providing support to the school staff to enhance their expertise within the topic of physical activity and other activities.

The specific objectives are:

- Schools should have good knowledge in physical education and physical activity, and promote measures of physical activity for children and youth.
- Schoolyards should stimulate versatile play and physical activity in the outdoors.
- The school should be aware of local facilities for physical activity to contribute to participation during leisure time.
- Parents should have knowledge on the importance of opportunities for physical activity in everyday life.
- Employees of school health services should be a driving force for physical activity for children and youth.
- To offer courses and skills development for more physical activity in schools.

Target Group

Primary /lower secondary school children, teachers, and staff at after-school (recreational) programs.

Practice Status

Ongoing

Start and Completion dates

2007 – today

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

The physical schoolbag provide courses in physical activity at schools, offering ideas to inspire and encourage children to be more active in their everyday life. To increase environmental awareness among children, in order for them to use the local area and outdoors for more environmental friendly activities.

Effects of the Practice on:

Health and Wellbeing	The Physical Schoolbag program encourages schoolchildren to be more physically active, and facilitate measures for children to meet the government recommendations of a minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical activity.
Vulnerable populations	The Physical Schoolbag program provides a "free" form of physical activity, and involves children from all social groups. Outdoor activities allow children to experience the nature, which can contribute to new social relations.
Environment	The program wants to inspire and encourage children to be more active in their everyday life. To increase environmental awareness among children, in order for them to use the local area and outdoors for more environmental friendly activities. There are also courses with activities involving making equipment from 'worthless materials', to help increase the children's awareness of recycling.

Who implemented the practice

The main organizations involved in the implementation of the program; are the Municipality of Trondheim, Sør-Trøndelag City Council and Sport club. The Sør-Trøndelag City Council is the project leader of the program. The program was initiated due to studies showing that many Norwegian children do not meet the government recommendations on a minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

Stakeholders and involved sectors

The stakeholders and involved sectors in the program includes; the Sør-Trøndelag County, Trondheim Municipality, Sør-Trøndelag idrettskrets and Trondheimsregionens friluftsråd.

Financial support

The program is funded through a joint venture between Sør-Trøndelag County, the Municipality of Trondheim and Sør-Trøndelag idrettskrets.

The science behind the practice

The program is based on evidence from studies suggesting that a minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical activity is beneficial for the health of children and youth.

Main Activities

The main activities implemented in the Physical schoolbag program includes:

- School visits with activities from voluntary groups and organisations, adapted for schools.
- Courses to increase physical activity in schools.
- Continuing education offer to physical education teachers.
- Lecturers to staff and parents.
- Advice and guidance to preparations and grants for good schoolyards.
- Encouragement to municipalities to obtain an overview of the local services for physical activity, sport and outdoor activities.
- Further development of the website for physical activity in schools in Sør-Trøndelag.
- Arranged meetings and conferences with up to date knowledge and experience of physical activity in schools.

Main results

The feedbacks from the evaluation indicate that the physical schoolbag is a good option for schools and most pupils, especially for pupils who do not enjoy physical education classes and sports training. Although the evaluation, could not conclude on the extent of impact that the physical schoolbag had on the pupils' physical activity level. It underlines that enjoyment and learning activities are of fundamental importance for increasing children's physical activity levels, both in the short and long term.

Evaluation of the Practice

The evaluation was conducted with the use of a short self-assessment form, which was given to pupils and instructors of the program. In addition to telephone interviews with principals and teachers.

Pupil evaluation: The focus of the evaluation were the pupil's experiences of the activities from the Physical school bag, how pleased they were with it, and if they felt they learned something from the activities. This was evaluated with the help of a short self-assessment form, consisting of five questions. For each question, the pupils would respond on a scale from 1 to 7 on how well the statements would suit them.

Instructor and school evaluation: For each activity group, the instructors answered a self-assessment form with questions about the duration of activity, school class, number of pupils and their involvement. There was also a question about which teachers participated in the activities.

Telephone interviews were also conducted with principals and teachers to capture their experience of the activities.

Challenges and Barriers of the practice

A potential barrier might be trying to establish of a collaboration between different stakeholders, and maintaining a collaboration between several stakeholders over time. In addition to potential challenges related to communication, time, process management and efficiency assessment.

INHERIT Perspective

This project has been chosen for inclusion because it has the potential to improve and increase physical activity levels among schoolchildren, through providing support to the school staff within the topic of physical activity. The program/project provides physical activity courses and outdoor activities at school, offering ideas to inspire and encourage children to be more active in their everyday life. It has the potential to increase environmental awareness among children, by allowing children to experience the nature and local area. The program has a clear emphasis on promoting more healthy and environmentally friendly behaviours.

More Information

- [The Physical schoolbag webpage](#)
- **Reports** (only in Norwegian):
[Den fysiske skolesekken - Pilot i Trondheim kommune 2007-2010](#)
Ingebrigtsen, J. E. & Aspvik, N.P.(2012). [Den fysiske skolesekken -en evalueringsrapport fra arbeidet i Sør-Trøndelag, høsten 2011](#)

Contact

Contact person: Astri Heide Vaskinn

Email: astri-heide.vaskinn@trondheim.kommune.no and post@denfysiskeskolesekken.no