Planning Safe Online PE Programs - Processes and Procedures

- School administrators, Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum leaders, and Teachers should work collaboratively to establish online learning processes and procedures that are aligned with school board policies.
- Begin online learning with a high degree of structure and routine to allow students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and apply new safety practices to online physical education participation. Begin with activities that:
    - require minimal or no equipment (for example, fitness activities);
    - require limited space for participation;
    - can be done alone or with a partner (for example, from the same household); and
    - are low to moderate intensity levels (for example, elevated breathing and heart rates).

Facilities

Develop processes and procedures to assist the parent/guardian/student in determining that the online location (indoors/outdoors) is safe for participation in physical education. This should include:

Outdoors

Parent/guardian/caregiver/student should:

- check for and remove potential obstacles (for example, lawn furniture, debris);
- avoid areas where it may not be safe to be physically active (for example, areas with holes, hills, close to traffic);
- check that the area has safe footing (for example, not slippery, uneven terrain); and
- check school board policies and procedures for:
    - environmental protocols during participation outdoors. Provide links to the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPASSE) or school board policies for situations when extreme weather conditions occur.

- student use of outdoor space during physical education (for example, students walking, running in the neighbourhood, use of parks/community facilities).
- (*For secondary*) Discuss with student/parent/guardian the local community facilities (for example, green space, basketball courts) available for asynchronous physical education activities and procedures required for participation.

Indoors

Parent/guardian/caregiver/student should:

- check the environmental conditions are suitable for participation (for example, the indoor temperature is comfortable for activity; if air conditioning is not available, open windows);
- check that there is enough room in the activity area for the student to be physically active;
- remove obstacles and potential hazards from the space (for example, tables, chairs);
- avoid areas that may not be safe (for example, close to doorways/stairs); and
- check that the area has safe footing and good traction.

Activities

When planning the learning activities for online physical education, take into consideration:

- the age and readiness of the students to participate in physical education;
- amount of space available for participation (for example, small stationary space, large outdoor space);
- the level of intensity appropriate for the space available (for example, low to moderate for limited space, moderate to high for larger indoor/outdoor spaces);
- the type of supervision that is required for the activity in the online learning environment (consult the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education (OPASSE) sport/activity pages for supervision requirements);
- the availability of equipment; and
- the availability of other participants (for example, members of the household) if additional participants are required.

Equipment

- Start with activities that require minimal or no equipment (for example, fitness activities) or physical activities where a range of equipment can be used successfully in the activity (for example, tennis balls, or other small balls).

- Consider developing an equipment list for online physical education kits. Check that all students have access to the equipment requested, and if not, establish a process to ensure all students have equitable access to the equipment and are able to participate fully. The kits could include:
    - (*for elementary*) simple physical education manipulatives (for example, skipping rope, utility balls of different sizes, disc, bean bag(s)).
    - (*for secondary*) a variety of physical education equipment (for example, skipping rope, tennis ball, disc, fitness band).
- Encourage students to have a water bottle or access to water to remain hydrated throughout their learning time.