

Fitness Activities

SECONDARY - CURRICULAR 2023

- This page applies to Aerobics, Circuit Training, etc., using a variety of equipment (for example, chinning bar, stability ball, slides, steps, tubing, medicine ball, balance board and shields).
- Consult [Risk Management](#).
- The safety standards for this activity must be presented to the activity provider prior to the activity taking place. The activity provider must meet the minimum requirements listed in the safety standards. For more information on planning trips using outside providers, consult [Outside Activity Providers](#).
- Also consult [Safety in Fitness Rooms](#).

Equipment

- Determine that all equipment is safe for use (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters). Students must be encouraged to report equipment problems to the teacher.
- All of the fitness equipment must be appropriate in size and weight for the student.
- All of the fitness equipment must be inspected on a regular basis and be in good repair.
- The electrical equipment must be in good working order.
- Steps and/or slides must be equipped with non-slip tread.
- Tubing/elastic strips must be appropriate for fitness level of participant (for example, proper tension and length).
- Place a utility mat directly below high apparatus (for example, chinning bar, peg board).
- If using free weights, consult [Weight Training](#).

- Students may use personal audio devices with headphones after initial instruction on any equipment that does not require a spotter or ongoing instruction, or when students do not need to be aware of their external surroundings (for example, traffic on streets). The personal audio device must not pose a safety hazard (for example, headphone cord length).

Refer to the [First Aid](#) section for first aid equipment requirements.

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

- Appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn.
- No exposed jewellery is permitted with the exception of soft/flexible bands on fitness monitors.
- When long hair poses a safety risk it must be secured. Devices (for example, hair pins, elastics and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Students must not participate when the length of fingernails poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

Facilities

- Determine that all facilities are safe for use. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the teacher.
- Playing surface and surrounding area must be free of all obstacles and must provide safe footing and traction.
- To provide free flow of motion, allow adequate space between fitness activities, equipment and walls/doors.
- Limit activities on stages to those that are stationary (for example, tubing, chinning bar, stretching).
- Fitness room/weight room must be locked when unsupervised.
- Consult [Safety in Fitness Rooms](#), for safety precautions when using non-gym areas.

- Holes, hazards (for example, glass, rocks, sprinkler heads, sewer grates), and severely uneven surfaces must be identified. The conditions must be made safe or the activity must be modified or moved to a safe location. Hazards which cannot be removed must be brought to the attention of the participating students. Teacher must notify principal/designate of unsafe field conditions.
- Walls, stages, equipment, trees, and posts must not be used as turning points, finish lines, end zones, or boundaries. Establish a clearly delineated boundary line away from the hazards, using visual markers (for example, lines, pylons), to prevent contact/collision.
- Consult **General Safety Standards for Facilities** for the opening and closing of gymnasium divider doors/curtains.

Outdoor running

- Teachers must do a safety check 'walk through' in order to identify potential problems prior to initial use of route or course.
- Teachers must outline to the students the route or course (for example, notice of areas to approach with caution) before the start of the run.
- Teachers must determine that students are not crossing busy intersections unless directly supervised.

Indoor Running - Use of Hallways and Stairs

- At turnaround or end points, designate a safety or slow down zone (for example, using pylons).
- Designate a safety zone (for example, using pylons) for all doors that open out into the hall.
- Where school hallways or stairways are used for fitness training, appropriate safety measures must be in place:
 - hallway protrusions must be clearly marked
 - inform appropriate staff members of times and locations of fitness training
 - no running to take place where showcases presents a hazard
 - hall double doors have to be secured open
 - monitors must be positioned at corners

- floor surface must be dry and provide good footing
- stairways must have a railing
- students must be instructed on safety procedure for running stairs (for example, one step at a time, blind spots, spatial awareness, using railings for balance, maintaining body control, respect for personal space)

Environmental Considerations

- When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (for example, thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), teachers must take into consideration their school board/school's protocols and procedures related to:
 - environmental conditions (consult [Weather](#)); and
 - insects (for example, mosquitoes and ticks [consult the school/school board's protocols and/or regional Public Health Department's website]).
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, sun burn, heat stroke).
- At all times the school board's weather and insect procedures are the minimum standards. In situations where a higher standard of care is presented (for example, outside activity providers, facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.

Special Rules/Instructions

- Be aware of students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. Consult [Medical Conditions](#).
- Students must not participate in the activity until they receive information on concussion prevention specific to the activity, inherent risks of the activity (for example, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks), and procedures and rules for safe play. Students must receive instruction on the

importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.

- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for communication with parents/guardians, the location of an off-site activity, means of transportation, supervision ratios, and parent/guardian permission.
- Activities must be modified according to the age, ability level, language, and experience of students, number of participants, and the facility available.
- Previous training, fitness level, and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.
- Activities must be based on skills that are taught.
- A proper warm-up and cool-down must be included.
- While moving, students must not be required to close their eyes or be blind-folded.
- Emphasize controlled movement when requiring students to walk or run backwards. Backward-running races are not permitted.
- Use proper progression of activities:
 1. warm-up
 2. muscle strength/endurance
 3. peak work
 4. stretching
 5. cool down
- Students must be matched with students of similar weight, height and skill level.
- Where fitness equipment is being used, (for example, stationary bicycle, medicine ball, chinning bar, tubing) students must be instructed in, and demonstrate competency in, the proper use of the equipment before using it independently.
- Stress correct body alignment for injury prevention.

- Permit students to work at personal levels of intensity (for example, students who can make responsible decisions related to low-impact to high-impact and low-intensity to high-intensity).
- Resistance training for the development of endurance can be done emphasizing high repetitions, low weights.
- A process must be in place to regularly disinfect equipment.
- A process must be in place where equipment needing repair is identified and removed from use.
- There is a minimum of 2 students in the fitness room at any one time.
- When a student displays hesitation (verbally or non-verbally) with participating, the teacher must determine the reason(s) for doubt. If the teacher believes that a potential hesitancy during the skill could put the student at risk, the student must be directed toward a more basic skill, or be permitted to select a role within the activity at their comfort level, including the choice to not participate.
- Prior to participation, the teacher must reference and apply their school board's policy on equity and inclusion as it affects student participation and makes appropriate accommodations/modifications to provide a safe learning environment. Consult the Intent subsection within the [About section](#).
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised.
- On-site supervision is required for initial instruction and use.
- In-the-area supervision after initial instruction.
- *Note:* Intramural/Club situations require in-the-area teacher supervision (even in situations where an outside instructor is present).

- The level of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity. The level of risk is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, and environmental conditions.
- A volunteer could assist in the supervision of physical education activities. Examples of volunteers are educational assistants, retired teachers, co-op students, parents/guardians, early childhood educators, and teacher candidates. Refer to your school board's policy regarding volunteers. These volunteers must be accompanied by a supervisor.
- A teacher who is providing instruction and is unfamiliar with the activity (for example, no recent experience) must refrain from teaching the activity until assistance is provided by an appropriately trained staff or training is received.
- Students must be informed that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without supervision. In addition to verbal communication, the doors must be locked or signs must be posted indicating that students are not allowed to use the gym unless appropriately supervised.

First Aid

- A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult [Sample First Aid Kit](#))
- A working communication device (for example, cell phone) must be accessible.
- Follow the school's first aid emergency response (consult [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)) and the school board's concussion protocol (consult [Concussions](#)).
- An emergency action plan and response to deal with evacuations and lock downs must be followed and communicated to students.

Definitions

- **In-charge Person:**

- Some activities refer to an “In-Charge” person. While the teacher is in-charge and responsible for the overall safety and well-being of students under their care, sometimes there are other personnel who must be identified as “In-Charge” related to specific situations (for example, a pool lifeguard). In activities where an “In-Charge” person is designated, that person, in consultation with the teacher, must make final decisions regarding safety of the students

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of an activity for regulation or direction. Activities, facilities, and equipment have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
- The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education designate three categories of supervision, Constant visual supervision, On-site supervision, and In-the-area supervision. The categories take into consideration the risk level of the activity, the participants’ skill level and the participants’ maturity. The three levels of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that an activity requires and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.

- **Supervisor:**

- A supervisor is defined as a teacher, vice-principal or principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school/school board. The supervisor is legally responsible for the students.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Constant Visual Supervision:**

- Constant visual supervision means that the teacher is physically present, watching the activity in question. Only one activity requiring “Constant visual” supervision may take place while other activities are going on.
- Curricular example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practising relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running

around the school. For high jump, the teacher is at the high jump area and is observing the activity.

- Intramural example: During a school outdoor special events day, some students are involved in parachute games, some in relay games, and others in a team scavenger hunt around the school. For parachute, the intramural supervisor is at the event and is observing activity.

○ **In-the-area Supervision:**

- In-the-area supervision means that the teacher could be in the gymnasium while another activity is taking place in an area adjacent to the gymnasium. In-the-area supervision requires the teacher to be readily accessible.
- In-the-area supervision occurs:
 - in activities in which students may be out of sight for periods of time and the location of the teacher is not nearby (for example, alpine skiing, cross-country running). At least one of the following criteria must be in place:
 - The teacher is circulating
 - The location of teacher has been communicated to students and volunteers
 - in single activities and those that may be combined (for example, other in- the- area activities such as badminton, table tennis, handball – wall) with the following criteria in place:
 - The teacher must be circulating between the activities and readily accessible
 - The teacher informs students of the location of the activities
- Curricular example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practising relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running around the school. For distance running, the students are running around the school and at times may be out of sight.

- Intramural example: During a school outdoor special events day, some students are involved in parachute games, some in relay games, and others in a team scavenger hunt around the school. For a scavenger hunt, the students are running around the school grounds and at times may be out of sight.
- **On-site Supervision:**
 - On-site supervision entails teacher presence but not necessarily constantly viewing one specific activity. Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (for example, equipment room) to the gym is considered part of “on-site supervision”.
 - Curricular example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practising relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running around the school. For a relay, the students are practising on the track and can be seen by the teacher who is with the high jumpers.
 - Intramural example: During a school outdoor special events day, some students are involved in parachute games, some in relay games, and others in a team scavenger hunt around the school. For relay games, the students are participating on the playground and can be seen by the intramural supervisor.

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