

# Fitness Activities

## SECONDARY - CURRICULAR 2025

- Consult [Disability-Centred Safety](#) if your groups of students include students with disabilities.
- 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

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- Determine that all equipment is safe (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters) and all assistive devices (e.g., a walker) are in good working condition and properly adjusted for the height and mobility needs of the student prior to participation.
- 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

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- 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

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- Determine that all facilities are safe and accessible for the students participating. 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. The Teacher must notify the 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

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- 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, poisonous plants).
- 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

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- 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 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.
- 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.

## Supervision

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- All activities must be supervised.
- The type 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.
- On-Site Supervision is required during the safety and initial skill instruction.
- On-Site Supervision is required for the duration of all other components of the activity (e.g., equipment setup and take down, warm-ups/cool downs, application of the skills and games).
- In-the-Area Supervision is required for the duration of all other components of the activity when the activities take place at a combination of locations.
- Where a Qualified Instructor is used and the Teacher is not directly with the Qualified Instructor, the Qualified Instructor must provide safety and initial skill instruction, and monitoring for the safe

application of skills and student behaviour for the duration of the activity.

- A Volunteer, under the direction of a Teacher, can monitor students during physical education activities. Refer to your school board's policy on Volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.
- Responsibilities must be clearly outlined for additional Teachers and Volunteers who are monitoring the activity.
- 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.

## First Aid

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- 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 lockdowns, including specific direction for participants with accessibility needs, must be followed and communicated to all students.☒

## Definitions

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- **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



- **Monitor:**

- An individual who assists the Teacher with a group of students, (e.g., Volunteer, Qualified Instructor) and has a responsibility to monitor student behaviors for the duration of the activity.

- **Monitoring:**

- The role of monitoring is to observe, identify, act, and report:
  - Observe: Observe with attention to detail the actions of the students.
  - Identify: Identify the student and the unsafe behaviour.
  - Act: Take appropriate actions to safeguard students and others (e.g., stop the activity).
  - Report: Provide the name of the student and the unsafe behaviour to the teacher for management and direction.

- **Outside Activity Provider:**

- A commercial company, volunteer organization, or individual, not associated with the school board, who possess the required qualifications to provide safety and initial skill instruction, and monitoring for the duration of an activity.

- **Qualified Instructor:**

- An individual who provides safety and skill instruction, and monitoring for an activity, and possesses the required qualifications (e.g., experience, certifications). This role could be fulfilled by a teacher, volunteer, or an employee of an outside provider. An instructor does not have the authority to supervise.

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of an activity for management 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 includes three Types of supervision, Direct Supervision, On-Site Supervision, and In-the-Area Supervision. These types of supervision

take into consideration the level of risk, which is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, the environmental conditions, the age, and developmental stage.

- The three types of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that activities require and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.
- Some activities in OPASSE transition from one type of supervision to another type of supervision (e.g., Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision OR On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision).

- **Teacher:**

- A person with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school/school board (i.e., teacher, vice-principal, principal). This person is legally responsible for the students and has the authority and responsibility to supervise.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Direct Supervision:**

- Direct Supervision requires that the Teacher is physically present at the activity, providing visual and verbal oversight for management and direction of both, the activity and student safety.
  - Provisos:
    - No other activity can occur when part of the activity or the entire activity is under Direct Supervision when there is only one Teacher supervising.
    - The Supervision section of the relevant activity safety standards page in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education describes when parts of an activity are under Direct Supervision.
    - Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for one activity and requires the Teacher to be present at that activity for management and direction.

- An activity may be under Direct Supervision:
      - During the entire duration of the activity;
      - During the set up and take down of equipment; .
      - During the safety and initial skill instruction;
      - During the performance/practice of the activity skill; and
      - When the activities transition from Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision.
- **In-the-Area Supervision:**
  - The Teacher is located in proximity to a combination of locations where the student activities take place, is circulating, and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
    - Provisos:
      - The Teacher is circulating between the activities occurring at separate locations, and is readily accessible, or the location of the Teacher is communicated to the student.
      - Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and skill and instruction and is monitoring at a combination of locations, the Teacher is located in proximity to where the student activities take place, is circulating between the activity locations, and is accessible for management and direction.
      - Students may be out of sight for periods of time.
  - An activity or a component of the activity is under In-the-Area Supervision:
    - Where the same activity is located in separate locations (e.g., Fitness activities);
    - Where two or more activities under In-the-Area Supervision occur in separate locations (e.g., Badminton, Table Tennis, Handball (Wall));

- Where the skill application of the activity takes place at a separate location from the teacher (e.g., Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine), Cycling, hiking on trails);
  - When the activities occur in double or triple gymnasiums; and
  - Where more than one Qualified Instructor is providing activities at a combination of locations.
  
- **On-Site Supervision:**
  - The Teacher is present at one location where the student activity takes place (e.g., gymnasium, sports field, climbing wall at an Outside Activity Provider’s facility, campsite) and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
    - **Provisos:**
      - Where more than one activity occurs in one location, the Teacher is circulating between the activities and is accessible for management and direction.
      - Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (e.g., equipment room, outdoor storage shed, boathouse, staff tent) is considered to be On-Site Supervision.
      - Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for an activity or a combination of activities at one location and the Teacher is present and is circulating and accessible for management and direction.
  - An activity may be under On-Site Supervision:
    - During the entire duration of the activity;
    - During the safety and initial skill instruction;
    - With activities using multiple stations while the Teacher is circulating;

- When combining two or more activities at one location while the Teacher is circulating; and
- When activities transition from On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision.

- **Volunteer:**

- A responsible adult (e.g., Educational Assistants, Retired Teachers, Co-op Students, Parents/Guardians, Teacher Candidates) approved by the Principal/Designate who is under the direction of a Teacher and has been instructed on their monitoring responsibilities. Refer to your school board's policy on volunteers assisting with student's physical activities.

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