

Active School Week

IDEAS

Planning an Active School Week

Active School Week (ASW) is about providing FUN and INCLUSIVE physical activity opportunities for ALL members of the school community. It is also a great way to make students and their families more aware of the physical activity opportunities available to them in their local communities

The following slides offer schools a selection of ideas that they might consider when planning their ASW programme.

For more ideas visit www.activeschoolflag.ie (Active School Week tab)

Tracksuits replace Uniforms

During ASW tracksuits replace uniforms making it easier for students to take part in as many events as possible. This extends to teachers and all staff members also.

Other Ideas – Design an ASW t-shirt, Jersey Day, Sports Fancy Dress Day, Colour Teams

Physical Activity as Homework

Traditional homework could be replaced by physical activity tasks during ASW.

In many primary schools the pupils on the ASF committee, assisted by teachers, design the homework tasks that are assigned to each of the different class groupings.

This is a VERY popular part of the ASW programme in many schools.

Wake Up – Shake Up

Early morning exercise which takes place either before school or at the start of the school day. Exercise leaders might include senior students, teachers, parents, local physical activity providers or local sports heroes.

Primary schools might consider inviting parents, grandparents, child minders and younger siblings to join in also.

Post primary schools might consider organising morning runs for teachers and students.

Active Travel

ASW provides a great opportunity to remind students and their families about the importance of active travel to and from school, if possible.

Scores on Doors - Classes record the numbers of students that use active travel during ASW and display their scores on doors. Active travel stickers could also be given out.

Other Ideas - 'Bling your Bike' parades, 'Funky Feet' competitions, road safety talks by local Gardaí , bicycle safety checks

Resources – visit www.activeschoolflag.ie (Resources – Active Travel – HSE resources)

Activity Breaks

Bizzy Breaks – The Irish Heart Foundation has developed two classroom based physical activity programmes suitable for primary schools. *Bizzy Breaks* (with CD) and *Bizzy Breaks for Rainy Days* (20 activities) available to buy from www.irisheart.ie

Desk Work Out - The Irish Heart Foundation has developed a desk work out suitable for adults and post primary students. The work out includes *shaker*, *stepper* and *strengtheners* exercises easily done from behind a school desk. Visit www.irisheart.ie

Drop Everything and Move - Schools could also develop their own series of exercises (squats, lunges, tricep dips etc.) easily done in the classroom setting in response to a signal over the intercom to ‘Drop Everything and Move’

Drop Everything and Dance

This is the most popular ASW activity amongst primary schools and guaranteed FUN!

First thing in the morning the whole school assembles in the yard/hall to learn and practise the moves for a selected dance (eg: Macarena, Haka).

Then anytime the song is played over the intercom or on loudspeakers in the yard staff and students must *drop everything and dance*.

Dance Events

Inter-class Wii 'Dance Offs' – Wii Dance projected onto a large screen giving classes the opportunity to compete against each other.

Dance Flash Mob – Students might organise a dance flash mob to surprise parents at collection time, the school community or even the local community when they are least expecting it!

Danceathon Marathon Event – Non-stop dance marathon.

International Dance – ASW presents a great opportunity to introduce students to dances from other countries eg: Bollywood, Salsa, Cossak Dance

YouTube Dance Clips – Many primary schools use *Just Dance for Kids* clips on white boards for classroom physical activity breaks. Super Mario and One Direction are popular choices.

Novelty Events during Lunch Times

FUN, novelty events could be scheduled during lunch times for indoor and outdoor venues.

Ideas – Limbo, Puc/Cic Fada, Welly Throws, Tug of War, Piggy Back Races, Speed Cup Stacking, Sitting Volleyball, Onesy Lunchtime Leagues, Keepie Uppie Challenges, Skipping, Hula Hooping, Slow Bicycle Races, etc.

Walk a Mile with a Smile

Every class undertakes a walk in their local community. In primary schools older classes could buddy up with younger classes for the walk and/or parents could be invited to join in the walk also.

Post primary students might go on a community walk with their class tutor.

Penalties against the Principal

Every class has a penalty shootout competition. The winners from each class compete against each other and the overall winner has the opportunity to take *Penalties against the Principal*.

Each class winner may also take penalties against their class teacher as well.

Soft foam balls recommended!

Teachers vs. Students

Teams of students compete against teams of teachers/school staff.

Popular activities include basketball, soccer, dodgeball, rounders and obstacle courses.

A great way to end the school day!

Whole School Challenges

60 Minutes Challenge – Every student and staff member tries to achieve 60 minutes of physical activity each day recording their activities in their school journal.

Running Challenge – Classes try to accumulate enough running/walking laps to complete a marathon or to run to different places on the map of Ireland.

GOAL Sports Challenge – GOAL's annual sports event for schools. Choice of Solo Run or Penalty Challenge.

Resource – *Physical Activity Pocket Planner* (Irish Heart Foundation) suitable for 1st/2nd classes.

Cross-Curricular Activities

Teachers are encouraged to find ways to incorporate physical activity into ALL curricular subjects during the week.

Ideas – Get Active rap, Walk around the World art display (student artworks of famous world landmarks displayed around school grounds), history walking trails, active maths etc.

In post primary schools year head and tutor assemblies could focus on the importance of physical activity for adolescents and the availability of physical activity opportunities in their local community.

Resources – *PA through Numeracy and Literacy* Booklet (Irish Primary PE Association) available on www.activeschoolflag.ie (Resources – Cross-Curricular)

NEW Activities

During ASW schools are encouraged to introduce NEW sports and activities that students may not have participated in before

Ideas – Zumba, Bokwa, Yoga, Ultimate Frisbee, Frisbee Golf, Cricket, Punk Rope, Boxercise, Orienteering, Inclusive Sports such as Goal Ball and Boccia

Resources

Irish Primary PE Association www.irishprimarype.com

Physical Education Association of Ireland www.peai.ie

The Great Outdoors

ASW is a great way to raise awareness amongst students and their families about the many ways there are to exercise for free in their local community.

The school might bring students out to use local amenities such as playgrounds, skateboard parks, forest trails, river walks, beaches, exercise parks etc.

Several parks have permanent orienteering trails marked out. For more information visit www.orienteering.ie/about-us/permanent-orienteering-courses

ParkRun Events

Parkrun is the name given to a 5k running events that take place every Saturday morning at 9.30am in public parks across the country www.parkrun.ie/

Schools with a *Parkrun* nearby could raise awareness about the event and encourage staff and families to take part during ASW. Parkrun events are free of charge but require runners to register online in advance.

Couch to 5k programmes are available from www.athleticsireland.ie

Parental Involvement

Parent Ideas – Parents could be invited to submit their ideas about activities that could be included in the ASW programme

Activity Leaders – Some parents may be willing to give ‘taster classes’ of their particular skills to classes

Parent and Child Events – ‘Walk a Mile with a Smile’ and ‘Wake Up – Shake Up’ mornings are great ways to involve parents in the ASW programme

Parents’ Association led Initiatives – The PA might consider organising some events eg: Activity Picnic in the local park (families bring sports equipment instead of food to a local park on a specific afternoon), morning/evening walks for parents, boot camp for parents, guest speakers

Community Involvement

Taster Sessions - Local physical activity providers could be invited to the school to give 'taster sessions' to different classes.

Local Facilities - Local physical activity facilities (eg: tennis clubs, golf ranges, leisure centres) might be willing to allow the school to use their premises during ASW.

Local Sports Heroes – Local sports heroes might be willing to visit the school to give talks, lead a 'wake up – shake up' morning session, act as celebrity bainisteoir for a school team etc.

Challenge the Neighbours – The school might challenge their neighbouring school in a number of different FUN events such as tug of war, frisbee, rounders etc. A mix of teams should compete against each other to include a broad range of age groups and both genders.

Thought for the Day

During ASW the school might consider changing its bell signal to something more sports orientated for the week.

The principal might read out an interesting fact or sports quote over the intercom each day.

Send Us Your Ideas

We are always looking for new ideas to share out amongst schools.

We would be very grateful if you would email us your *Active School Week* ideas to eolas@activeschoolflag.ie