

Junior Physical Education – a new focus

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Reasons For Change...

- Issues with previous junior program:
- Very sport focused with emphasis on Strand B of the curriculum. Covered specific skills in a variety of sporting contexts.
- Program was not overly teacher friendly, was an administrative document which new and existing teachers could gain little information from.
- Lack of relevant assessment – other than performance based assessments.
- Limited skills/learning experiences gained from program.

Reasons for change...

- Alignment between the Junior and Senior PE programs. The program had little progression of content, learning, and expectations of students who were entering Level 1 PE.
- Our students were struggling with the transition from Junior PE into NCEA PE. How could we prepare them better to avoid the big hurdle that most experienced.
- Junior program was producing a general understanding from students and parents that PE was 'playing games'.

Creating change...

- A small group of teachers in the department formed the Junior Curriculum Committee.
- Met with Team Solutions to discuss Junior Program.
- Gathered evidence from department about what we wanted our students to get out of our Junior PE program.
- Asked students about their needs
- From this information we formed our Junior Physical Education Philosophy.

Our philosophy

- Students will develop their critical thinking and interpersonal skills through active participation in a range of physical contexts.

- Students will develop their motor skills and an understanding of physical activities through active participation.

- Students will investigate the science and socio-cultural factors behind the performance of physical activity.

Unit 1 – Interpersonal Skills

- This unit involved our students participating in physical activity while explicitly learning about 5 interpersonal skills. Critical questioning played a big part in the teaching of this unit.
 - Social/Personal responsibility
 - Communication
 - Decision making
 - Co-operation
 - Inclusion

Lesson structure

- All lessons will follow the BAD format. Brief-Action-Debrief
- Brief as the name suggests should be BRIEF!
- Action as the name suggests should be ACTION!
- Using questioning to develop critical thinking - all questioning in lessons where possible will be student driven.
- Where possible and appropriate try and use terminology from Level 1 - 3 PE. Eg aspects, components, explore.
- Time Frame: 2 Cycle (6 lessons) on each Interpersonal Skill
- 3 Assessment Cycles (9 lessons)

Assessment

- Involved students participating in an unfamiliar context (benchball) in which they were to demonstrate the 5 interpersonal skills.
- Peer, self and teacher assessed.
 - Staff
 - Generic
 - Involved students / ownership
 - Relevant / meaningful
 - Parent, teacher, student friendly
 - Able to provide accurate assessment of learning
 - Information gathered is easily conveyed to parents

Positive Outcomes

- Brought Focus and value to junior program.
- Good unit to start with as promoted a team environment/atmosphere between students.
- Behaviour has improved in Year 9 compared to Year 9 last year.
- Yr 10s responded well (after approx 3rd cycle).
- Students have gained ownership of their behaviour through personal/social responsibility.
- Interpersonal Skills have been taught explicitly (not a delightful accident).

Some parent comments

- “My daughter enjoyed it because it wasn’t all about being the best at sport. She felt really comfortable about joining in as the focus was not on being the best or winning”.
- General discussion about inclusiveness, a sense of belonging and involvement amongst students during lessons, a good way to start the year with new students in the class. Way to make friends etc.
- Gaining life skills from unit, not just physical skills.
- Some parents didn’t have any idea about unit focus, therefore indicating importance of contact with parents.

Barriers

- Staff Inertia
- Staff reluctance to relinquish some of their ownership to students
- Lack of critical questioning skills
- Student's expectations of PE
- Underestimating time required to teach each interpersonal skill

Future Implications

- Reduce assessment criteria.
- Assess students use of interpersonal skills in more than one setting. Benchball & Ki-o-Rahi
- Teachers became skilled at using critical questioning, now we need to enhance our students ability to do so.

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- Resources by Rangitoto College Junior Curriculum Team: Paul Field, Chelsea Kemp, Melissa Lean & Alec Solomon (TIC)
- Slideshow by Chelsea Kemp