



Australian schools start the official countdown to this week's National Health and PE Day

HPE Day celebrations set for Wednesday 9th September 2015 in schools across regional and metropolitan areas

Many of the 9,500 schools from across the Nation are gearing up to celebrate this week's Health and Physical Education (HPE) Day to be held on Wednesday, September 9, 2015.

HPE Day ambassador and accomplished long-distance runner, Mr Steve Moneghetti, said it was pleasing to see that this national day – and this year's theme of being good for schools - had sparked significant interest from metropolitan and regional schools located in every corner of Australia.

"We have seen registrations from schools in every state and territory, and the type of activities that they are planning ranges from fun runs, to dance-a-thons, and everything in between - but the one common goal across everything that is being planned is to do things that will get kids more active," Mr Moneghetti said.

"HPE Day isn't designed to be about playing a particular sport, who wins or who might lose – this is a national day that is about getting active and having fun, in the hope that it encourages children to embrace a healthy lifestyle and reap the rewards in the years to come," he said.

"We know that Health and Physical Education in a school's curriculum can make a significant impact on the learning potential and wellbeing of all children, and in addition to being a benefit to schools, it can also make a valuable contribution to the wider community because active and healthy young people are the best investment we can make in the future."

National Executive Director from the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER), Ms Alison Turner, encouraged parents to play a role in getting their children more active and help to shake off Australia's unenviable reputation as being amongst the worst in the world for inactive school-aged children.

"This year we have introduced a 'Parent Pledge', where parents and caregivers can make a commitment to their children to be a positive role model by spending a minimum of 30 minutes being active with them on HPE Day," Ms Turner said.

"We know that 80% of 5-17 year olds are not participating in at least 60 minutes of exercise each day, and that is simply unacceptable - so it is up to families, schools and the community to work together to tackle this important problem," she said.

"Because most children's waking hours are spent sitting at school and at home, we need to integrate opportunities to get them to be more active as part of everyday life – and HPE Day is designed to help children become resilient, strong decision makers and to be proactive when it comes to their physical and mental health."

PLEASE NOTE: A video news release is available for download at <http://youtu.be/11lhnyzsMmE> and raw vision is also available on request

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