



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

Active After-school Communities

Helping kids and communities get active



AASC NATIONAL NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2008

An exciting and active 2008 for AASC

An exciting year lies ahead for the Australian Sports Commission's Active After-school Communities (AASC) program in 2008. We are looking forward to a year filled with new projects, productive partnerships and increased physical activity levels in the community.

With initiatives such as the national Super Site Awards and 5 Star Community Coach Awards we aim to recognise the incredible amount of support we receive from over 20 000 community coaches and 3000 schools and out of school hours care services around Australia. In this issue we will profile the state and national winners of the awards.

Also in 2008 the AASC program will continue to promote the Playing for Life companion books – resources arising from the collaboration among the AASC program and 14 national organisations, including sporting organisations. These include ARL, Netball Australia, Ausdance, Cricket Australia and Hockey Australia, to name a few. The activities in the companion books aim to introduce children to 14 popular sports and activities. Most importantly, the companion books provide community coaches with plans to assist with delivering a structured physical activity program for up to seven weeks.

Partnerships among the AASC program and state governments, local businesses, sporting organisations and clubs, local councils and communities will grow from strength to strength. We will continue to

deliver the program around Australia in metropolitan, regional and remote areas with a team of highly dedicated, locally based regional coordinators who strive to strengthen community partnerships and build community capacity to deliver structured physical activities to primary school-aged students.

We extend a welcome to the new sites in the program for 2008 and look forward to engaging your children and local community in fun, safe and inclusive activities.

To our returning sites, thank you for the dedication and commitment you have shown to getting our kids moving and active.

Judy Flanagan
Director, Community Sport
Australian Sports Commission



Students at Malabar Public School enjoy getting active.

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Super Site Awards 2007

The Super Site Awards recognise the outstanding contribution made by schools and out of school hours care services in the coordination and delivery of the AASC program. Well done to the 2007 state winners of the Super Site Awards.

South Australia — Wallaroo Mines Public School

Wallaroo Mines Public School supports the AASC program's FISH philosophy where activities aim to be fun, inclusive, safe and high involvement.

School staff not only supervise the program, but always get involved in the activities as well. With fantastic community networks, the school has enjoyed a huge variety of activities, including table tennis, belly dancing, lawn bowls and gymnastics.

The school is actively involved in developing a bike education program for students and is currently working with the local council and transport department to gain support for a bike education program in 2008.

Western Australia — Karridale Primary School

Located in southwest Western Australia, Karridale Primary School makes use of local community AASC program deliverers to provide dance, martial arts and circus activities to 95 per cent of students at the school.

Having all completed the Community Coach Training Program, teachers and school staff are committed to the program and work on a rotating roster to supervise the students.

Northern Territory — Manunda Terrace Outside School Hours Care

With a thirst for new and dynamic activities, Manunda Terrace Out of School Hours Care often travels off site to discover new sports and activities. Since joining the AASC program, students have experienced and kept active with tenpin bowling, canoeing, swimming, golf and judo.

Tasmania — South Arm Public School

South Arm Public School has shown great initiative in creating fun and original activities that promote physical activity. Activities this year included surf safety and beach activities, and BMX riding.

The school enjoys huge support from teachers and parents. Three teachers trained for a Bronze Medallion to deliver the surf activities, and parents built a BMX track.

Queensland — Currajong After School Care

Currajong After School Care promotes community partnerships and pathways for students who participate in the AASC program.



AASC Regional Coordinator Gillian Walls with students from Currajong.

The site has cultivated relationships with local businesses that assist them to deliver the program by providing food and equipment. Currajong actively promotes to their students the benefits of joining local sporting clubs and other activity-related organisations.

Victoria — Croxton School

All students at Croxton School have intellectual disabilities and take part in a huge range of AASC program activities including calisthenics, circus skills, basketball, athletics, yoga and dance.

The school is currently working towards encouraging students to participate in local community-based programs, including basketball and swimming.

Through the program, the older primary school students have developed their confidence in participating in sport and many are involved in the Special Olympics.

Australian Capital Territory and Southwest NSW region — Bowning Primary School

With very enthusiastic staff and the variety of physical activities and deliverers provided each term, it is no wonder that all 45 students at Bowning Primary School take part in the AASC program.

All staff members are trained in the Community Coach Training Program and external deliverers are predominantly from the local community, including students from Yass High School.

New South Wales — Fingal Head Public School

Teachers from Fingal Head Public School work with the community to provide a variety of activities, including orienteering.

The high participation rates have been attributed to the teachers actively promoting the AASC program, continuously developing fresh ideas for the activities, and providing delicious, healthy afternoon teas.



Children from Fingal Head Public School.

SUPER site

5 Star Community Coach Awards 2007

The 5 Star Community Coach Awards have been established to highlight best practice and recognise outstanding achievement in coaching within the AASC program. We congratulate 2007 national winner Alison Parker and all the state winners.

National winner

South Australia — Alison Parker

Epitomising the very best of both community and coaching qualities, Alison is a 'can do' person who tackles challenges with a positive and practical attitude. In 2007, her gymnastics sessions expertly accommodated over 40 children from the local Indigenous Gidja Out of School Hours Care, with back-to-back sessions often catering to over 80 kids in one night. Alison has developed strong relationships with both students and community leaders, providing unique opportunities for low socioeconomic families, special needs and Indigenous children in the region.



5 Star Community Coach Award winner Alison is a 'can-do' person.

State winners

Queensland — Benjamin Doolah

Benjamin Doolah, an assistant teacher at Horn Island State School, has delivered three AASC sessions a week since mid-2005 – rain, hail or shine. His activities are full of energy and laughter, combining Indigenous games with traditional sports such as basketball, volleyball and touch football. With no other structured sports available for youngsters on Horn Island, Benjamin's sessions have become the highlight of the children's day.

Northern Territory — Troy Croton

Troy Croton is a community member from Humpty Doo in the Northern Territory who has brought a great attitude, commitment and wonderful rapport with children to his local schools through the AASC program. Troy always ensures the children have plenty of fun and provides loads of encouragement to them as both individuals and team players.

Australian Capital Territory and Southwest NSW region — Donna Wade

Donna Wade of St Mary's Catholic School in Hay has embraced the AASC's Playing for Life philosophy and has an amazing ability to motivate and engage her students. Donna's delivery of her activities has been so popular with the children that the school has established a waiting list. 'I love the sessions because they love the sessions', is how Donna sums it up.

New South Wales — Brooke Roach

Brooke Roach is a highly respected member of the Raymond Terrace community whose passion for working with children possessing low self-confidence and self-esteem has enthused local parents, school staff and volunteers to get kids involved in a wide range of physical activities. Brooke's genuine interest in the welfare of all children, and particularly Indigenous youth, shines through in his work.

Tasmania — Regina Hansen

Regina Hansen of the Hobart Gymnastics Association has delivered to 14 sites over the last eight months, often volunteering herself for work in lower socioeconomic communities. She consistently models the key AASC elements of activity and wellbeing while demonstrating enormous creativity in working with children of mixed abilities, often in poorly equipped environments.



Regina Hansen and some of her AASC children.

Western Australia — Rachael Steen

A fitness instructor and gymnastics coach from Goldfields South East, Rachael Steen shares her love of music, dance and movement with the children in her AASC classes. Always passionate and totally committed to her work, Rachael's greatest rewards are the priceless smiles on the children's faces when they achieve their goals for the first time.

Victoria — Elspeth Gawley

At Benalla West Primary School, Elspeth Gawley utilises dance, AFL, gymnastics, lawn bowls and junior fire brigade activities in an effort to maximise the opportunities for children. Students are busting to get into the programs offered and many 'at risk' kids have benefited from being involved.

AASC companion books

Recently provided to over 3200 AASC schools and out of school hours care services around Australia, the greatly anticipated AASC companion books are the result of partnerships among the AASC program and 14 national organisations, including sporting organisations.



The companion books are a series of sport-specific activity session plans that complement the AASC Playing for Life resource kit and assist coaches with minimal experience in a particular sport to deliver activities in line with the Playing for Life philosophy.

The companion books will be used by members of the local community within the AASC program and within sport at the grassroots level.

The sport-specific activities are targeted at children aged from four to 12 years of age and aim to develop the skills required to participate in that particular sport, through a games-based approach to coaching. For example, the focus of the *Netball Companion Book* is on mobility skills important to netball, such as landing, pivoting, passing and dodging, incorporated into modified games. Each session focuses on specific skills which progress from week to week. The first netball session is an introduction to throwing, catching and moving, the second session is on developing passing, moving and footwork skills and the third session is on passing, catching and running to evade an opponent.

All the companion books were developed in conjunction with key people from the relevant organisations.

The companion books' sports and activities are volleyball, cricket, dance, gymnastics, circus, lawn bowls, basketball, rugby league, golf, netball, frisbee, hockey, softball and martial arts. These 14 sports and activities were chosen as they were the most popular sports being delivered in the AASC program nationally when the resource process began in 2006.

In creating this exciting resource, partnerships were formed with the following organisations:

- > Bowls Australia
- > Netball Australia
- > ARL Development (Australian Rugby League and National Rugby League)
- > Softball Australia
- > Cricket Australia
- > Volleyball Australia
- > Basketball Australia
- > Hockey Australia
- > Australian Flying Disc Association and Australian Ultimate Frisbee
- > Ausdance
- > Golf Australia
- > Gymnastics Australia
- > National Institute of Circus Arts.

The resource includes 14 companion books, 'Change It' book, 42 additional activity cards, activity finder, CD-ROM, plus a handy clipboard that attaches to the Playing for Life kit.

The resource can also be purchased through the Australian Sports Commission's Publishing unit by calling (02) 6214 1795 or the visiting the ASC Publishing website (ausport.gov.au/publications).



'The companion books are greatly assisting my regional and remote AASC sites to engage in different sporting activities that may not be offered in their locations.'

Mischa Westlake, Regional Coordinator
Midwest Gascoyne, Western Australia

'As a deliverer, being able to teach kids the skills needed for particular sports is so valuable for my AASC sessions. The companion books provide structure for my seven-week program and I know that the kids will really benefit.'

Casey Websdale, AASC Deliverer
East Gippsland, Victoria



What is the Playing for Life philosophy?

The Playing for Life philosophy adopts a 'game sense' approach to physical activity and there is a strong emphasis on catering to all ability levels.

In brief, the philosophy is that the game is the focus, and the coach is a facilitator not a director, and players help by providing feedback to make the activity more or less challenging.

To find out more, visit the Active After-school Communities website (ausport.gov.au/aasc).

'The companion books are very user friendly, well planned and formatted to link to the Playing for Life kit well. We have enjoyed using the softball booklet and can't wait to use the dance book next term.'

AASC Coordinator, The Lakes College
Northlakes, Queensland



AASC news

All Australian Games give students a go

Nearly 700 primary school-aged children took part in a huge sporting event in November 2007 at the Sydney Olympic Park Athletic Centre. The All Australian Sports Initiative (AASI), part of the Australian Sports Commission's AASC program, organised the inter-regional sports day with 18 AASC schools from the Lakemba and Macquarie Fields regions.

'We chose this venue as it was the site of the Sydney Olympics,' said Ben Howard, a AASI Community Sport Officer. 'Many of these children, some of whom are refugees and new arrivals to Australia, may never otherwise get to experience the site of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. We want to inspire these young people, and this was one way to do that.'

The students took part in 30 modified sports and recreational activities provided by the AASC program in partnership with many organisations, including sporting organisations and the state government.

As well as promoting inclusion, it is hoped that the event will encourage students to participate in weekend sport or join their local sporting club.



All Australian Games at Sydney Olympic Park.

Online course a success for recruiting AASC community coaches

Volunteer AASC coaches are receiving a virtual helping hand from the Australian Sports Commission with a free, interactive online coaching website. The course provides the first step towards accreditation within the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme and can also be used as part of the training for coaches within the AASC program.

Director of Community Sport at the Australian Sports Commission, Judy Flanagan, said the Beginning Coaching General Principles course had been designed for community coaches who may be short on time and have difficulty accessing face-to-face coach training sessions. Topics range from planning and safety to coach responsibilities, working with parents and group management.

'Volunteer coaches contribute their valuable time and energies to grassroots sport in this country and it is essential that they are supported in their efforts.'

'The Australian Sports Commission subsidises this course as part of our

commitment to assist coaches and, more broadly, to provide a safe environment for all sports participants by improving general coaching standards.'

For more information and a sample of the course, visit the Australian Sports Commission learning portal (<https://learning.ausport.gov.au>).

'[The Online Coaching Course is] really common sense, but you need to have the logic of it laid out for you and that's what the course does. The course is probably the only way that I would have been able to get involved in coaching because of my time commitments.'

Leanne Johnson, Swansea,
New South Wales

Building healthy communities in Anmatjere

Anmatjere is a remote area in the Northern Territory that includes the Laramba, Ti Tree (including 6 Mile), Engawala (Alcoota) and Wilora communities. At the end of 2005 the Australian Government began implementing health projects in remote communities that had limited access to health services, poor health status and high needs.

The initiative, which is in its last term, is called Building Healthy Communities, and through community consultation it was decided that it would be a community-driven project built around outcomes of the AASC program model and included health education programs, such as substance misuse awareness and nutrition.

This project has helped young people living in the Anmatjere region to change their lifestyles and increase their health knowledge through active participation in the activity and education programs.

Underpinning the project was community ownership and control that was ultimately self-sustaining. Each community also had a funded community coordinator and several coaching positions.

The program targeted disengaged children and youth. Primary school-aged students received regular access to structured physical activity and health education activities. Secondary school-aged students received access to activities, and in addition, interested students received regular training and coach education, plus the potential to get nationally recognised qualifications and payment for coaching, helping to develop leadership skills and possible career pathways. Adults and other community members were targeted and trained to further build community capacity to sustain the project outcomes.

The project evaluation was ongoing and included case studies, stakeholder research and focus groups. Results will be completed in mid-2008; however, initial outcomes that the community coordinators identified included the community's desire to further educate youth in the areas of sport and health, including formal education, plus the further development of sporting leagues, including basketball.

'Can Do' coaching creating deliverers

The Australian Sports Commission's Schools Network was created in 1999. This initiative is aimed at upper primary and secondary school-aged students, and also supports teachers and sporting organisations to make links to enhance school sporting programs and engage students in sport.

The AASC program and Schools Network work in partnership to deliver complementary outcomes. Warragul North Primary School in Victoria joined

forces with Warragul Regional College, with funding support from the Schools Network, to develop a sport leadership program and training resources for Year 8-10 students. This is known as the Can Do Coach program, which includes the AASC Community Coach Training Program course. This initiative was considered a great way to secure coaches for the AASC program conducted at Warragul and Warragul North Primary Schools.

For more information, visit the Schools Network website (ausport.gov.au/schools/about.asp).

Working in partnership with state education

This year a number of AASC state teams around Australia further strengthened their partnership with state education departments. Initiatives included training days and professional development days for teachers interested in promoting physical activity.

In South Australia and New South Wales, teachers from AASC sites attended a condensed version of the Community Coach Training Program with the aim of increasing their confidence in delivering physical activity and also encouraging them to become registered deliverers of the AASC program.



Teachers enjoying the Community Coach Training Program.

The Western Australia AASC team and the Schools Network recently hosted a Junior Sport Development Day for teachers. The day provided the opportunity for teachers to gain some great new ideas on how to deliver sport and physical activity to students and make their physical education lessons more exciting and inviting. It also provided an opportunity for teachers to meet the requirements of the AASC Community Coach Training Program.

'Not being a sporty person, I believed physical activity was more of a chore than a fun lesson. The variety of games and activities has changed my opinion. I feel more aware of creating an inclusive environment for learning during physical education lessons – an environment where all kids want to participate, and do.'

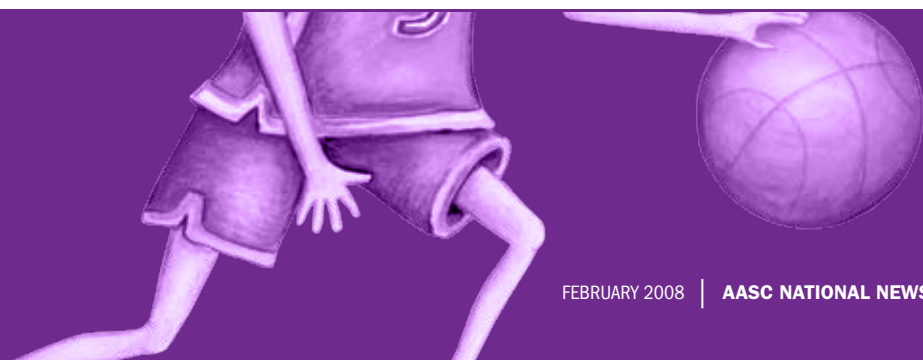
NSW teacher

Secure website for AASC

If you are a AASC school or out of school hours care service or registered deliverer, did you know that you have access to a secure website that contains all you need to know to make the most out of the AASC program?

The secure website is a central one-stop-shop for all AASC program resources, news and information that can assist you with program delivery. Newsletters, Playing for Life activity cards, training dates, healthy snack ideas, program forms and grant information are just some of the resources you will find.

If you are registered with the AASC program you can receive a unique ID number and password from your regional coordinator. You can log onto the secure website by visiting ausport.gov.au/aasc and following the link on the AASC home page.



Playing for life around Australia

The AASC program reaches far and wide around Australia and is delivered at over 3000 sites with nearly 150 000 children participating. So far the program has trained over 20 000 community coaches.



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