



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

# Fact Sheet

## Active After-school Communities program helping Indigenous communities



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This is how a school principal from an Indigenous community describes the Australian Government's Active After-school Communities (AASC) program.

The AASC program is a free initiative delivered nationally by the Australian Sports Commission. It has been shown to improve the health of Indigenous communities through increased education, physical activity and the capacity to deliver sport. The program has also been credited with decreasing discipline problems in Indigenous communities by engaging children in sport and teaching them the value of teamwork.

### Improving health in Indigenous communities

Many stakeholders in Indigenous communities agree that the AASC program is getting children active. When talking about the benefits of participation, the children mention being healthy and active, being strong, having energy, feeling like a winner, making their family proud, having fun, building friendships, developing leadership skills, not being inactive and watching TV, and improving their skills.

In their own words, AASC participants said of the program:

'I like playing footy and basketball'

'It's good fun'

'It makes you healthy and strong'.

Program deliverers in Indigenous communities say that, as well as motivating inactive children to get active, the program assists already active children participate in different 'fun, non-competitive and non-confrontational activities'.

### Improving attitudes in Indigenous communities

The program has a positive impact on Indigenous children's attitudes towards sport, with the majority of schools and after-school care providers reporting they feel more positive towards physical activity after participating in the program.

One stakeholder says, 'Even the naughty kids get involved, and they learn good things, like how to work in a team, and mix with other kids. They start being more friendly and stop bullying their mates.'

One school principal states, 'The program sends an important message: it shows the community that the kids are capable of doing all types of things'.

The vast majority of participating Indigenous community sites believe the program is welcoming for children of all abilities, including physically inactive children.

One stakeholder describes the benefits of the program as, 'medical benefits, helping kids deal with social and self-esteem issues, and social and cultural integration issues'.

## Strengthening Indigenous communities

The AASC program is viewed as having a positive effect on Indigenous communities, with one stakeholder saying the program has reduced graffiti and vandalism by decreasing boredom in children and giving them an avenue to achieve something. 'It does work really good, as you drive around and you see all the kids getting involved.'

The AASC program enhances the capacity of Indigenous communities to provide ongoing sport to school-aged children. Equipment, resources and training provided as part of the program also enable the community to provide more physical activity programs in the future.

Almost 47 per cent of the Indigenous community sites participating in the AASC program believe there are more opportunities for children or families to join local sporting clubs as a result of the program.

Others appreciate the mutually beneficial links created with government agencies beyond the Australian Sports Commission. For instance, the AASC program was seen to complement other health initiatives in the Kimberley region that largely focused on nutrition.



### Facts at a glance

- 96% of Indigenous community sites were satisfied with the overall program
- 85% of Indigenous community sites agree that since becoming involved in the AASC program, children and families at their site are more aware of the benefits of physical activity
- 81% of Indigenous community sites agree that children feel more positive towards physical activity after participating in the program
- 98% of Indigenous community sites agree that children find the program fun
- 95% of Indigenous community sites agreed that children from all socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds feel welcome participating in the program
- 76% of schools and after-school care providers in Indigenous communities were satisfied that the program was stimulating community involvement in sport

## Active After-school Communities

Helping kids and communities get active

For more information visit  
[ausport.gov.au/aasc](https://ausport.gov.au/aasc)