

# Physical Activity at School during the COVID-19 Pandemic

## Ideas from Alberta School Communities

Alberta school communities have proven to be adaptable, flexible, and creative during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some innovative ideas from Alberta school communities to support physical activity. Thank you to our partners for sharing these!

One junior high PE Team created Daily Physical Activity (DPA) packages for every classroom in the school. The packages included a variety of equipment that would stay with the classroom cohort. Kits include footballs, kick balls, playground balls, Frisbees, rubber animals, pylons, skipping ropes (still waiting on a backorder of those) and more. These DPA kits have allowed teachers to be creative with their classes and the activities they offer. Staff members are now able to assess when their class needs a break and utilize the kits for quick or extended "brain breaks". Before receiving the DPA packages, the PE Team explained the process for cleaning and disinfecting the equipment between uses.

One elementary school is using nature and their outdoor surroundings to enhance the types of physical activities offered. Students are going for long walks outdoors including around a nearby lake.

A Public Health Inspector came across this innovative way of disinfecting basketballs in a high school. The force of the spray on the ball makes it move towards the basket as it rotates, allowing the whole ball to be sprayed without a lot of handling by the cleaner. The balls dry quickly in the bin because of its design.



See other side for more ideas.

## Physical Activity at School during the COVID-19 Pandemic | 2

Here is a summary of ideas from Alberta schools to help make physical activity safer during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be sure to follow all public health guidance when supporting students to be active at your school – visit [alberta.ca/returntoschool](https://alberta.ca/returntoschool) for more information.

Instead of...	Try...
Physical activity in the gym (or other indoor school space)	Physical activity outside, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking/running in the neighbourhood</li> <li>• Hiking or snowshoeing</li> <li>• Outdoor fitness circuits</li> <li>• Disc golf</li> <li>• Orienteering</li> <li>• Shoveling snow for neighbours</li> </ul>
Physical activity in shared community indoor spaces (e.g., recreation centres, community halls, etc.)	Physical activity in shared community outdoor spaces, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playgrounds</li> <li>• Parks, fields, and green spaces</li> <li>• Pathways and trails</li> <li>• Outdoor community rinks</li> <li>• Outdoor running tracks</li> <li>• Ball diamonds and basketball courts</li> <li>• Painted tarmacs</li> </ul>
Physical activities with close contact (e.g., wrestling, soccer, football)	Physical activities that can be done individually, a safe distance apart, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yoga and mindfulness</li> <li>• Dance and rhythm activities</li> <li>• Skipping rope</li> <li>• Tennis and badminton</li> <li>• Track and field activities</li> </ul>
Sharing physical activity equipment between cohorts	Providing each cohort with physical activity equipment they can store in a mesh bag. On a regular basis, <a href="#">wash and disinfect</a> it so that it can be rotated to a different cohort.
Floor work including push-ups, sit-ups and planks	Having students use mats that can be <a href="#">cleaned and disinfected</a> between uses.
Mixing cohorts at recess / allowing cohorts to share playground equipment	Creating zones for physically active recess (with cones, flags, painted lines). Be sure students clean their hands well before and after using playground equipment.
Tag that involves touch	No-touch, physically distanced tag with pool noodles that are <a href="#">disinfected</a> between uses.