



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Health Boost from Federal Government schools building funding**

The Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation Inc (ACHPER) has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement to boost spending in Australian schools that will include the upgrading and building of multi purpose facilities.

ACHPER National Executive Director, Jeff Emmel said today,

“The announcement is a timely boost for many primary schools in particular, that struggle to provide the curriculum entitlement in areas such as health and physical education and the arts because of a lack of adequate indoor facilities and equipment”.

“It is a good thing for educators and parents to see this as a broadening of the Educational Revolution agenda beyond computers and the productivity agenda.”

ACHPER sees this as a smart investment in the future health and learning of our children. It is clear that active and healthy children learn more effectively and the school must remain a critical setting for promoting healthy behaviours.

Teachers and parents will welcome the initiative that will hopefully have an impact on physical activity levels of children. The longer term impact of this decision will hopefully see many more primary schools overcoming obstacles to delivering quality health and physical education in schools.

Emmel said, “It will be a real boost for many schools in regions where the climate operates against regular, daily physical activity in schools and where grassed outdoor areas are limited or of poor quality due to extreme conditions”.

He went on to say, “It has been well established in surveys of primary schools that lack of facilities and equipment was a major barrier to delivering quality programs.

Schools will have an opportunity to not only enhance the school curriculum in health and physical education, but to involve themselves more in the community through the sharing of facilities. It is important for all levels of government to recognise that health and fitness or recreation centres built for school and community use is a cost effective way of promoting physical activity and better health in the community. The important thing will be to ensure that the design of such facilities will make it easier and more conducive to both teachers and students to enjoy this critical part of the primary school curriculum.”

Stimulus funding provided to Local Government late last year could well be integrated with this announcement.

Emmel said, “ACHPER with its strong network of branches in the states and territories was always ready to provide advice and assistance regarding the design of gymnasias and multipurpose halls to ensure optimum use within the school and community”.

**For Further Information /Interview  
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