TOPIC 9
Healthy, safe and active communities

9.1 Overview

9.1.1 Introduction

Sport and recreation in Australia has changed considerably over the last century. The influx of different cultures has transformed the types of activities that Australians are engaged in.

Apart from cultural influences, you can look also at the type of community you live in and what opportunities for improving health are offered in the area. This might come in the form of built spaces targeted at improving a specific area of health, or outdoor spaces that offer opportunities for recreational activities such as bushwalking, cycling or swimming.

The concept of a community being ‘healthy, safe and active’ not only encompasses physical activity, but also a sense of connection and freedom from discrimination, in which everyone feels safe to be who they are without fear of prejudice.

Resources

- eLesson: Healthy, safe and active communities (eles-2950)
- Digital doc: Key terms glossary (doc-29392)

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the factors that contribute to a safe and healthy community?

SYLLABUS OUTCOMES

A student:

- recognises how contextual factors influence attitudes and behaviours and proposes strategies to enhance health, safety, wellbeing and participation in physical activity (PD4-6)
- investigates health practices, behaviours and resources to promote health, safety, wellbeing and physically active communities (PD4-7)
- plans for and participates in activities that encourage health and a lifetime of physical activity (PD4-8)
- applies and refines interpersonal skills to assist themselves and others to interact respectfully and promote inclusion in a variety of groups or contexts. (PD4-10)
9.2 Cultural influences on physical activity

The health benefits of being physically active are huge, yet many people are not active. In this subtopic you will explore the reasons why some people are active and why others are not. In addition, you will learn new games and activities from Indigenous Australians and across the globe!

9.2.1 Factors influencing choices

The choices people make about how they spend their leisure time are influenced by a wide range of factors. Some of these relate directly to an individual, such as their family or background, while others are linked to the social and physical environment. Policy decisions can also affect physical activity behaviours. These influences can have either a positive or negative impact on being active. Negative influences are known as barriers to being active. Examples are shown in table 9.1.

**TABLE 9.1 Barriers to being active**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual factors</td>
<td>Relate uniquely to that person</td>
<td>Age, disability, injury, gender, education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social environmental factors</td>
<td>External people, clubs and groups that can influence behaviour</td>
<td>Doctor, Physical Education teacher, sports club, culture and coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical environmental factors</td>
<td>The external environment including weather</td>
<td>Weather, access to sports fields, equipment and bike paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy factors</td>
<td>Decisions made by others that promote rules and regulations</td>
<td>Schools that require students to wear hats outside during recess and lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic factors</td>
<td>Income-related situations affecting your ability to access services</td>
<td>Income, job, area you live, housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**HEALTH FACT**

Being physically active is linked to many health benefits. Exercise is a protective factor against conditions that are prevalent throughout the Australian population such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and obesity. In addition to the physical benefits of being active, health experts stress the major link between an active body and good mental health. There is strong evidence that during exercise the body secretes chemicals into the bloodstream that when circulated around the body enhance a person’s mood. These chemicals are called endorphins. This mood enhancement continues well after the exercise is completed and can assist in the prevention and/or treatment of mental disorders such as depression.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Recent research into the physical activity and sedentary behaviours (time spent inactive during the day) reveals that Australian adults spend on average 13 hours per week watching television. Australian Bureau of Statistics data from the 2011–12 Australian Health Survey also indicates that men and women spend over two months of the year sitting down engaged in sedentary behaviours.
There are many types of physical activity available in most Australian communities.

9.2.2 Cultural influences on physical activity

The cultural influences that exist within a community are one significant factor that can have an impact on the amount and types of physical activity undertaken within that community. These cultural influences can be described as the external factors that help shape the attitudes and behaviours of an individual or group and may include geographical location, influences of family and friends, language and religion.

Australian Rules football and Rugby League vary in popularity in different parts of Australia.

Over time, cultural influences often shape the behaviours expected within a community and shape the importance placed on things such as art, religion, family and sport. In Australia, considerable emphasis is placed on sport and it plays a significant part in our national culture. However, different cultural influences may dictate the typical sports and activities undertaken by different communities throughout Australia. For
example, Rugby League is a culturally significant part of community life in states such as New South Wales and Queensland, while AFL is more popular in other states and territories. In Australia, water sports are very popular activities as four-in-five Australians live in coastal areas. Our climate also generally allows access to sports such as surfing, water-skiing and boating activities for most of, if not all, the year round.

9.2.3 Change in Australia’s sporting landscape

In the early 1900s the sporting landscape in Australia was dominated by culturally significant sports such as Australian Rules football, netball (first known as women’s basketball), horse racing, Rugby Union and cricket. This reflected the strong cultural ties Australia had with the United Kingdom. Over the past one hundred or so years there has been a significant impact on the types of physical activity engaged in by Australians as more and more migrants have arrived here, bringing with them sports and activities from their own cultures. Examples include soccer from the UK/Europe, bocce from Italy and, since the 1970s, the growing popularity of basketball and skateboarding as US influences on our culture have increased.

Australians enjoy a wide variety of pastimes.
During this time sports such as badminton, surfing, table tennis, soccer, hockey and lacrosse have been absorbed into Australia’s sporting culture and collectively play a significant role in the activities accessible to and played by Australians.

There has also been positive change in the amount of media coverage of women’s sport. In the past, sporting news tended to be dominated by stories about men’s participation and success in sports such as cricket and rugby league. Today, however, we are seeing an increase not only in news coverage but also in sponsorship deals; and major networks are now televising women’s sport in prime-time viewing slots. As a result of this and other initiatives, there is an increase in the number of women playing sports such as Rugby Union, Rugby League, cricket and Aussie Rules football; in turn we are seeing a more equitable coverage of both men’s and women’s sport.

**The world game**

Soccer is an example of a sport that has gradually grown in popularity in Australia since its introduction in the late 1800s by English immigrants. In 1911 the first governing body for soccer was formed and the first national team played in 1922, but it wasn’t until the post-war influx of immigrants that the game started to really embed itself in Australia’s sporting culture. From there soccer has flourished to become an incredibly popular sport, with the Football Federation of Australia revealing that there are close to 2 million Australians, male and female, involved with this sport as players, coaches and match officials.

**9.2 Activities**

**Group presentation**

1. In groups of three, research and prepare a report for presentation on a culturally significant sport from the options below. Select a presentation tool that you are unfamiliar with such as Prezi to build your ICT skills.
   - Sepak takraw from South-East Asia
   - Lacrosse from North America
   - Gaelic Football from Ireland

Your report should contain the following:

- the name of the sport or activity
- the country or culture of origin
- details of how the game has evolved over the years
- the basic rules and regulations of the activity
- an explanation as to why you think this activity is popular in this culture
- a description of how culture has shaped the importance of this game or activity (may include the religion of the people, the environment, historical events, etc.)
- an explanation of how the game could be modified to enable the class to play safely.

Now you are ready to play!
Research and play!
2. Considerable research has been done on traditional Indigenous games and activities played in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Use the Indigenous games and activities weblink in the Resources tab to research and choose your game. Your task is to present to the class an activity that is unique to these Indigenous populations and able to be played by your class. Once the rules are explained the class will participate in this culturally significant activity. Note: You may ‘modify’ the activity so it can be safely played in your school.

Improvosed game
3. Your task is to create your own game! In groups of four or five, design a game that can be played by your class at school.
   (a) Decide on the playing venue.
   (b) Based on the playing venue select the appropriate number of players per team.
   (c) What is the aim of the game? How do teams score?
   (d) In your group decide on the rules of the game. Consider ways to make the game fast, safe and fun.
   (e) Does the game enable maximum participation with the players?
   After the game has been designed it is time to try it with the class. Set up the playing area, explain the rules and scoring, then start to play. You need to stop the game if at any stage it appears that the rules you created are inappropriate for ensuring the safety of the class. After a certain time period (determined by the teacher) call the teams in and get some feedback. This could include suggestions about improving the enjoyment levels, safety, pace and rules of the game. After the suggestions are discussed and where possible implemented, try the game again.
   (f) After class write down your reflections on the game.
   - What were the strengths and weaknesses of the game?
   - How could it be improved further?
   - Did the class enjoy the game?
   - Were there participants who were not engaged?
   - Was your game influenced by cultural factors such as modifications of current games that you play and enjoy?
   - Was the game limited by the environment, such as the weather (forcing an inside game) or lack of facilities?

Resources

Weblink: Prezi
Weblink: Indigenous games and activities

9.2 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Why are water sports such as swimming and surfing popular in Australia?
2. What does the term ‘barrier’ mean in relation to physical activity?

Elaborate
3. Research an activity that originally came from Asia but that has become common in Australia in the past 40 years, such as yoga (India) or karate (Japan). Suggest why they have appeal.
4. Describe the cultural influences that shape the activities that you enjoy.

Evaluate
5. Indoor activities (such as snooker and darts) are played significantly more in England than in Australia. Why?
6. Why do more Australians engage in activities such as tenpin bowling and bocce today compared to a century ago?
9.3 Impacts of nature on health and wellbeing

The natural environment comprises naturally occurring elements, both living and non-living, such as trees, beaches, rocks, mountains, rainforests, creeks and rivers, and wetlands. The natural environment is less obvious in our urbanised communities because the built environment is so dominant. Although the health benefits of being closer to nature are not new, research is now confirming what we long believed was true — that being outdoors makes us feel good. Although ‘feeling good’ is hard to measure, you can link it to some broad health benefits.

9.3.1 Our natural environment

Australia is fortunate to have a unique natural environment and local, state and federal government policies ensure responsible ways of caring for it. The natural environment provides spaces for people to connect with nature, even if they live in a built environment. This connection has been associated with feelings of well-being and positive mental health. The investment in taking care of our natural environment, such as bushland or healthy waterways, contributes to this connectedness and sense of wellbeing. It is also an indirect investment in our own health by ensuring the quality of the air through maintaining sufficient green spaces.

9.3.2 Benefits of being outdoors

Spending time outdoors is good for us, but Australians spend as much as 90 per cent of their time indoors. Spending time in front of computers and watching television takes us away from opportunities to be active. Research conducted at the University of Rochester in New York found that individuals consistently felt more energetic when they spent time in natural settings. There are beneficial effects of being outdoors for mental and physical health and wellbeing. Being outside in nature for just 20 minutes a day is enough to significantly boost energy levels. So what is it about being in touch with the natural environment that has an impact on our health and wellbeing? Some explanations are:

- Our own internal body clock, called the circadian rhythm, is affected when exposed to sunlight. This accounts for our body being in tune with night and day. When the optic nerve in the eye is exposed to sunlight it sends a message to a part of the brain to release the ‘feel good’ chemicals. People in regions where there is little sunlight for lengthy periods (for example, during Alaskan winters) have reported negative mood states associated with lack of exposure to sunlight.
- Exposure to ultraviolet rays from sunshine provides the body with the ability to produce vitamin D. Vitamin D is required for optimal functioning of the immune system. A deficiency in vitamin D is also a factor associated with low mood and depression.
• Being a part of nature and the outdoors provides exposure to fresh air and open spaces, which allows us to use different senses in this environment. It decreases feelings of exhaustion and increases feelings of alertness and wellbeing.

Providing facilities such as outdoor chess sets encourages people of all ages to make connections outdoors.

• Being outdoors in green space has connections with positive feelings as well as improvement in mental health and wellbeing.
• Being in natural settings provides opportunities to participate in physical activity, which results in the release of ‘feel good’ chemicals.
• The outdoors provides spaces for interacting in social groups such as at the beach, the park and playing games. This connection with family, friends and community provides support and positive mental health experiences.
• The outdoors is one of the few places where our eyes can ‘exercise’ over long distances. In indoor settings, they tend to be used for relatively short distance work such as reading computer screens, where focal lengths are relatively short. Myopia, or short-sightedness, is a condition in which long-distance vision is poor. Research from the University of Cambridge found that a lack of outdoor play in young children could be linked to myopia.

9.3 Activities
Outdoor circuit
1. Create a 2-kilometre walking or jogging circuit of your school/suburb that traces a path through green spaces and natural features. The start and end points should be the same. In the circuit incorporate terrain such as hills, or other features such as stairs, that provide an opportunity for further physical activity along the way. Time yourself using a tracking app and set a timed challenge for the class.

Map it out!
2. Use Google maps and identify how many natural areas are in your community. Identify areas that you use and present your findings to collate these areas as a class.
9.3 Check and challenge

Explain
1. Provide three examples of how being outdoors has a positive impact on your health and wellbeing.

Elaborate
2. Use the Fresh air gym weblink in the Resources tab to read the article, then answer the following questions.
   (a) What are the health benefits of an outdoor gym?
   (b) What are both the positive and negative aspects of an outdoor gym?
   (c) Why is an outdoor gym considered “better” than an indoor gym?
   (d) What environmental factors need to be considered before installing an outdoor gym?
   (e) What alternatives could you suggest for an outdoor gym without the expensive equipment?
   (f) What are the wider community benefits of this facility?

Evaluate
3. Complete the Personal wellbeing weblink in the Resources tab. How did you rate overall? How did you rate compared to the average of Australians? What did you rate yourself on feeling connected to community? What factors influenced your choice?
4. When planning new suburban housing developments, the recommended town planning ratio for green space to population is 4.3 hectares/1000 people. What does this equate to in $m^2$/person? Calculate the ratio of public green space to area of built environment in your local area by using a scaled aerial view map.
5. The World Health Organization (WHO), in its concern for public health, produced a document stating that every city should have a minimum of 9 $m^2$ of green space per person. View the graph below to find out how some major cities rate against others. As a class, discuss why you think some countries have more green space than others.

[Graph: Green space per person in cities of the world]

on

Resources

- Weblink: Fresh air gym
- Weblink: Personal wellbeing
9.4 Go outdoors

Outdoor experiences are both challenging and rewarding. They provide relief from the often highly structured indoor way of life. Orienteering and bushwalking are two popular outdoor activities, but there are many others to enjoy.

9.4.1 Outdoor activities

Much of what we do is within the confines of the classroom or, later in life, within the walls of the home or office. Many of us long for open spaces, freedom and opportunities to relax. Fortunately, there are places to go to do this and adventures to be had. However, so that we have the best possible experiences, we must ensure we are well equipped and our knowledge of safety is adequate for what we intend to do.

Use the Go surfing! weblink in the Resources tab to watch a short video on how to surf a wave. In particular, take note of points that will help you if you haven’t used a surfboard before.

Many people enjoy challenging activities because there is an element of risk-taking.

9.4.2 Recreational activity

There are many benefits to outdoor recreational activity, including breaks from schoolwork, study and chores, and opportunities to socialise with others. In addition, outdoor activities provide relaxation, health and fitness enhancement, the chance to gain new skills and an opportunity to appreciate our abilities and express our talents.

There are many recreational and adventure activities from which we can choose. Depending on our school environment, we might have access to some of these as part of our physical education or sports programs. Access to others may be through excursions and school camps, and many more may be experienced outside of the school environment. At this stage, it is important to be aware of the range of activities available to us, participate in some and develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours so that when we choose to do activities of this nature we will be able to do so confidently and safely.
Recreational activity provides opportunity for enjoyment and personal development.

Some popular recreational activities include:

- abseiling
- camping
- cycling
- orienteering
- scuba diving
- snorkelling
- bike riding
- canoeing and kayaking
- fishing
- rock climbing
- skateboarding
- surfing
- bushwalking
- caving
- kite flying
- sailing
- skiing (cross-country and downhill)
- table tennis.

There are many recreational activities to choose from.
HEALTH FACT

Outdoor activities are known to reduce stress levels. The influence of the natural environment, together with an escape from urban life, a sense of achievement and feelings of revitalisation, lower the activity of hormones that cause stress. It is certainly a good reason to get involved in outdoor activity more often.

DID YOU KNOW?

Orienteering was invented in Sweden around 1900 for military training. Soldiers had to practise getting messages to areas unknown to them in the fastest possible time. It is now a popular outdoor activity, combining thinking and fitness into a ‘cunning running’ experience.

9.4 Activities

Plan an expedition

1. Form groups of four. Your task is to plan an expedition to a bush area, stay overnight and return the next day. Using the headings and questions below, develop an outline of your plan and submit it to the class. Evaluate each of the plans and choose one as a blueprint for a class expedition.
   - **Letting people know.** How long will you stay and what is your expected time of arrival home?
   - **Transport.** How will you get to the camp? What will be the cost? Are permission notes required? Is a special driver’s licence required?
   - **Camp site selection.** Is permission to use the site required? If so, from whom? How much does it cost and are access keys required? Can you reach there and return in the time available? Is it a safe place to stay? Are there any fire restrictions?
   - **Equipment.** How many tents are required and how many students will there be to a tent? How will you share the transport of equipment? Do you need to buy/hire/borrow equipment such as sleeping bags, tents, torches and cooking utensils?
   - **Food.** What meals are required and what shopping is essential? Is water available? Can you carry all that you require? How will you cook your meals, especially if there is a total fire ban restriction?
   - **Clothing and footwear.** Do you have appropriate clothing and footwear for the type of terrain and the temperatures you would expect?
   - **Safety skills.** Think of safety requirements for yourself and the group. Is the route you are taking safe? Have you organised a first aid kit? Is anybody trained in first aid in case of an injury?
   - **Emergency procedures.** Have you developed a risk management plan? What will you do in case of accident/fire/flood/storms? Will you be able to get out? Will somebody be carrying a mobile phone? Who do you contact in case of emergency?
   - **Personal skills.** Are you personally fit enough for the challenge? What distances and terrain are involved and will you be capable of this while carrying all your equipment? What skills do you have that might be important to the group (for example, compass and map reading) and what skills might the group have that might be important to you?

2. In your group, use the internet to research environmentally sound practices of which all campers need to be aware. Use the information from all groups to assemble a class camping/bushwalking code of which everyone should be aware before going on an expedition.

Camping — a trial run

3. Now that you have everything planned, perform a trial run at school or after school on the oval. In some cases, pitching a tent can be difficult on your first attempt. It is even more difficult in the dark. Use the following activities to trial and develop your skills in expedition planning. Report back to the class on each activity and have the other students evaluate your performance.
   - (a) In groups, plan a menu for the expedition. Work to a budget and plan fully what you will cook for each meal.
   - (b) If tents are available, set up a camp site on the school oval or grounds. Organise a competition among groups to erect and dismantle tents in the quickest period of time.
Dealing with emergencies
4. Locate an article from a newspaper or online that features an expedition/camp where there was a mishap. Work out strategies that could be used to prevent similar occurrences.
5. While your group is walking in thick bushland, you notice that one person in your group is missing. As a group, how would you handle this situation?

Orienteering
6. Use the Go orienteering! weblink in the Resources tab and read the instructions for an orienteering game.

Risk management
7. Complete the Planning for an outdoor adventure and Risk management worksheets in the Resources tab to build your skills in identifying, assessing and managing risks in outdoor activities.

Resources
Digital doc: Worksheet 9.1 Planning for an outdoor adventure (doc-29385)
Digital doc: Worksheet 9.2 Risk management (doc-29386)
Weblink: Go orienteering!

9.4 Check and challenge
Explain
1. What problems did you encounter in the Plan an expedition activity? How did you overcome these problems?

Elaborate
2. Identify five activities that could be classified under the umbrella of outdoor recreation.

Evaluate
3. Discuss the importance of safety in outdoor recreation.

9.5 Components of a balanced lifestyle

A balanced lifestyle means having a healthy balance between time spent working, at home, with family and on personal hobbies or pursuits. Having a balanced lifestyle is considered essential to good physical and mental health. Often, by making simple changes to your habits or routines, the balance can be readily shifted in favour of better personal health.

9.5.1 Lifestyle components
Analysing our lifestyles by weighing up the time we spend on the various lifestyle components is a valuable exercise, as the act of balancing our lifestyles can sometimes be challenging, requiring time and physical effort. The amount of time each of us spends on the different components varies from one person to another.
and over time. Care must be taken not to spend too much time in one area of activity at the expense of another.

One of the biggest problems for both adolescents and adults is allocating time for physical activity. Many people do not do enough daily exercise and yet it has enormous health benefits. In this subtopic you will explore how school/work, physical activity and leisure and recreation affect your health.

Most of the pursuits we engage in every day help to keep us active. School or work require us to keep our minds active and physical activity provides us with exercise. The activities we involve ourselves in for leisure and recreation can keep both our minds and bodies active so it is important to make time for all of these types of activities every day.

Use the Get active! weblink in the Resources tab to investigate activities that might assist you in your everyday physical activity plans.

9.5.2 Rest

Rest is an important lifestyle component because:
- it restores our ability to concentrate
- it provides time for the body to replenish its energy stores.

Rest is important in relieving the body of some of the conditions that cause fatigue, such as intense mental activity (for example, solving a maths problem, doing assignments) and physical exertion (for example, running, competitive sports). There is even a need to rest the eyes after looking at a computer screen for a period of time. Activity causes the brain and muscles to become tired. When they are tired, the muscles are more relaxed and tend to be unable to do the work that we would like them to do. The effect of continuous mental effort creates tension in muscles, leading to a condition called stress.

It is important to understand that rest is different to sleep and is not a substitute for it. Sleep can last for long periods of time and has a much lower level of consciousness; rest can be quite short and may not even involve closing the eyes. The purpose of rest is to revitalise the body so it can function again at normal levels. It may be necessary to take frequent short periods of rest during days of heavy physical activity to allow our systems time to recover energy stores.
9.5.3 Sleep

Sleep is a natural process for the body — in fact, we spend almost a third of our lives asleep. Most adolescents require about eight to 10 hours of sleep per night, with this amount decreasing as we get older. There are three stages of sleep: dreaming, deep sleep and waking. Deep sleep is the most important stage and the one that best revitalises the body. Relaxation is the key to achieving deep sleep. The most useful way to ensure sound and extended sleep each night is by having adequate exercise during the day. Exercise tires the muscles and later slows brain activity. For best results, we need a balance between thinking tasks and physical activity to fatigue our bodies in preparation for sleep.

After sleep we feel refreshed and revitalised. Often, any problems we may have had previously are not as overwhelming or can be solved more readily. Sleep allows the brain to recharge, empowering it with higher levels of concentration and the ability to focus. Good sleep provides the groundwork for our performance throughout the day.

Poor or insufficient sleep, however, has the opposite effect. When we are tired, our mind is less able to cope with daily tasks. We often appear irritable; our concentration is poor and we have difficulty because the mind is unable to focus for periods of time and struggles to remember and retain key points and facts.

**HEALTH FACT**

Teenagers need as much sleep as small children. This is because the body is still growing at a rapid rate and the brain is still developing, especially the part of the brain that is responsible for memory and dealing with emotions. Sleep is important to keep the brain refreshed and able to cope with important things such as behaviour and emotion control.

It is important that we develop sensible habits to ensure proper sleeping patterns during adolescence. Late night study, for example, can cause tension and make sleep difficult. Use of effective time management strategies to plan and complete work early in the afternoon can lower stress levels. Alternatively, it might be more effective to sleep earlier and then rise sooner than you usually do and complete study in the morning; this way, the mind is fresh and will absorb much more. Also, the importance of being physically active and avoiding stimulants such as coffee and depressants such as alcohol cannot be overemphasised. Sound daily routines and good personal health practices form the foundation of a good night’s sleep.

How much sleep do you need? Use the Sleep weblink in the Resources tab to find out.

**on Resources**

Weblink: Sleep
Staying active throughout the day will help you develop good sleeping patterns.

DID YOU KNOW?
The record for the longest period without sleep is 18 days, 21 hours and 40 minutes. The record-holder reported experiencing hallucinations, blurred vision, slurred speech and lapses in memory and concentration.

9.5.4 School/work
Tasks related to school and, later in life, work form the bulk of our daytime routines. Much of what we do in these roles requires thinking, concentrating and problem-solving skills. At school, we are required to write, draw, calculate, count, exchange opinions, research, analyse and debate — tasks that challenge us mentally.

Breaks during the day, such as lunch, help us to recharge our energy stores. At school, many students find they benefit from using these breaks to engage in games and physical activity. In the workforce, many who have been unable to be physically active for periods of time use breaks to stretch and exercise. This is a healthy practice because it consumes energy and relieves tension. It also has positive health benefits in terms of maintaining fitness and weight control.
9.5.5 Physical activity

Sufficient **physical activity** is an important component in ensuring that our lifestyle is balanced. Sometimes, the demands of school and work can make us feel we do not have time for physical activity. In fact, lack of time is the most common excuse used by people who do not engage in sufficient physical activity.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The NSW Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (SPANS) 2015 report showed that less than 12 per cent of adolescents in secondary school met the required amount of physical activity.

By being conscious of when during your day you can allocate time to become more active, physical activity can readily be built into your lifestyle. Opportunities for valuable physical activity could include:

- walking part of the way to and from school rather than taking the bus the whole way
- team training
- taking stairs rather than escalators
- walking the dog
- working in the garden
- playing backyard cricket
- strolling along the beach
- going for walks
- joining activity groups such as a HIIT or Pilates class.

In fact, if we are able to mix physical activity with periods of concentration we will be a lot more productive in our work and study. A good balance for adolescents is a minimum of one hour of physical activity each day. Remember that all activity is included, not just sport.
Physical activity comes in many forms, not just sporting activities, and has many social, emotional, intellectual and health benefits. Explore the Australian Physical Activity Guidelines weblink and complete the Get active! worksheet in the Resources tab to explore the different ways you can be physically active.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
The average person spends about 14,145 hours at school; that does not even include time spent on homework!

### 9.5.6 Leisure and recreation

The inclusion of sufficient **leisure and recreational activity** in our lifestyle is important because it provides a break from work, chores and matters we must attend to, such as assignments and study.

Leisure time can be active or passive. During active leisure time, we engage in physical activity such as walking or cycling. This contrasts with passive leisure time, where there is little or no physical exertion. There are many good leisure activities such as reading, listening to music, gardening, playing computer games, watching television or browsing through shops. Recreation, on the other hand, usually applies to more organised activities such as camping, sailing and bushwalking. Both leisure and recreation are very important for our health because they are enjoyable.

Hobbies are excellent leisure-time activities because they appeal to our creative instincts. There are many types of hobbies but most can be categorised into:
- literary, such as reading and writing
- artistic, such as painting, drawing and modelling
- technological, such as building and designing
- scientific, such as performing experiments and conducting research.

Hobbies provide the opportunity to learn about things that interest us, to fulfil ideas, to plan and organise, to develop independence and to experience enjoyment.
HEALTH FACT
At least one in four Australian high school students are either overweight or obese. Living a balanced lifestyle that involves plenty of physical activity is the best way we can manage our weight.
Visit the My healthy communities weblink in the Resources tab to see how your region measures up with the national average.

9.5 Activities

Meditation
1. Meditation is an excellent way to rest the mind and body. Try the simple meditation outlined below or use an app such as Smiling Mind to guide you.
(a) Set an alarm or ask someone to bring you out of the meditation after a designated time period (for example, 5, 10 or 15 minutes). Begin by sitting cross-legged on the floor. Straighten your spine by lifting the crown of your head directly upwards and gently pressing your hips towards the ground. Lay the palms of your hands on your thighs, facing either up or down. Close your eyes and take deep breaths through your nose, remaining as silent as possible.
(b) When you receive the instruction to open your eyes, take a moment to silently consider how you feel. Do you feel more relaxed? Do you feel more alert? Write down some reflections on your experience of meditation. Do you think meditation is a good way to rest?

Sleep disorders
2. Insomnia involves having trouble with how well or how much you sleep, whereas hypersomnia is excessive sleepiness. Draw a chart with two columns and head the columns ‘Insomnia’ and ‘Hypersomnia’. Use the Insomnia and Hypersomnia weblinks in the Resources tab to identify what you believe to be the best five strategies for coping with each of the conditions.

You can also use devices such as a Fitbit or sleep apps to track your sleep.
Enjoying exercise
3. (a) As a class, generate a list of sports or activities that could be played at your school and could be considered active, enjoyable and easy for everyone to do outside of school.
(b) Choose three activities and arrange to play each. Make sure everyone is involved.
(c) Rotate the positions every few minutes to ensure that each person has the opportunity to play both the active and less active roles. Modify the rules if necessary to ensure there are fewer stoppages. Play each game with the intent of becoming as involved as possible.
(d) Discuss how enjoyable activity can contribute to your health.
4. Use the Play squash! weblink in the Resources tab to learn how to play squash. Would squash be a good active leisure activity for you to try?

Active leisure
5. (a) Have each person in the class choose an activity that they consider to fit the category of active leisure. Some suggestions might include table tennis, skateboarding, squash or tennis.
(b) Briefly investigate how the activity is played and whether it would be possible for your class to play (for example, you may need to catch a bus to the squash courts).
(c) Select the three most popular active leisure activities and organise to participate in them.
(d) Discuss ways in which you can build more movement into your leisure time activities.

Participating in lifelong physical activities
6. As a class, undertake the following tasks.
(a) Choose five lifelong physical activities and brainstorm the potential benefits of each activity.
(b) Investigate whether these activities are available in your local community and whether it would be possible to organise an excursion to a place where they are conducted.
(c) Participate in the activities and discuss whether the benefits were as favourable as you had suggested in the brainstorm.

Hobbies
7. Choose five hobbies from the following list and rank them according to personal preference. Explain why each appeals to you and how you might incorporate them into your life. Discuss your choices with the person beside you.

- Cooking
- Sculpture
- Bird watching
- Performing stunts
- Watching movies
- Knitting
- Reading
- Playing board games
- Dancing
- Pet minding
- Beach walking
- Exploring
- Windsurfing
- Sewing
- Travelling
- Playing video games
- Photography
- Horse riding
- Collecting (stamps, cards, etc.)
- Bushwalking
- Fashion design
- Playing a musical instrument
- Fishing
- Fitness activities

Promote activity!
8. In groups, design a poster to be displayed around your school or a Prezi presentation that discusses the components of a balanced lifestyle. Your poster or presentation should depict the importance of maintaining balance in your life to improve health and wellbeing.

Resources
- Weblink: Insomnia
- Weblink: Hypersomnia
- Weblink: Play squash!
9.5 Check and challenge

Explain
1. What are the five lifestyle components?
2. What is sleep and why is it so important?
3. How can we best ensure a good night’s sleep?
4. Think about your own sleeping patterns. Suggest three things you could do to improve the quality of your sleep.
5. Describe something that you would consider to be rest following a period of time working on a problem-solving exercise.
6. Describe something that you would consider to be rest following a period of intense exercise.
7. Describe how stress might affect your ability to have a good night’s sleep.
8. What is the difference between active and passive leisure activities?

Elaborate
9. An analysis of your lifestyle suggests that you need to find time for an extra 30 minutes of physical activity each day. For each day of the week, suggest where this time would come from and what activities you would do.
10. Describe five ways by which we can become more active in school and work.
11. Describe a leisure activity that involves planning and one where no planning is required.
12. Describe a hobby that would be suitable, interesting and appropriate for you and your friends. Explain why it is a good choice.
13. Discuss why the need to plan might be a barrier for some people in their choice of leisure activities.
14. Identify areas you can improve on to enhance your health and wellbeing and set three goals that will enable you to successfully achieve these improvements. Use the SMARTER goals worksheet in the Resources tab to help you set your goals.

9.6 Valuing diversity and promoting inclusivity

Australia is a diverse nation and this may be reflected in the make-up of your local community. Diversity within your community may come from people with varying cultural backgrounds and languages; however, it can also be due to people of different ages, religions, disability, sexuality and gender. In this subtopic you will explore the individual and community benefits of diversity and discover ways that individuals can promote inclusion.

9.6.1 Diversity within Australia

Data from the 2016 Australian Census highlights the changing nature of our society. Some of the key findings are shown in the figure at the top of the next page.

Gathering data on Australians’ sexuality and gender has its limitations, as people who have been treated disrespectfully in the past may be unwilling to reveal this information about themselves in formal surveys such as the Census.

Use the Australia as 100 people weblink in the Resources tab to learn more about the characteristics of Australian society as captured by the 2016 Census.
Australians have very diverse backgrounds as shown by the results of the 2016 Census.

1 in 5 Australians have some form of disability.

People are living longer, with 16 per cent of the population aged 65 years and over.

Australia’s population has grown to over 23 million people.

Christian religions make up 52 per cent, other religions 8 per cent and no religion 30 per cent of the entire population.

More than one-fifth (21 per cent) of Australians speak a language other than English at home.

More than one-quarter (26 per cent) of Australia’s population were born overseas.

Almost half (49 per cent) of all Australians were either born overseas or have at least one parent who was born overseas.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up 2.8 per cent of the Australian population.


9.6.2 Promoting inclusivity

Due to Australia’s diverse population, we all have access to engage with and learn about a variety of cultures. Different cultures can significantly influence the languages we speak, the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the sports we play and the music we enjoy. By engaging with cultural experiences outside those of our normal day-to-day lives we give ourselves the opportunity to learn about the way others live and also learn a little bit more about ourselves in the process.

We only need to examine Australia’s sporting landscape to observe how inclusion can educate people and change their previously held views of different population groups. In 1973, Rugby League player Arthur Beetson became the first Indigenous Australian to captain a national sporting team. In 1995, Ian Roberts became the first openly gay rugby player in the world. In 2011, Usman Khawaja became the first Muslim and first Pakistani-born Australian to play Test cricket for Australia. In more recent times we have also witnessed an explosion of professional women’s sporting competitions (WBBL, Super Netball, AFLW, Super W Rugby Union, Women’s Rugby 7s, NRL Touch Premiership, NRL Women’s Premiership, to name a few) that have garnered further exposure through subscription and free-to-air television. All of these advancements in the national sporting arena have the ability to expose viewers to different cultures and population groups, which can start the conversation about inclusion and a celebration of diversity. Have you ever considered how you as an individual can work to promote inclusivity in Australian society?
At an individual level, the way you treat someone can have a significant impact on their identity and can help them feel either included or isolated. An important part of inclusion is overcoming any preconceived ideas you may have about particular groups or cultures. If you do have some attitudes or beliefs that may be discriminatory, think about why this is and whether these opinions are valid. You will probably find that you have formed opinions based on other people’s prejudices and on stereotypes. Treating each person for who they are, and not for what group they belong to, is a first step in overcoming any prejudices you may have.

Using inclusive language is another way you can affirm diversity. Using non-sexist language — for example, ‘police officer’ rather than ‘policeman’ — affirms both males and females in this role. Using the word ‘partner’ affirms both heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

Being inclusive means not making assumptions about people. For example, young people often discuss their attractions and relationships with their peers and, in many cases, assume everyone is heterosexual. For a young person who is gay or unsure of their sexuality, this assumption can make them feel that who they are is not important or that they are excluded from the group.

9.6.3 Stereotypes and prejudice

Stereotyping can have negative impacts on a person’s wellbeing. You may have heard many stereotypes in the past such as ‘all young people are disrespectful’ or that people with a disability or mental disorder cannot look after themselves. Not only are these statements untrue, they also amount to prejudice. This means that the person is being pre-judged based on his or her affiliation with a specific group or because of the status of their physical or mental health. It is important for individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes and to promote positive language and attitudes about diversity.

By challenging stereotypes and prejudice we can demonstrate that we value and support everyone’s right to be treated fairly and with respect.

Ways to help you challenge stereotypes and prejudice include:

- **educating yourself.** Respect and value the differences between people and understand when language or actions may discriminate against them.
- **advocating for others.** Take action to support those who are treated unfairly. For example, let bullies know that their behaviour is not right or acceptable and that you do not agree with it.
- **role modelling inclusive language and behaviours.** This means ensuring you treat others fairly and practice using respectful language. Language is very powerful and can be a great tool to change stereotypes and attitudes.
HEALTH FACT

Stereotyping people because they belong to a certain group of people can lead to discrimination. When people are discriminated against and treated badly, their identity can be negatively affected. This can lead to poor relationships, depression and other health problems.

On many occasions people may experience prejudice in the form of racist attitudes and comments. You may have been a bystander when a racist comment was made and felt the uncomfortable nature of the situation. It is common for people in this situation to not act for fear of being a target as well. According to the Racism. It Stops With Me campaign there are some simple strategies that individuals may be able to employ to show signs of support to people who are the target of racist behaviour. These are outlined in the box on the next page.
If you see racist behaviour in public, you could:

- say something if it feels safe. It could be as simple as saying ‘Why don’t you just leave him/her alone?’

**If it doesn’t feel safe to say something, you could:**

- think about how you can support the target of the abuse. Go and sit or stand next to them and check if they’re ok
- tell someone responsible such as the driver if it’s happening on public transport or a security guard if it’s happening in a public place such as a shopping centre
- call the police on 000 if you think that you or somebody else may be in danger.

If you see racist material online, you could:

- report it. Most social media platforms (for example, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) have policies for and ways of dealing with offensive content
- make a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission, to the Office of the eSafety Commissioner or to the police
- say something. Go to the Anti-Hate weblink in the Resources tab to check out messages you can post in response to ‘haters’ online.

If you see racism directed towards a classmate or teammate, you could:

- say something. There are many ways you can respond to prejudice in any situation
- suggest they talk to someone. Most schools and sports clubs will have a policy for dealing with bullying and harassment, including racism.

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**CASE STUDY: THE IMPACT OF CONTEXTUAL FACTORS ON YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Muslim football star Lael Kassem breaking down barriers, eyeing Giants AFLW berth**

Lael Kassem was inspired by her nine brothers to play Aussie rules and now she is motivating others to take up the sport.

Kassem is quite possibly the busiest woman in the west. She plays for the predominantly Muslim Auburn-Penrith Giants in Sydney’s premier division as well as coaching their youth girl’s team. She is also studying for her PhD and has just been awarded the Jesaulenko internship and is currently embedded in the Giants’ coaching department.

The internship is named after Carlton Legend Alex Jesaulenko who was born in Austria in 1945 and after migrating to Australia played rugby and soccer in Canberra before taking up Aussie rules. Jezza has spoken many times about how footy helped him engage in Australian culture and Kassem is doing the same.

“Playing Aussie rules made me stronger in my identity as an Australian,” Kassem said.

“It was the same for my teammates, footy allowed us to travel and meet people from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds and play against them which I would not have done without the sport. The opposition teams were very welcoming and made that integration into the broader community easier.”

Kassem has been playing footy since 2011 and says her involvement has been a great vehicle to bring people from different backgrounds together. She also believes her team mates and opponents have more in common than what people might think.

“Everybody wants to categorise us and talk about our differences,” Kassem said.

“Let’s focus on what brings us together and what we have in common, that’s footy. We all love playing Australian rules football. We can all talk the language of football.”
“I’m Lebanese-Australian but I’m playing footy and integrating into Australia like everyone else.”
Kassem is hoping her involvement with the Giants coaching staff will help her one day line up for GWS in the AFLW.
“I’ve always been interested in high performance and elite athletes,” Kassem said.
“I’m still motivated to play at the highest level in the AFLW and this is inspiring me to follow that dream and is giving me a deeper understanding of the game I didn’t have before.”

CASE STUDY:
Tyrone Gordon, Dubbo man, brings family dances back to life for a new generation
In a hidden red-dirt bush amphitheatre near Dubbo, in central NSW, dozens of fidgeting children line up for Tyrone Gordon to smear ochre on their faces, arms, legs and bellies.
It is a tradition stretching as far back as there are stories. Once painted, they will be schooled in moves every kid used to be taught: the crow, the echidna, the emu, the rowboat, the brolga, the owl. The “family dances”, Gordon, 27, calls them.
“It’s the important things they teach,” he says. “No getting cheeky, no staying out after dark, no swimming in the river; no going to the special place that you’re not allowed to. How to hunt, what season’s coming up. That’s what the animal dances are about.” The sun is sinking, and the fires are lit. The teacher’s voice rises over the dusty hubbub. “Show us your goannas, boys. Show us your kangaroos. Now everyone, show us your echidnas.”
The kids swirl and contort, they stamp, they move to Gordon’s instruction: his pair of clapsticks and his singing in language both ancient and modern. Not just his local Wiradjuri: some of the dances being taught are from elsewhere, reflecting the intercultural communication that went on in pre-European times, and which continues.
These classes — drawing in both black and white children who each pay $5 for the experience, as well as a bottle of water and a piece of fruit — have been going for only six weeks, but interest has exploded.
It started with a post on social media: Gordon, who as a teenager was taught the old dances by Dubbo elder Wayne Krause and has been teaching others then, advertised that “I want to do some cultural things out bush”.
The first week 10 kids showed up. The next, there were 90. Many of these youth are in care; statistically, many face stiffer life challenges than other young Australians. Some of them have no direct link to the lived history of the region and their own people.
According to the 2011 census, indigenous unemployment in the NSW northwest Wiradjuri language region was at 20 per cent, compared with 4 per cent for the non-indigenous population. Year 12 completions were 22 per cent, versus 39 per cent.
By Gordon’s own admission he was at risk of drifting off into the half-world of drug use and small-time criminality that social disadvantage often produces. “I’ve gone off the rails,” he admits, simply. He says dance — and his other love, boxing — are what keep him grounded.
“A lot of programs that are run in Dubbo targeting at-risk people, or people likely to be in contact with the criminal justice system, look at sporting or other community connections,” says Scott Tanner, the police inspector in charge of the local force’s indigenous relations strategies. “This is one that targets culture. If a kid doesn’t know where he comes from or where he belongs, it can be hard for him to know where to go.”
It’s about giving pride to kids who will take it from whatever direction it can come.
The session feels like footy training, with parents ringed around the dance circle on folding chairs, proudly taking photographs, and the littlest ones playing in the shadows. At one point, Gordon sends two boys off for mucking about.
“They’re not just getting cultural learning,” says Dubbo woman Kimmie Collins, who has brought six-year-old indigenous grandson Bailey — her ward since birth — as well of a handful of others from Narromine, half an hour away. “They’re getting teaching about how to live. Here, Bailey learns his own stories.”
Gordon, who also takes his traditional dance education to schools around the region, wants the endeavour to become a prosperous business, and has aspirations to take it international.
He’s adamant though that it’s not just entertainment. The way he sees it, what he’s doing is nation-building.
“Without a story, you don’t know who you are, and you way you transmit those stories is through dance, through movement,” he says. “It’s not about ‘your people did this to me, your people did that to me’; it’s about rebuilding from both sides.”
9.6 Activities

Promoting inclusion
1. (a) In small groups research one of the following campaigns or events and explore how they celebrate diversity and promote inclusion.
   - Harmony Day
   - Always #LikeAGirl
   - Indigenous Rounds in national sporting competitions such as the NRL, AFL and netball
   - Bingham Cup, Rugby Union
   (b) Present your findings to the rest of the class via an oral and/or visual presentation.

Challenging stereotypes
2. (a) Complete the following table outlining a stereotype associated with each group and include a comment as to why it would be considered prejudicial.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Stereotype</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with a disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQI people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Australians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with a mental illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) In small groups, discuss your responses to part a and consider the social and emotional impacts that stereotypes may have on individuals.
(c) In small groups, role play a scenario in which a mental health stereotype is portrayed and then challenged by the use of positive language and behaviour.

Case study
3. Read the case study in section 9.6.3, ‘Muslim football star Lael Kassem breaking down barriers, eyeing Giants AFLW berth’ and answer the following questions.
   (a) What are some of the stereotypes usually associated with females playing a contact sport such as AFL?
   (b) How has Kassem’s involvement in AFL promoted diversity and inclusivity within her community?
   (c) Discuss the positive influences a story like this could have on changing people’s attitudes towards multiculturalism.

4. Explain how a program such as Tyrone Gordon’s dance classes can have benefits for:
   (a) individuals
   (b) the community

Extension activity
5. (a) Research the inclusion policies of various national sporting bodies such as the NRL, AFL, Netball Australia and Cricket Australia. Examine how policies such as these increases diversity within the sporting association and promotes inclusion of all Australians.
   (b) Design a policy for your school community that would make it a more inclusive place.

9.6 Check and challenge

Explain
1. How might we notice diversity within a community?
2. How can sport be used as an introduction to celebrating diversity?
3. What are some examples of inclusive language?
4. List five strategies that can assist in promoting inclusion.
5. What are some examples of stereotyping specific groups?
6. Define the term ‘prejudice’.

**Elaborate**
7. How could you become a role model for people looking to challenge prejudice?
8. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up what percentage of the total Australian population?

### 9.7 Community participation and connection

Evidence supports the close relationship between people's health and the living and working conditions that form their social environment.

#### 9.7.1 The social determinants of health
Factors such as socioeconomic status, conditions of employment, power and social support — known collectively as the social determinants of health — act together to strengthen or undermine the health of individuals and communities. The WHO describes social determinants as:

... the circumstances in which people grow, live, work, and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness. The conditions in which people live and die are, in turn, shaped by political, social, and economic forces.

An individual’s social environment includes the local community they live in, their workplace, their school and any other community groups they are involved in. It has strong links to positive wellbeing, so it is important we encourage this connection for all individuals.

#### 9.7.2 Benefits of being in a community
Community doesn’t just relate to where you live, it encompasses your shared interests, beliefs and activities. There are many places where individuals and groups can connect and be a part of a community through participation in both physical and social activities.

- Community groups include:
  - sporting groups
  - cultural groups
  - playgroups
  - senior citizen groups
  - recreational groups, such as Scouts and Guides
  - creative arts groups such as drama or musical groups
  - parenting groups
  - book clubs
  - environmental groups.

#### 9.7.3 Spaces for community interaction
Having a sense of community and opportunities for social interaction are two key factors that contribute to physical and mental wellbeing. A sense of community refers to whether you have a feeling of ‘belonging’. This belonging is encouraged by opportunities for interaction, with nature and with people. Social isolation and lack of community interaction are associated with poorer health. Any place or space that allows people who share similar interests to come together can have a positive impact. A sense of belonging brings with it...
feelings of security and increased feelings of identity. For example, sporting teams, cultural groups and special interest groups such as bird watchers or skaters in a skate park all have a sense of belonging when participating together. The increase in events such as the colour run, mud runs and community fun runs have been prominent in areas across Australia and have been designed to increase the community involvement in physical activity, but in turn have a positive effect on mental health and are shown to be building strong community links. These links with the broader community through social networks are important for health and wellbeing.

Community connection is important to our health and wellbeing.

There are different types of community spaces and each plays a different role in meeting the needs of all individuals and in supporting safe, healthy and connected communities; for example:

- meeting spaces — community halls, footpaths, shops, gardens
- playing spaces — fields, sports grounds, parks, beaches
- learning spaces — community gardens, libraries
- celebration spaces — places of worship, parks
- creative spaces — schools, galleries, museums
- growing spaces — spaces tended by the local community such as creeks and community gardens
- active spaces — outdoor gyms, cycle paths, stairs, open space.

DID YOU KNOW?
According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2011 report, nearly 72 per cent of young adults (aged 12–24 years) are involved in social or community groups. The 2014–15 AIHW report showed that around 99 per cent of Indigenous Australians were involved in sporting, social or community activities.
9.7.4 Community connection

We can improve our relationships and social wellbeing by instructing other people through physical activity sessions or participating beside them in team sports and helping them to understand the concept of play. This might include roles such as coaching or it might mean volunteering at a local fun run. You might even be involved at school running a sport session for your classmates.

When undertaking these tasks, you are able to develop and improve interpersonal skills or attributes such as your communication skills, problem-solving skills, time management, your ability to work as a part of a team and your self-confidence.

These skills will help you work more confidently within a team and in everyday life, as well as helping to enhance your social and mental wellbeing as you improve your ability to communicate confidently with other people.
9.7.5 Healthy, happy communities
The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) outlines specific action areas to improve health for all. One of the key action areas that is essential to ensure complete wellbeing is to ‘create supportive environments’. If we can create an environment that has activities to include all members of the community regardless of factors such as age and background, then we are creating a supportive environment for people to feel free to participate in whatever activities they desire.

Ensuring community members feel included will not only benefit their sense of wellbeing but will also allow you to feel a sense of accomplishment and pride as you have helped someone else connect with their community. You are also playing a part in supporting social justice for all and making the world a better place.

There are a range of support systems you might have in place at your school that aim to build a supportive environment, such as peer support or buddy systems. There might also be particular modifications made around the school so that students with a disability are able to participate easily in whole-school activities.

9.7.6 Health benefits of well-designed built environments
A 2003 study found that those people living in highly walkable neighbourhoods spent almost twice as much time weekly (137 minutes) walking to complete local errands compared with those living in low walkable neighbourhoods, and about half as many residents were overweight. This suggests that well-designed neighbourhoods comprising safe, open spaces might deliver important social, physical and emotional health benefits.

Social health benefits
Natural spaces promote social contact by bringing people together, creating a more connected and cohesive community. There are many opportunities for social interaction in a natural environment. Examples include family camping trips, kicking a ball in the park with friends, going bike riding and walking to the shops. Having a strong social network, such as friends, family and peers, can promote mental health and reduce stress.

Physical health benefits
Being in open spaces provides the chance to be active. A recent, and one of the largest, Australian research studies conducted by the University of Western Sydney found that availability of green neighbourhoods encourages walking, but also encouraged more intense forms of exercise such as jogging and team sports. It showed that access to green spaces allowed for greater opportunity to do regular physical activity — more than once per week.
Emotional and spiritual health benefits

Just being part of the natural environment brings with it positive mind–body benefits. Connecting with nature has a ‘de-stressing’ effect on the mind. As a result, your physical body experiences a reduction in muscle tension and heart rate. Natural settings provide spiritual inspiration and time for reflection. Nature can bring calmness to the body as we fill our lungs with fresh air and stretch our body.

The connection with the environment is no more evident than in Australian Indigenous culture, in which the environment provides food, culture, spirit and identity. The land is considered sacred and the people’s connection with the land is the most important identity-shaping relationship. Their belief is if the land is treated well, it will provide well for you and your family. This is reflected in the saying ‘if you look after Country, Country will look after you’. This connectedness and respect for the land is the way that Indigenous people ‘care for Country’. This ‘oneness’ with country is shown by the link between the wellbeing of an individual and the wellbeing of the land.

HEALTH FACT

The OECD Better Life Index reported that Australians felt ‘a strong sense of community and high levels of civic participation’, with 94 per cent of people feeling they knew someone they could rely on if they needed help. This sense of community is a hallmark of Australian life.

9.7 Activities

Building connection

1. In small groups research what groups are available in your community for people of a variety of ages and cultures to connect through physical and social activities. As a class, share each group’s findings and create a list of your local community groups.

Refining interpersonal skills

2. In small groups plan a practical lesson for your class to participate in. Discuss with your teacher to determine suitable activities. Designate a role for each member of the group. Roles may include: Team Leader, Secretary and Group Instructor. Reflect on how your group worked together during this activity.
   • What worked well?
   • What didn’t work well?
   • Did you feel a sense of accomplishment?
   • What do you think could be improved for next time?
Case study
3. Read the following case studies and answer the questions that follow.
   (a) William is in Year 8. He has recently moved to Australia from China and has trouble speaking and understanding English. In China he was top of his classes and involved in a range of extracurricular sporting activities, however, since moving to Australia he has been struggling academically and hasn’t been able to attend any sporting trials because he doesn’t understand what is required. He feels isolated and isn’t sure where to turn for help.
      i. What groups are available in your school to support William?
      ii. What could you do to help William feel more included in school?
   (b) Alex is in Year 7. She has muscular dystrophy and is now in a wheelchair. Alex loves watching sport and wishes she was able to run around with the other students.
      i. In what ways could you involve Alex in sport at your school?
      ii. In groups, devise some physical activities that individuals who use wheelchairs could participate in at school.

Regenerate a natural space
4. Identify an area or section of the school grounds or local community that is currently underused or uncared for.
   (a) Measure the dimensions of this area and convert it into an aerial scale drawing of 1:100.
   (b) Propose a plan to change this area into a useable space where individuals and groups can connect to nature or as a community by addressing the following points:
      • the proposed purpose of this space
      • the specific target audience from the school or community for which the space is designed
      • the health benefits the space will bring
      • the relevant authorities that will need to be consulted before the plan can become a reality
      • who will be responsible for caring for this space.

9.7 Check and challenge
Explain
1. What are the social determinants of health?
2. List community groups or places in your local area that offer opportunities for people to interact.

Elaborate
3. How can being involved in the organisation or planning of physical activity improve skills such as teamwork and self-confidence?
4. Explain how ensuring that all members of a community feel included and able to participate in activities they enjoy will enhance their sense of wellbeing, and in turn yours?

Evaluate
5. Research the Ottawa Charter and present your findings to the class. Your presentation should include what the Ottawa Charter is, why it was created and what the factors or determinants that make up the charter are.
6. As a class think of some community initiatives that your local area could benefit from. Draft a letter to your local council or Member of Parliament outlining your ideas and detailing how your community would benefit from these initiatives.
9.8 Review

9.8.1 Summary

• Many cultural influences affect a person’s time and the type of physical activity undertaken.
• The types of activities Australians are engaged in has changed considerably over the last century as immigrants have shaped a different cultural landscape, bringing new games and activities to the Australian people.
• Natural and built environments provide opportunities for people to connect with others.
• Natural environments offer physical, social and spiritual health benefits.
• Being outdoors offers a range of health benefits including improved feelings of wellbeing, production of vitamin D and reduced feelings of exhaustion.
• Participating in community groups provides a sense of connectedness and mental wellbeing.
• Having a sense of community and opportunities for social interaction are two key factors contributing to physical and mental wellbeing.
• It is important to analyse our lifestyle by weighing up the time we spend on the contributing components. We need to make sure that we don’t spend too much time in one area of activity at the expense of another.
• Rest is important in assisting the body to recover from fatigue caused by intense mental activity or physical exertion.
• It is important to understand that rest is different from sleep and is not a substitute for it.
• Deep sleep is the most important stage of sleep and one that best revitalises the body.
• Using break time at school and work to exercise is a healthy practice because it consumes energy, relieves tension and improves mental performance.
• If we are able to mix physical activity such as walking with periods of concentration we will be more productive in our work and study.
• Leisure can be active or passive.
• Health-related fitness is concerned with the level of fitness we need to maintain good physical health.
• Australia is a very diverse nation with many cultural backgrounds.
• By engaging with various cultures we learn about how other people live and this helps us to become more inclusive individuals.
• You can use inclusive language to affirm diversity and accept people from all walks of life.
• Stereotyping can have a negative impact on a person’s wellbeing and can lead to discrimination.
• Social determinants of health include socioeconomic status, conditions of employment, power and social support. These determinants can strengthen or undermine the health of individuals and communities.
• Participating in community groups can have both physical and social benefits.
• Involving yourself in different aspects of community life such as coaching and being a part of a team can improve your self confidence and communication skills.
• Being able to exercise in open natural spaces can have a positive impact on not only your physical health but also your mental health.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the factors that contribute to a safe and healthy community?

Evaluate your initial response to the essential question after having studied this topic.
9.8.2 Key terms

- **built environment** the human-made structures of our communities
- **circadian rhythm** the internal body clock that is roughly a 24-hour cycle. It is affected by external forces such as sunrise and crossing time zones (jet lag).
- **civic participation** joining events in your community, being involved
- **cohesive** joined together, unified
- **connectedness** the degree to which people come together and interact with others and their environment
- **cultural influences** the external factors that help shape the attitudes and behaviours of an individual or group
- **determinants** causes or reasons
- **focal lengths** the distance from the lens of your eye to the object you are viewing
- **leisure and recreational activity** an activity chosen for enjoyment and self-satisfaction
- **lifestyle components** rest, sleep, school/work, physical activity, and leisure and recreation
- **myopia** short-sightedness, the inability to see long distances
- **natural environment** any naturally occurring environment, such as beaches, rivers and mountains
- **physical activity** any movement where the large muscles of the body are working, such as walking, windsurfing and gardening
- **prejudice** unfavourable opinions or feelings formed without reason, knowledge or thought
- **rest** a state of relative inactivity during which the body uses time to restore itself
- **risk management** identifying elements of risk, for example, bushfires
- **sleep** a deep state of unconsciousness that, at best, is uninterrupted and continues for a long period of time
- **social interaction** the way you talk and what you do when with other people
- **stereotyping** applying a set of characteristics typically used to categorise a group of people
- **stress** a physical reaction, such as sweating, that is felt in response to stimuli such as fear or nervousness

9.8 Check and challenge

To answer questions online and to receive immediate feedback and sample responses for every question, go to your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au/Note: Question numbers may vary slightly.

Key terms quiz online:

Multiple choice quiz online:

Check your understanding

1. Describe the cultural influences that have helped shaped the activities you are interested in.
2. What aspects of a built environment allow for community connectedness?
3. What are the social, physical and spiritual benefits of being in a natural environment?
4. What features of a community allow for physical activity to be incorporated into everyday lifestyle?
5. How can being outdoors enhance our health?
6. Why is it important to incorporate rest into our lifestyle?
7. How can engaging in different cultures affect wellbeing?

Resources

- Digital doc: Worksheet 9.6 Key terms quiz (doc-29390)
- Digital doc: Worksheet 9.7 Multiple choice quiz (doc-29391)
- Digital doc: Key terms glossary (doc-29392)