

Foodbank of Western Australia Incorporated



Foodbank

An Australia Without Hunger



2012 School Based Physical Activity Initiative

Executive Summary



Foodbank of Western Australia Incorporated

Healthy Food For All

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Executive Summary

Research has identified less than half of Western Australian School students report undertaking the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity every day with 41% of primary boys and 27% of primary girls meeting these guidelines.² Current physical activity guidelines recommend children and adolescents (5-18 years) undertake 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily for good health.¹

Foodbank Western Australia has great capacity to provide physical activity opportunities to its school based community. In 2012 Foodbank's School Breakfast Program had a reach of over 15,000 students at 395 schools across the state. Foodbank WA's *Choose to Move* physical activity initiative was originally developed in 2010 as a pilot program in 12 primary schools in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The pilot was developed in consultation and collaboration with health professionals and other stakeholders to enhance the existing Healthy Food for All Program. The Healthy Food for All Program integrates targeted nutrition and health promotion for those participating in the School Breakfast Program³. The initiative was implemented in 61 schools in 2011.

A shortage of sports equipment is cited as a common barrier to the delivery of physical education in schools, and to students engaging in unstructured play before school, during recess and lunch breaks⁴. *Choose to Move* endeavours to overcome this barrier by providing schools with high quality sports equipment packs. The sports equipment provided to schools could be utilised by students for "free unstructured play" before/after breakfast, recess and lunch times and also used by teachers to provide structured physical activity lessons in conjunction with the Department of Education's physical activity resource *FUNDamental Games Strategies (FGS)*. The *FGS* resource was developed by the Department of Education and it was designed for teachers of year's four to seven and comprehensively assists teachers to plan, deliver and evaluate effective physical activity programs, and to implement whole-of-school physical activity programs, policies and actions.

Highlights from *Choose to Move* in 2012 include:

- **48** schools throughout the state participated in *Choose to Move*.
- *Choose to Move* reached over **6289** students in years four to seven and **281** teachers.
- **202** sports equipment packs were distributed.

What did students say?

- **98%** had fun playing with the *Choose to Move* equipment.
- **79%** believed they did more physical activity during the school day since the *Choose to Move* equipment arrived in their class.
- The most popular types of equipment were the basketballs, dodge balls, soccer ball, AFL footballs and netballs.
- During the school day, between **4%-8%** of students who in the pre-program survey indicated they did not play sport, reported playing with *Choose to Move* equipment in the post-program survey.
- Significantly more students in the post-program survey compared to the pre-program survey:
 - reported being physically active every day of the school week (60 minutes/day).
 - reported participating in physical activity lessons with their teacher.

- identified that they should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity/day
- correctly identified they should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity each day, and
- thought that physical activity was important for their health..

What did teachers say?

- **94%** of teachers agreed that *Choose to Move* increased participation in physical activity during lessons and break times.
- **96%** believed the *Choose to Move* equipment encouraged students to be more physically active.
- **87%** specified that *Choose to Move* equipment assisted them to conduct physical activity lessons.
- **78%** believed the *Choose to Move* equipment encouraged physical activity events to occur within their school.
- **92%** agreed that participating in the *Choose to Move* Program assisted their class to achieve the government's requirement that all students participate in at least 2 hours of physical activity/week, during the school day, as part of student learning programs.
- **100%** of teachers used the *FGS* manual in conjunction with the *Choose to Move* equipment.
- Teachers agreed that the *Choose to Move* Program had a positive impact on student outcomes, especially:
 - student health
 - physical activity skills
 - student social skills
 - social relations between staff and students
 - Student concentration
 - Engagement with class activities

Recommendations:

1. Continue to provide *Choose to Move* to School Breakfast Program Schools
2. Investigate the cost to print *FUNdamental Games Strategies* – game cards to include in the sports equipment packs