



Inclusion and Diversity

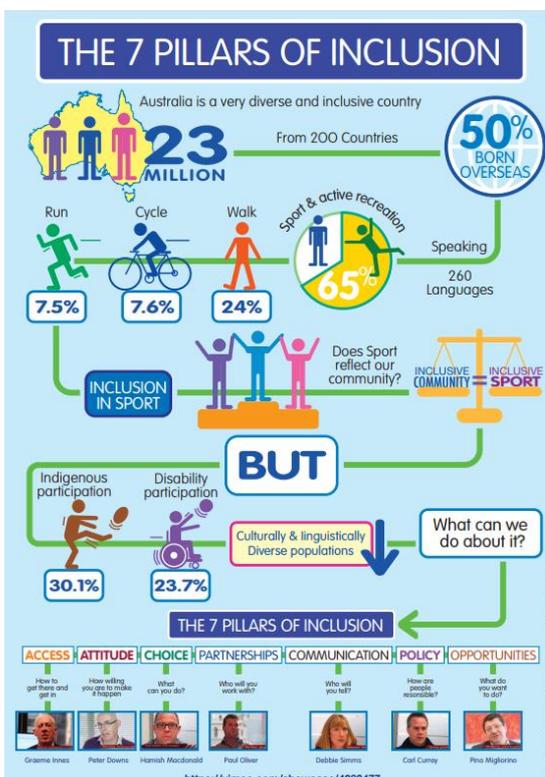
Active Schools in Action #13 - The Small Things!

It is the small things that can make the biggest impact! We challenge you to keep this simple statement at the forefront of your thinking as you read on. In an educational setting, inclusion and diversity may be defined as all students having access to participate in their learning, the provision of an equal opportunity to take part in all activities on offer alongside their peers and being supported by informed adjustments and teaching strategies tailored to meet their social, emotional, academic, and physical needs. As educators, it is essential to firstly consider each students strengths, interests, goals and needs. By doing so we create improved opportunities for students to better participate and reach their full potential at school and in life.

While the sporting landscape has changed enormously in recent years, it is a reality that some students experience barriers to participating in sports at school and in their local communities. To ensure that all students can participate equally, we must question what we do as educators when we are aware that these challenges exist. How can we promote inclusion through our Physical Education curriculum and sports programs? How do we discuss it with other educators?



Important Considerations



A person is not defined by a single characteristic such as their age, race, culture, religious affiliation, gender, sexual orientation or ability. **Inclusion** is pro-active behaviours, options and actions to make students from all backgrounds and abilities feel welcome. An uncomplicated way to think about **diversity** is to think about your school community. How accurately do your school sporting teams reflect the diversity of your school community? An inclusive school Physical Education and Sports program should afford a range of opportunities to participate, regardless of a student's personal characteristics.

When thinking about inclusion and diversity in your educational setting, consider the '7 Pillars of Inclusion'. The pillars place a significant emphasis on our habits, or the things we do, which either support or inhibit inclusion. Once we recognise these patterns of behaviour, we can start to implement adjustments that promote and enable inclusion. In this approach, the 7 Pillars serve as a springboard for creating diversity and can be utilised to address the "how to" of achieving inclusion. The model also assists schools to identify their strengths and weaknesses around inclusion and may help to create a strong and an inclusive culture for sport and physical activity.



The 7 Pillars of Inclusion

By understanding the 7 pillars of inclusion schools can create a uniform approach and a consistent vocabulary, which will help them move beyond simply appreciating and understanding the importance of diversity and inclusion, to taking simple observable action that will foster cultural change over time. It is the small things that can make the biggest impact.

(Click on the pictures for more information on each Pillar of Inclusion)

ACCESS

How do you get there and get in?

ATTITUDE

How willing are you to make it happen?

CHOICE

What can you do?

PARTNERSHIPS

Who will you work with?

COMMUNICATION

Who will you tell?

POLICY

How are you responsible?

OPPORTUNITIES

What do you want to do?

Approaches and Strategies

What	Small things	Big impacts
Talk to your students about inclusion and diversity	Have a conversation about expectations and etiquette. Students will have questions and concerns, so provide opportunities for discussion.	Talking with students helps them to understand that all people have needs and rights and that everyone is different.
Get to know your students	Knowledge is power. Find out about student abilities, strengths, and challenges, rather than making assumptions.	Knowing your students creates the opportunity to formulate strategies for individuals to promote their success and ongoing participation.
Engage your students	Encourage student voice in developing ways to adapt activities to allow all students to experience success and inclusion.	Generating trust that student voice is being heard and actioned promotes future participation by providing opportunities for peer leadership.
Modify activities to support all students	Build modifications into your daily physical activity planning. Provide opportunities for students to suggest suitable modifications.	Allowing all students to be involved in a safe and inclusive environment promotes creativity and ownership of the learning environment.
Engage with local community and councils.	Identify, engage and promote local providers and sporting bodies with sound inclusion policies.	The familiarity and trust established via a school program enables students to transition with minimal fuss into an extracurricular sporting environment.
Promote student achievement	Make a fuss. Celebrate all student achievements, acknowledge individual growth.	Acknowledgment and encouragement are great motivators. Use structured peer feedback with consistent vocabulary to build inclusion literacy.

Resources & Further reading *Click on the pictures below for more information and resources*

