

# Physical Literacy 101

FOR LEADERS



## Why is physical literacy something you should know about?

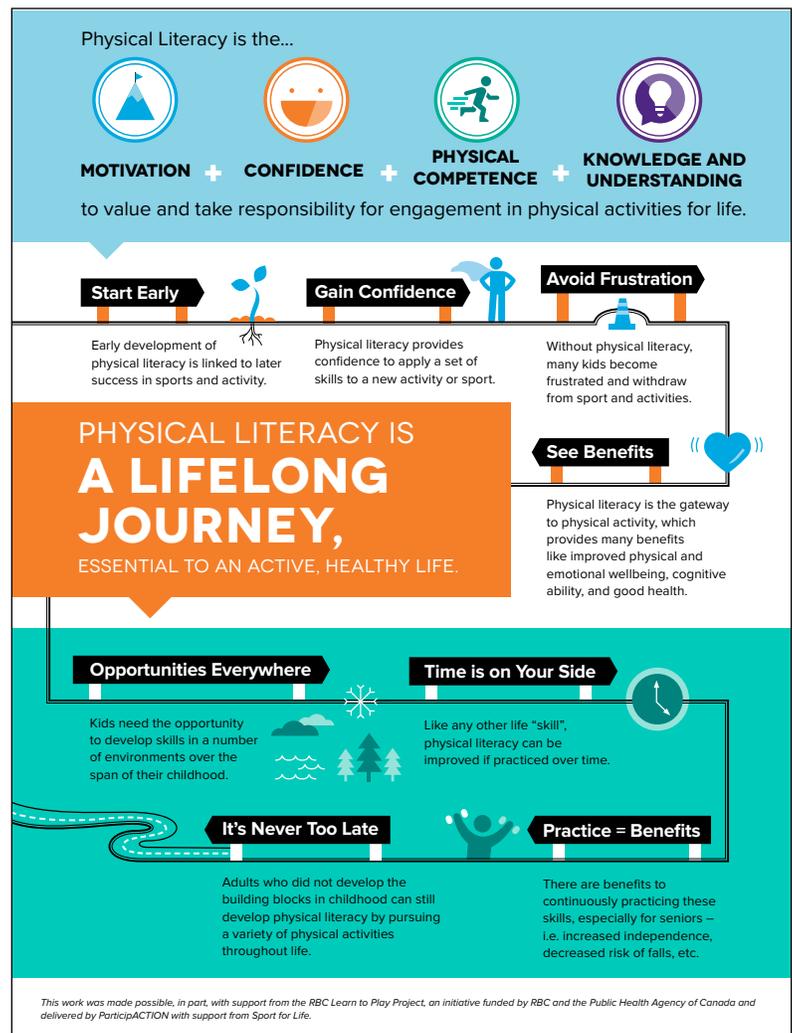
Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, knowledge, understanding, and physical competence to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.<sup>1</sup>

Understanding physical literacy can help us become more healthy and active now, while preparing us for a healthy and active future!

Physical literacy is very similar to learning how to read and write. It's all about developing a 'movement vocabulary'. It is also:<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ the gateway to physical activity, which benefits many other areas of our life, such as improved physical and emotional wellbeing, cognitive ability and good health;
- ✓ a door to opportunities in physical activity, sport and daily life;
- ✓ a way to provide people with the confidence to apply their skills to a new activity or sport.

Just like most things, understanding physical literacy takes time and practice.



Source: ParticipACTION

## Physical literacy has four main elements:<sup>3</sup>

**Motivation and confidence** – It is possible to enjoy being physically active; the more we do it, the more it is likely to play a key role in our life.

*Ask your members:* What do you enjoy about getting physically active?

**Physical competence** – This is achieved when we develop different movement skills and patterns, including the ability to complete movements in a range of intensities and for different durations.

*Ask your members:* What is your favourite movement?

**Knowledge and understanding** – Understanding the benefits of having an active lifestyle and knowing the importance of safety equipment is important.

*Ask your members:* What is one thing you cannot leave the house without when getting physically active?

**Engagement in physical activities for life** – That's when we choose to be active on a regular basis.

*Ask your members:* How do you get physically active every day?

**Physical literacy starts with fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, kicking, catching or throwing a ball<sup>4</sup>, and these skills are further developed through the ABCs of physical literacy<sup>5</sup>:**

**A Agility:** the ability to change the body's position quickly and efficiently.

**B Balance:** the ability to maintain body equilibrium

**C Coordination:** the ability to build up more and more complicated movements and perform them in a smooth way.

**For example:**

If you can → **RUN**, you can take part in → Soccer, basketball, volleyball, track and field, squash, badminton, rugby and tennis

If you can → **THROW**, you can take part in → baseball, soccer, football and bowling

Ways to incorporate physical literacy in your 4-H meetings:

- ✓ Expose your members to a variety of different activities.
- ✓ Break down the movements required for these activities.
- ✓ Go over any safety equipment and instructions.
- ✓ Take a movement break. Have different 4-H members run a team-building activity or energizer.
- ✓ Bring simple equipment like soccer balls or frisbees, so your 4-H members can use them before and after the meeting.

Have your 4-H members mentioned a physical activity they love or want to try? Check in with your provincial 4-H office to see if someone has started a club in your area for that activity or see if you can start one yourself!



4-H Canada has partnered with ParticipACTION to develop this resource  
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