

# Taking Control of Your Physical Literacy

FOR MEMBERS



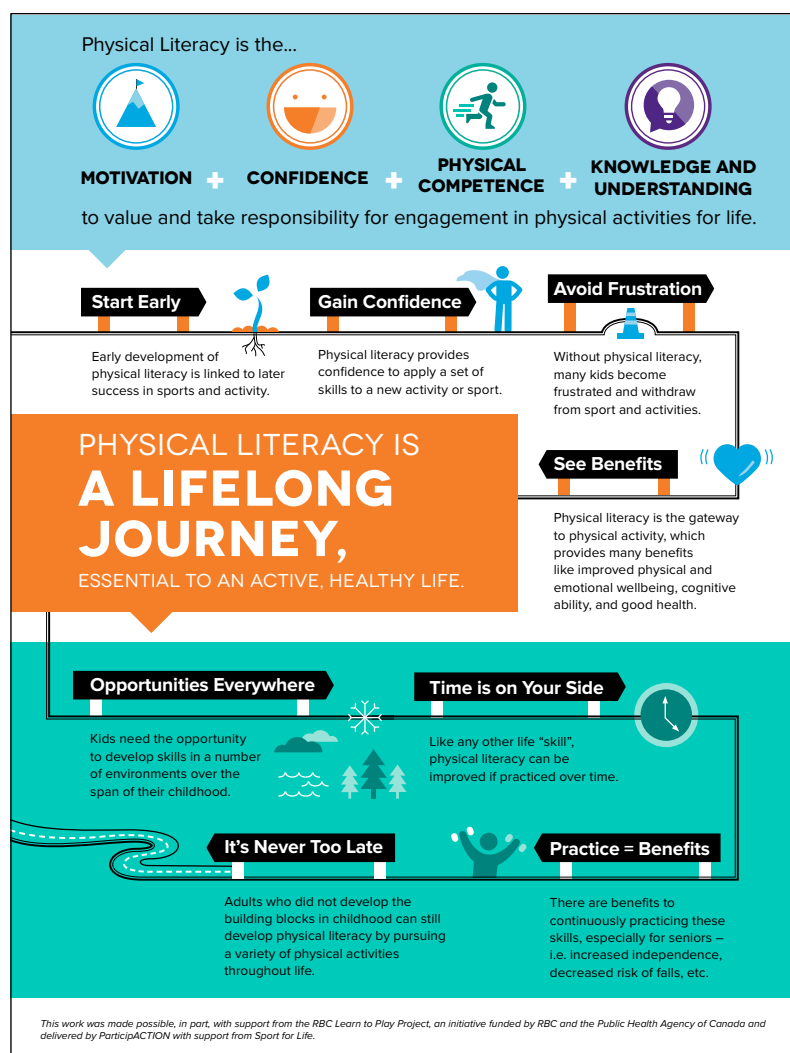
Have you ever heard of physical literacy? The term ‘physical literacy’ has only become widely popular in the past 10 years. Physical literacy is defined as the motivation, the confidence, the physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.<sup>1</sup>

The best way to think about physical literacy is that it’s just like learning how to read and write. It’s all about developing a movement vocabulary.

Understanding physical literacy is a lifelong journey, and it can help lead an active and healthy life. Just like learning a skill, it can take time and practice.

Physical literacy is important in all aspects of our life because:<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ It is the gateway to physical activity, which benefits many other areas of our life, such as an improved physical and emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ It provides the confidence to apply our skills to a new activity or sport.
- ✓ It opens up the door to a wealth of opportunities in physical activity, sports and daily life.



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 your life.

**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.

**Knowledge and understanding** – Understanding the benefits of having an active lifestyle can help trigger the desire to lead one.

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

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

If you can → **JUMP**, you can take part in → gymnastics, volleyball, diving and triple jump



Do you have a physical activity or sport you love to do?  
Talk to your 4-H leaders about starting a 4-H club  
that's all about being physically active!



4-H Canada has partnered with ParticipACTION to develop this resource  
[participACTION.com](http://participACTION.com)



[4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving](http://4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving)