

# **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians**

## **Summary and Appendices**



**A report by the University of Western Australia and  
The Centre for Health Promotion and Research Sydney  
for  
Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.**

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## Contents

Terms of Reference .....	4
Guidelines Summary.....	6
Methodology .....	7
Appendix A: Sequence of Guideline Development.....	10
Appendix B: Report of the National Workshop .....	21
Appendix C: Report of the first stakeholder review of guidelines .....	40
Appendix D: Report of the second stakeholder review of guidelines.....	49
Appendix E: International and further expert consultation.....	57
Appendix F: Consumer Testing 1. Focus Group Report .....	59
Appendix G: Consumer Testing 2. Intercept Interview Report.....	72
Appendix H: Report of 3rd Stakeholder Review of Guidelines .....	82
Appendix I: Other outcomes from the report.....	85

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The terms of reference for the project issued by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (DHFS) were to develop national physical activity guidelines. The guidelines are to do the following:

- offer guidance and options for physical activity which are both achievable and sustainable across all age, gender, socio-economic and occupational groups.
- include the needs of target groups of the obesity strategy of the NH&MRC report on "Acting on Australia's Weight," i.e., men aged 25-40; women of post menopausal age; children and Indigenous peoples.
- serve a similar purpose to the Dietary Guidelines for Australians (NH&MRC, 1991).
- complement the activities of the Active Australia initiative of the Australian Sports Commission and DHFS.

### **Scientific Advisory Committee Members**

The role of the Committee is "To provide technical advice to the Consultants and the Department".

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## GUIDELINES SUMMARY

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians**

#### **Preamble.**

The guidelines refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. Try to carry out all guidelines and for best results combine an active lifestyle with healthy eating.

### **Guidelines**

#### **1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

Where any form of movement of the body is seen as an opportunity for improving health, not as a time wasting inconvenience.

#### **2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

Make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, or do things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines.

#### **3. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days.**

Moderate-intensity activity includes things such as a brisk walk or cycling. Combine short sessions of different activities of around 10-15 minutes each to a total of 30 minutes or more. The 30 minutes total need not be continuous.

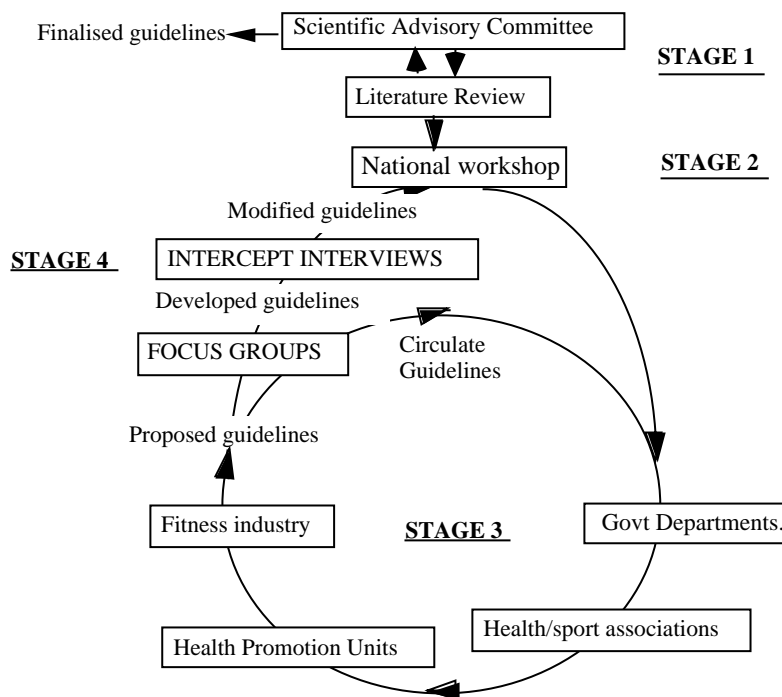
#### **4. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness.**

Vigorous exercise makes you 'huff and puff'. For best results, this should be added to the above guidelines on 3-4 days a week for 20 minutes or more each time.

## METHODOLOGY

The process of developing the national physical activity guidelines was an iterative one using the component circuit approach to needs assessment developed by the consultants (Egger, Spark and Donovan, 1991). The process is illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Research process



### ***Research Components***

The process of consultation took one year. In the first instance, a Scientific Advisory Committee of eight specialists, with the Chairman from the New South Wales Department of Health was established to guide the process. The committee met six times during the course of the project. Following the first meeting of the committee, a draft set of seven guidelines was developed from previous work (Donovan and Egger, 1996) and a literature review in the area. These were presented as a starting point to a national workshop of 27 scientific specialists in the field of physical activity and then to a larger workshop of 47 health or physical activity specialists working in the field.

The modified guidelines from these workshops were circulated for comment to stakeholders in appropriate Government departments, health and sporting associations,

health promotion units and throughout the fitness industry. Over 200 individuals or institutions were invited to comment on the third draft of the guidelines and over 50% of these did so. A fourth and fifth draft were then circulated back to all those previously consulted and this resulted in a sixth draft which was circulated to a small number of International experts (8) for comment and put on the appropriate Internet user group lists. Draft guidelines were also published in some health-related journals. Modifications and simplifications occurred following this stage resulting in a seventh draft.

The seventh draft of the guidelines was tested at the consumer level, firstly in a series of eight focus groups in metropolitan and rural Australia and then in 400 intercept interviews in shopping centres in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth. Modifications to this were made again by the Scientific Advisory Committee based on scientific accuracy versus public understanding resulting in a ninth draft. After a final circulation to stakeholders and revision by the advisory committee, a tenth and final draft of the guidelines was agreed upon. Detailed documentation of all stages of the consultation can be found in the Background and Appendices report accompanying this document.

### ***Separate Guidelines***

During the course of the consultative process, and based on background reviews (see chapters 1, 2 and 3), decision was made to recommend the development of two additional sets of separate guidelines. Although represented at the national workshop, Indigenous Australians felt separate guidelines developed following more consultation with Indigenous people were appropriate. It was also felt necessary to develop separate guidelines for children. A starting point for these were the International guidelines on physical activity for children developed by Sallis and Patrick (1996). Specialists in child health at the national workshop also felt the need for guidelines *to support* physical activity amongst young Australians. Although draft guidelines were developed for children within the current process (see Background and Appendices Report), further consultation was required and such consultation was beyond the scope of this project.

Additions to the existing guidelines for Australians, or recognition of the special needs of pregnant women, older people, those who are disabled and those who are overweight or obese, were originally considered. These were deleted after the third round of consultations because feedback from specialists in the area suggested they were now superfluous given the universality and hierarchical nature of the overall guidelines.

Because of their hierarchical nature, different levels of the final guidelines are appropriate for , irrespective of gender, age, ethnic background, body size or disability. An added proviso is that vigorous activity by pregnant women should be undertaken with medical supervision.

### **References**

Donovan R, Egger G. (1997). *Evaluating guidelines for physical activity*. Report for the NSW Department of Health.

Egger G, Spark R, Donovan R. (1991). "A component circuit analysis approach" to needs assessment and strategy selection in health promotion. *Health Promotion International*, (4):299-302.

Sallis JF, Patrick K. (1994). Physical activity guidelines for adolescents: Consensus statement. *Paediatric Exercise Science*, 6:302-314.

## Appendix A: Sequence of Guideline Development

### **Draft 1:**

Initial guidelines were proposed as a draft for the NSW Health Department based on a document prepared by Garry Egger and Boyd Swinburn for the prevention of obesity.

#### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 1**

1. Regard movement as an opportunity not an inconvenience
2. Increase daily 'incidental' activity
3. Accumulate planned mild-moderate intensity activity of at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
4. Enjoy an active participation in a variety of sport and recreational activities.
5. Increase the opportunities for safe, enjoyable, active play amongst children.
6. Decrease the time spent in sedentary behaviour and, for children, reduce the opportunities for inactivity.
7. Reduce fat in the diet to optimise energy balance through physical activity.

**Draft 2:**

After initial testing of draft 1 in consumer groups for the NSW Health Department, modification was made to arrive at draft 2. The major change concerned the lack of comprehension amongst consumers of the term 'accumulate' and the lack of understanding of the term 'incidental' exercise.

The basis of the changes are outlined in the report 'Proposed Physical Activity Guidelines' Consumer Testing for the NSW Health Department.

**Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 2**

1. Regard movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.
2. Choose the more active options in day-to-day activities
3. Increase the opportunities for safe, enjoyable, active play amongst children
4. Put together at least 30 minutes of one or more mild-to-moderate forms of exercise on most days
5. Take part in a variety of active recreations or sports that you enjoy
6. Decrease the time spent unnecessarily inactive, and in children, reduce the opportunities for inactivity
7. To maximise the benefits of physical activity combine with a balanced, healthy eating plan.

### **Draft 3:**

Draft 2 was tested at a National Workshop of specialists in physical activity to arrive at draft 3 of the guidelines. As a result of specialist groups at the national workshop it was considered appropriate to either develop separate guidelines for pregnant women and children or to incorporate these in a general discussion about the guidelines. There were concerns expressed about the understanding of some individual words and it was decided that these would be tested amongst consumer groups as options. General statements about incorporating physical activity into daily life and safety and enjoyment were also added.

The report of a National Workshop and progression leading to draft 3 of the guidelines is outlined in Appendix B of this report.

#### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 3**

1. **Think about physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**
2. (Option 2 : Think about *movement* as an opportunity, not an inconvenience)
3. **Choose the more active options in day-to-day activities**
4. (Option 2: Be active in as many ways as you can)
5. **Build physical activity into family, social and community life**
6. **Increase the opportunities for safe, appropriate and enjoyable activity**
7. **Put together 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity on most days**
8. **If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise**
9. (Option 2: If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise, *for added health benefits*)
10. **Combine physical activity with healthy eating.**

#### **Additional guideline for pregnant women**

1. Regular physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy

#### **Special Guidelines are to be considered for:**

- Special considerations include:
- Children
  - Indigenous Australians
  - women
  - the elderly
  - the chronically ill

#### **Draft 4:**

Draft 4 of the guidelines resulted from the circulation of the 3rd draft to over 200 stakeholders in the area around Australia. Additions were suggested to the guidelines to quantify movement intensity (e.g. movement where you 'huff and puff') and to give practical examples of different guidelines. Guidelines were also ordered hierarchically so that subgroups such as pregnant women, the elderly and the disabled could carry out steps of the hierarchy. Detailed results of this phase of the study are shown in Appendix C of this report.

#### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 4**

(Underlined words are options to be tested in consumer groups)

1. **Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**
2. **Be physically active every day in as many ways as you can**  
(e.g./for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, use the stairs instead of the lift, or do things by hand instead of using machines)
3. **Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**
4. **Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but doesn't get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**  
(e.g./for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or, swim, row, dance etc. for around 10 minutes each)
5. **If possible, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is activity where you get out of breath) for extra health and fitness benefits.**

#### **For a healthy pregnancy**

6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.

#### **For the elderly or the obese**

Try to stick to guidelines 1- 4

#### **For the disabled**

Where possible, try to carry out at least points 1-3.

## **Draft 5:**

After modification of the guidelines based on stakeholders responses, the guidelines were sent back to national workshop members and the Advisory Board. This resulted in a 5th draft of the guidelines being developed with only minor modifications from draft 4.

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 5**

(Underlined words are options to be tested in consumer groups)

**1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g./for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, do things yourself instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none and more is better than a little)

**3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**

**4. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but does not make you 'huff and puff'/get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**

(e.g./for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or more, or combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each)

**5. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is, where you 'huff and puff' ) for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3-4 days a week, for *extra* health and fitness benefits.**

#### **For a Healthy Pregnancy**

6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.

#### **For people who are elderly, very unfit or obese**

Try to carry out guidelines 1- 4 at least

#### **For people who are disabled**

Try to carry out guidelines 1-3 at least.

## **Draft 6:**

Draft 6 was developed from a second round of responses by the wider group of stakeholders detailed in Appendix D. The main change resulting from the fifteen responses received was the addition of an explanatory Preamble.

### **Physical activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 6**

(Underlined words are options to be tested in consumer groups)

#### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of activity required for good health and a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness training or sporting achievement. They also do not include stretching, warm-up and cool down requirements associated with a more advanced exercise program and for which other guidelines are available.

**1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g./for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, do things yourself instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none and more is better than a little)

**3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**

**4. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but does not make you 'huff and puff'/get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**

(e.g./for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or more, or combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each)

**5. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is where you 'huff and puff') for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3-4 days a week, for extra health and fitness benefits.**

#### **For a Healthy Pregnancy**

**6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.**

#### **For the elderly, the very unfit or the obese**

Try to carry out guidelines 1- 4 at least

#### **For the disabled**

Try to carry out guidelines 1-3 at least.

### **Draft 7:**

Draft 7 resulted from responses by 8 International experts, other stakeholders and participants from several appropriate user groups on the Internet. International expert responses prompted the dropping of specialist guidelines as these were now covered in the Preamble and through the hierarchical nature of the guidelines. It was also suggested that the term 'moderate intensity' might be dropped for simplicity and that explanations such as 'huff and puff' are not necessary.

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 7**

#### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health and a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. They also do not include stretching, warm-up and cool down requirements associated with more advanced exercise programs. For best results all guidelines should be followed. Otherwise do in from 1-5.

**1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g. make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, working in the garden, or doing things yourself instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little).

**3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating.**

**4. Put together at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all days of the week.**

(e.g. combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each or walk, play sport or cycle for 30 minutes or more. The 30 minutes need not be continuous)

**5. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness benefits.**

## **Draft 8:**

The eighth draft of the guidelines was developed from consumer responses in focus groups and intercept interviews. These are detailed in Appendices F and G. Most significant changes were the introduction of the term 'extra' into physical activity because of the misunderstanding of the amount of 'incidental' activity which could be carried out. Optional words were also dropped after testing and the order of the guidelines was changed to make these more hierarchical with the nutritional link being left to number 5.

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 8**

#### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health and a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. They also do not include stretching, warm-up and cool down requirements associated with more advanced exercise programs. For best results all guidelines should be followed. Otherwise do in order from 1-5.

#### **Guidelines**

- 1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**
- 2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**  
(Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little).
- 3. Put together at least 30 minutes of *extra* physical activity on most, preferably all days of the week.**  
(This can be, for example, as 3x10 minutes, 2x15 minutes or 1x30 minutes and can be part of work, family, community and social life)
- 4. *If you are able*, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for *extra* health and fitness benefits.**
- 5. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating.**

## **Draft 9:**

Draft 8 guidelines were recirculated to 204 stakeholders and 49 national workshop attendees for a third time. It was also presented to a meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee in this form. The main change was to re-introduce the term 'moderate intensity' physical activity on the basis of current scientific evidence suggesting this is a minimal requirement. Some explanations were also modified slightly to clarify the explanations. More detailed explanations of intensity were left for a slightly more detailed consumer booklet.

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 9**

#### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health and maintenance of a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. They also do not include the stretching, warm-up and cool down requirements of more advanced exercise. For best results all guidelines should be followed. Otherwise do as many as possible in order from 1-5.

#### **Guidelines**

**1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g. make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car; working in the garden, or doing things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines. Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little)

**3. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all days.**

(e.g. combine short sessions of different activities of around 10-15 minutes each or do things such as walk briskly, play sport or cycle for 30 minutes or more. The 30 minutes total need not be continuous.)

**4. If you are able, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness.**

**6. Combine an active lifestyle with healthy eating.**

## **Draft 10:**

The final draft of the guidelines (draft 10) resulted from the final Advisory Board meeting. The main changes introduced to the final document were a reduction in the guidelines to 4 by including the nutritional guideline (5) in the Preamble, simplifying the Preamble, and adding explanations to guidelines 1 and 4 to provide a symmetry with the other guidelines.

# **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians**

## **Preamble.**

The guidelines refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. Try to carry out all guidelines and for best results combine an active lifestyle with healthy eating.

## **Guidelines**

### **1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

(e.g. where moving the body in any way is necessary, or an option, this should be seen as an opportunity for improving health, not as a time-wasting inconvenience.)

### **2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g. make a habit of cycling or walking instead of using the car, or do things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines.)

### **3. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all days.**

(e.g. Moderate-intensity activity includes things such as walking or cycling briskly. Combine short sessions of different activities of around 10-15 minutes each to a total of 30 minutes or more. The 30 minutes total need not be continuous.)

### **4. If you are able, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness.**

(Vigorous exercise is that which makes you 'huff and puff'. For best results this should be added to the above guidelines on 3-4 days a week for 20 minutes or more each time.)



## Appendix B: Report of the National Workshop

### **Background**

The National Physical Activity Guidelines workshop was convened on behalf of the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) as part of the National Physical Activity Guidelines project. The workshop was conducted over the 9th and 10th of October 1997 at the Sydney Airport Hilton.

### **Expected Outcomes**

The outcome expected of the workshop was a set of draft physical activity consideration by other stakeholders throughout the country.

Consideration was also to be given to whether select groups (i.e. Indigenous, elderly etc) require special guidelines, or special consideration within the guidelines.

### **Participants**

Forty-five individuals from a range of disciplines around the country were initially invited to attend. As a result of substitutions and additions, based on requests from proposed attendees, the final attendance over the two days was 49.

Attendees were recruited on the basis of either a scientific or practical role in physical activity over several years. It was not intended to cover all individuals in the country working in this area as a third phase of the project was intended to canvas other groups and institutions.

Attendees were selected from advice given by the Advisory Board, through consultant contacts, and through recommendations from DHFS and other attendees already invited.

On the basis of a recommendation by the Advisory Board, day 1 attendees to the workshop were individuals with a scientific background or with interests in specialist groups who may either need separate guidelines or for whom the guidelines may need to be thoroughly checked. Day 2 attendees were drawn from practical people working in the field with experience in the public-scientific interface.

### **Format of the workshop**

Both days of the workshop were introduced by DHFS with introductions to the Advisory Board and consultant group.

The background to the project was discussed by way of a summary of two draft discussion documents circulated to attendees before the conference. The first of these: "The role of physical activity and exercise in the prevention of disease" concluded with a draft set of guidelines (already draft 2) for consideration by the group on day 1. The agenda for the workshop is shown below:

### **NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WORKSHOP - DAY 1**

Airport Hilton, Sydney, 9th October, 1997  
Acacia/Kurrajong rooms (1st Floor)

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 9.00  | Opening remarks - Michelle Fraser<br>Advisory group introductions - Bill Bellew<br>Project team - Prof. Rob Donovan<br>Personal introductions |
| 9.15  | Study methodology - Prof. Rob Donovan   |
| 9.30  | Background and requirements - Prof. Garry Egger   |
| 10.30 | MORNING TEA   |
| 11.00 | Group sessions for consideration of general guidelines  |
| 12.30 | LUNCH (Seasons Restaurant)  |
| 1.30  | Group reports   |
| 2.00  | Group sessions for consideration of special needs   |
| 3.30  | AFTERNOON TEA   |
| 4.00  | Group reports and development of special needs  |
| 5.00  | FINISH  |



Day 1 attendees were formed into groups to consider the following:

**Group tasks: Day 1: General Guidelines:**

1. Is the guideline supported by the scientific evidence and to what extent?
2. Is the wording of the guideline likely to be understood by all target groups and if not, how this could be changed?
3. Can the guidelines be reduced, simplified or condensed and whether there is one statement (such as the US guidelines) which can cover all requirements?
4. Are there other specific groups which are not covered by either specific or general guidelines? If so, what are they and what issues need to be considered?

Changes to the guidelines recommended by each group are discussed below:

## General Guidelines - Recommendations, Day 1

**Group 1:** Adrian Bauman, Michelle Fraser, Tim Armstrong, Colin Lane, Kathy Samaris, Penny Graham

### Recommendations:

#### General:

- Use the words 'physical activity' consistently
- There may be an umbrella statement suggesting that
  - being active is healthy
  - PA benefits (your) health
  - PA does not place you at risk
- Prioritising the guidelines is not crucial
- Special needs may be considered for
  - children
  - older adults

#### Specific:

##### *Guideline Numbers:*

1. Remove the negativity of the statement and incorporate health i.e. Regard/think of movement/ as an opportunity for health.
2. Concept generally supported
3. Don't place emphasis on kids. Emphasise enjoyment, fun, lifestyle. It was also pointed out that this is a 'structural' guideline and may not be appropriate here. (It was later agreed however that it did fit here).
4. Remove the word 'mild' and 'exercise' (for PA). Test consumer understanding of 'most'
5. *Suggest:* Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days.
6. This statement is politically important. Perhaps change to: ' be physically active through participation in sports or recreations that you enjoy.'
7. Delete 'children'. Remove the negativity in the statement. Find some more positive words.
8. Repeat dietary guideline no. 4 from the Dietary Guidelines for Australians instead of the current guideline i.e. maintain healthy body weight by maintaining a healthy diet with balanced activity.

**Group 2:** Neville Owen, Ian Padrisat, Cheryl Wright, Boyd Swinburn, Sandy Angus, Ian Kett, Ross Spark

**Recommendations:**

**General:**

- Special guidelines may be necessary for children i.e.
  1. increase children's opportunities for safe, enjoyable, active play
  2. reduce children's opportunities for unnecessary inactivity

**Specific:**

*Guideline numbers:*

1. OK
2. *Suggest:* 'Decrease the time spent unnecessarily inactive
3. Should be no. 2
4. *Suggest:* 'Incorporate (?) PA into family, social and community life'.
5. *Suggest:* 'Put together at least 30 minutes or more of moderate PA on most days'
6. *Suggest:* 'Take part in a variety of active recreation, sport or fitness activities that you enjoy'.
7. *Suggest:* 'Combine PA with balanced, healthy eating'

**Group 3:** Michael Booth, Peter Liehne, Margaret Thomas, Marilyn Morgan, Trevor Shilton, Billi Corti.

**Recommendations:**

**General:**

- Evidence for the current guidelines:
  1. Possible
  2. Strong
  3. Generally
  4. Doubtful
  5. Generally
  6. Generally
  7. Generally +
  
- Add community cohesion as a benefit of PA (particularly in Indigenous groups)

**Specific:**

*Guideline Numbers:*

1. *Suggest:* 'Recognise and create opportunities to be active'
2. OK
3. OK
4. *Suggest:* Put together 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise on most days
5. OK
6. REJECT
7. *Suggest:* Maximise the benefits of PA with a balanced and healthy diet.

**Group 4:** Bill Bellew, Libby Darlison, Wendy Brown, Bob Morgan, Colleen Wilson, Wendy Gillett, Susan Taket

**Recommendations:**

**General:**

- Agreed an umbrella statement is necessary
- Should be separate statements for children and older people
- Need to add some benefits from vigorous activity
- State somewhere that 'it's never too late to start

**Specific:**

*Guideline Number:*

1. *Suggest:* Take every opportunity you can to participate in physical activity
2. *Suggest:* Be active in as many ways as you can each day
3. *Suggest:* Decrease the opportunity for inactivity and increase the opportunities for safe, enjoyable, active play amongst and with children.
4. *Suggest:* Put together at least 30 minutes of different, moderate intensity physical activity on most, preferably each day of the week
5. *Suggest:* Throughout life, chose to take part in active recreation or sport that you enjoy.
6. *Suggest:* If you can, take part in more vigorous activities or sports e.g. softball, football, vigorous cycling or swimming
7. *Suggest:* Combine your physical activity with a balanced, healthy eating plan.

## Recommendations Day 2

After each of the groups presented their conclusions and recommendations, each of the guidelines and recommended modifications were canvassed in a plenary session. Each first draft guideline and all suggested changes/additions were discussed until there was unanimous consensus on the wording, or consensus that alternative wordings should be tested further. The revised draft guidelines below were agreed to by all participants.

- 1. Think about physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**  
(Option 2 - Think about *movement* as an opportunity not an inconvenience.)
- 2. Choose the more active options in day-to-day activity**  
(Option 2 - Be active in as many ways as you can)
- 3. Build physical activity into family, social and community life**
- 4. Increase the opportunities for safe, appropriate and enjoyable activity**
- 5. Put together 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity on most days**
- 6. If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise**  
(Option 2 - In you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise, *for added health benefits.*)
- 7. Combine physical activity with healthy eating.**

## Specific recommendations - Day 2

Day 2 attendees were then divided into groups based on their speciality and asked to answer the following questions:

1. Is your special group covered by all the general guidelines?
2. If not, is there a need for (a) separate guidelines, or (b) a statement of special needs for this group to accompany the guidelines?
3. What are the needs/guidelines for that group?

Considerations of each group are presented below:

### **Group 1: Children and adolescents**

Michael Booth, Terry Dwyer, Peter Davies, Jeff Emmell, Andrew Hills, Mike Knowles, Karen Paterson, Trevor Shilton, Lori Cameron

#### **General:**

- This group has special needs and therefore separate, although linked, guidelines are recommended
- There needs to be a distinction between children and adolescents, determined by age:
- Thought needs to be given in the guidelines to parents, teachers and the young people themselves
- Special guidelines need to focus on skills (experiences) and positive experiences which support the development of an active life.

Consideration was given to:

- 0-5 years
- primary age
- high school age
- post school transition (?)

#### **Specific:**

##### **0-5 years:**

Provide opportunities to engage in structured and unstructured play with other children and with adults.

##### *Rationale:*

- focus on developmental needs
- movement skills/body awareness
- socialisation
- confidence in exploring the physical environment

##### **Primary age:**

1. Provide opportunities to develop fundamental action skills, confidence and success.

##### *Rationale:*

- skills as the basis for successful participation
- avoid 'public failure'

2. Provide opportunities for both boys and girls to participate in activities they enjoy in ways they enjoy

*Rationale:*

recognise that the needs and interests of boys and girls are different. Cater equitably to both

3. Where possible, encourage self-powered transport

*Rationale:*

- note the increase in children being driven around today

4. Ensure the physical environment provides convenient, safe and appropriate opportunities for activity.

*Rationale:*

- there is a need for cycle ways, parks, dance facilities

5. Provide opportunities for (encourage) participation in a variety of activities

*Rationale:*

- develop a broad range of skills  
- exposure to a range of activities

6. Provide knowledge and experience of all the components of health-related fitness i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility etc.

(For the following 2 guidelines, wording is incomplete):

7. Reduce the emphasis on competition in children

8. Pay attention to weight bearing activity in children

## **Group 2: Indigenous Australians**

Marilyn Morgan, Bob Morgan, Ian Padrisat, Sandy Angus, Ross Spark, Susan Tabak, Connie Nelson.

### **General:**

- The group expressed the notion that prior to colonisation, Indigenous people were very physically active every day, and they ate a high fibre, low fat diet of bush tucker. These activities of exercise and diet were intimately interwoven with spirituality and cultural practices.
- It was suggested by the group that the Aboriginal definition of health is different to that of the white community in that it has a greater emphasis on the community. There is a need to strengthen the community's resolve to utilise existing resources
- PA is a process of building and strengthening social relationships which are the fabric of holding the community together.
- The value of time is different between white and Indigenous societies in that the former is interested in the economic value of productivity, whereas the latter is concerned with giving meaning to time.
- It was suggested that guidelines for Indigenous people must have a human element. For this reason they have to be 'owned' by the community without a sense of imposition.
- There is a need to be careful about the wording of the guidelines because of the different use of language in Indigenous groups. An impression should be created that 'any form of PA is better than none.'
- Symbols may be better than words in any guidelines for Indigenous people.

### **Specific:**

- Specific guidelines are needed for Indigenous people
- It was proposed that the Commonwealth be approached to provide funding for a further meeting of Indigenous people to develop specific guidelines from the community and to develop these to draft stage
- It was suggested that further consultation and testing of a draft Indigenous guidelines be tested in Indigenous communities.
- It was suggested that an Indigenous representative be invited to join the Advisory Board of the current study.

- Any special guidelines which are developed for Indigenous people must parallel those for the general community

Possible directions for guidelines proposed were:

- walk with the kids, talk with the kids, teach them about the country
- physical activity is important for family, social and community life
- some activity is better than nothing, doing more is better still
- eat good tucker as well

### **Group 3: The Elderly and Chronically Ill**

Ian Kett, Barry Ward, John Ward, Don Chisholm, Susan Dumbrell, Bess Mathers, Amelia Howland, Margaret Thomas, Marie Williams

#### **General:**

There is no need for special guidelines but general conditions for the aged should be written into the main body of the report.

These include:

- there is no disability or age limit that precludes an individual from being able to carry out physical activity.
- if you have any doubts about your health or your capacity to commence exercise, seek professional advice.
- exercises to improve muscular strength, mobility, flexibility, are important *first up*, for older people.
- the activity you choose has to be appropriate to your needs and capacities
- specific activities are undertaken for specific purposes. (Perhaps there should be a chapter on specific activities for specific purposes).

#### **Group 4: Adults**

Tim Armstrong, Bill Daley, Harry Owen, Peter Liehne, Tony Sedgewick.

##### **General:**

- No special guidelines are called for, but some considerations need to be made in defining the guidelines.
- It was not clear where occupations and settings fit.
- If vigorous activity is promoted, there may be a need to discuss a screening questionnaire and incorporate the medical or National Heart Foundation (NHF) guidelines for testing for screening for vigorous activity.

##### **Specific:**

1. It was recommended that guideline 5 be split into:

3. Be physically active throughout life

5. Choose recreational, sport, or fitness or other physical activities that you enjoy.

2. There was a preference expressed for the first option in guideline 2.

**Group 5: Women** (Completed on day 1 - evening)

Libby Darlison, Wendy Gillett, Wendy Brown, Penny Graham, Colleen Wilson, Susan Dumbrell, Margaret Thomas

**General:**

- Although there is no need for special guidelines, special considerations need to be spelled out in the main document.

**Specific:**

Key groups to be considered are:

- adolescents (for skill development and appropriate activity)
- NESB women (particularly Asian)
- full-time workers
- urban
- Indigenous women

Key issues are:

- safety/security
- appropriate activity

Suggested changes to the existing guidelines are:

4. Increase the opportunities for safe, appropriate and enjoyable activity  
or

Increase the opportunities for safe, appropriate and enjoyable activities in family, social and community life.

An addition to the end of the existing guidelines, or as part of the background may be for pregnant women i.e.

" Regular physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy"

There may also need to be some reference to 'weight bearing' activity and its benefits for women, as well as children and the elderly.

## **Task 2: Day 2 Presentation of Guidelines**

As a second task, day 2 attendees were asked to form groups and discuss the following:

*How should the guidelines be best presented?*

As this is a specialist task it was not expected to yield final results, but to provide possible ideas for further consideration. Views canvassed included:

1. A flowing river with guidelines written alongside
2. Take 30 today
3. Concentric circles with the community, physical activity, family and 'me' in the centre and labels of 'do most', 'do more of', do least in outer circles. This was proposed particularly for Indigenous groups
4. A gradually sloping hill with age along the bottom and examples of each guideline along the slope.

## Workshop Summary

1. It was agreed that the following draft (draft 3) general guidelines be tested further as part of the consultation process:

**1. Think about physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**  
(Option 2 : Think about *movement* as an opportunity, not an inconvenience)

**2. Choose the more active options in day-to-day activities**  
(Option 2: Be active in as many ways as you can)

**3. Build physical activity into family, social and community life**

**4. Increase the opportunities for safe, appropriate and enjoyable activity**

**5. Put together 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity on most days**

**6. If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise**  
(Option 2: If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise, *for added health benefits*)

**7. Combine physical activity with healthy eating.**

2. Special and separate (but linked) guidelines were proposed for children. Draft guidelines are:

- 1) Provide opportunities to develop fundamental action skills, confidence and success.
- 2) Provide opportunities for both boys and girls to participate in activities they enjoy in ways they enjoy
- 3) Where possible, encourage self-powered transport
- 4) Ensure the physical environment provides convenient, safe and appropriate opportunities for activity.
- 5) Provide opportunities for (encourage) participation in a variety of activities
- 6) Provide knowledge and experience of all the components of health-related fitness i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility etc.
- 7) Reduce the emphasis on competitive sports and exercise in children
- 8) All children should regularly engage in some weight bearing activity

3. Special physical activity guidelines for Indigenous people should be developed in conjunction with the Indigenous community. Funding is sought from the Commonwealth to carry this out.

4. There is no need for special guidelines for other groups. However, special consideration needs to be given to the needs of women, adults, the elderly, disabled and chronically ill in a background document for the guidelines.

5. The needs of pregnant women may be covered by a special guideline added to, but not included in, the general guidelines.

As a result, the following were added to draft 3:

Additional guideline for pregnant women:

1. Regular physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy.

Special guidelines were also to be considered for:

- children
- Indigenous Australians

Special considerations include:

- women
- the elderly
- the chronically ill.

## Appendix C: Report of the first stakeholder review of guidelines

Following the national workshop, draft 3 guidelines were circulated as widely as possible to stakeholders in the area. The following represents a summary of the results of this phase of the consultation.

**Those consulted:** All names collected by the National Weight Control Strategy team at Deakin University, plus extras gathered through word of mouth. Total number = 204.

**Response rate:** 98/204 = 48%

### Answers to categorical questions:

1. *In your opinion, do the draft physical activity guidelines listed here cover all aspects of physical activity for health for the general Australian population?*

Yes 67%  
No 23%  
DK 10%

2. *Are the guidelines understandable to the general public in their present form?*

Yes 55%  
No 36%  
DK 8%

3. *Can the current draft guidelines be condensed to be simpler while still covering the major requirements of a set of physical activity guidelines?*

Yes 48%  
No 48%  
DK 4%

### A summary of general responses

- 1) The overall reaction to the draft guidelines was very positive. Constructive responses were categorised into 5 main categories:
- 2) Many people felt the guidelines could be condensed to 3 or 4. This would add simplicity to the project.
- 3) There was a view that information may be lost in the quest for simplicity. It was felt that the guidelines should, first and foremost, remain scientifically valid. The complexity may be overcome by giving examples.

- 4) Some guidelines appear to be different in dimension to others i.e. most had a call to action, but guidelines 3 and 4 in particular appear to be more related to people who may administer the guidelines. There were several suggestions that these be dropped or incorporated into other guidelines.
  - 5) As it is unlikely to ever have guidelines for everybody (e.g. disabled are difficult within the general guidelines, it was proposed that the title for 'All' Australians be changed to 'for Australians'. Several people also questioned why special guidelines are needed for women. They felt the need was as great for men.
4. It was noted that the guidelines should be tested with the general public.

#### **A collection of general comments**

- Should focus on increasing activity in any form, then frequency and intensity  
/Convey that any activity is better than none
- Mention should be made of walking (several comments)
- Special guidelines are needed for people with severe obesity/disabilities/ill  
/ Special considerations needed for the elderly
- Drop 'All' Australians as it doesn't cover disabled, obese etc.
- Why special guidelines for women? Why not men? (several comments)
- Needs to be more in advertising/promotional language for the masses  
/Be more positive/Need to be tested with the public (several comments)
- Fuse 3 and 4 (several comments) and possibly eliminate 7/ 3 and 4 are more for providers rather than the general public/exclude 4
- Need a visual version for illiterate people/ pictorial message would be good for NESB and others.
- Provide examples for all guidelines (several comments) - make more concrete
- There is a question of whether the dietary guidelines are a good guide (for the public in contrast to dieticians).
- The existing guidelines may be too brief to get the message across/ the emphasis should be on usefulness rather than simplicity/ there should be only 3 or 4 guidelines maximum.

- Perhaps a bottom line of shifting from a 'sedentary lifestyle' to some level of activity should be included/May need a statement suggesting to start slowly and gradually build up.

### **Comments on individual guidelines**

#### **1. Think about movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**

**OR**

#### **Think about physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**

##### *Preference:*

Option 1: 60%

Option 2: 40%

Total response: 25%

##### **Comments:**

- 'Think about' - change to consider?
- Define opportunity - for what? Health, enjoyment etc?
- Sounds silly, a bit strange, omit/ Is it relevant? May put people off to be told what to think
- is good because it 'sets the stage' for the other guidelines
- combine 1 and 4
- change to more positive

##### *Alternative suggestions*

- Consider the benefits of physical activity before you get into a car, catch a bus etc.
- Think of the opportunity for activity during your day as a bonus rather than an inconvenience.
- Being physically active or moving more is an opportunity to improve health.
- Physical activity is an opportunity, not an inconvenience.

##### **Proposed outcome**

Test in focus groups:

#### **Think about movement (pa) as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**

**OR**

#### **Think about all movement (pa) as an opportunity for improving health, not a time-wasting inconvenience**

## **2. Choose the more active options in day-to-day activity**

**OR**

**Be active in as many ways as you can.**

Option 1: 9%

Option 2: 91%

Total response: 23%

### ***Comments:***

- add 'where possible'
- combine 2 and 3.

### ***Alternatives:***

- Be physically active at every opportunity
- Choose the more active options in daily activity
- Be active in as many ways as you can by walking, playing games with children, or using stairs instead of the lift.
- Be as active as you can in daily activities - try to move more.
- Be active in as many ways as you can in day to day activities
- Be more active than you currently are.

### **Proposed outcome:**

**Be physically active every day in as many ways as you can**

(for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, use the stairs instead of the lift, or do things by hand instead of using machines)

## **3. Build physical activity into family, social and community life.**

### **Comments:**

- 'Build' is an Aussie carpenter terms - very 'blokie', change
- Unclear
- Doesn't add much/delete
- This is a different dimension to the others/not like the others
- Is a 'motherhood' type statement
- Express in more acceptable language
- Combine with 4
- Add 'work'

### ***Alternatives:***

- Bring opportunities for safe, enjoyable physical activity into family, social and community life.

**Proposed outcome:**

Delete

**4. Increase the opportunities for safe, appropriate and enjoyable activity.**

**Comments:**

- Is not an 'active' statement' like the others/ More for those providing services.
- How? Disadvantaged may not have the resources.
- personalise to increase 'your'
- Use examples/ may need clarification/ expand to include most obvious examples
- Is this relevant?
- Unclear. What is appropriate?/Too vague. What do safe and appropriate mean?
- Doesn't mean much practically
- Combine 4 and 2.
- Not applicable, needs to be more specific

**Alternatives:**

- Choose safe, enjoyable options in day-to-day activity

**Proposed outcome:**

Delete

**5. Put together 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity on most days.**

**Comments:**

- Many thought this meant combining a number of activities (it does) and therefore (incorrectly) thought it should be changed/ still not totally clear about 'accumulation'.
- Needs to be explained more
- Give examples re accumulation of 30 minutes/ define 'put together'
- Add at the end 'but at least twice a week'
- Why put in a time? Evidence for 30 minutes?
- Define moderate/ what does moderate mean/ can we have an example?.
- In general a good way of putting this information

**Alternatives**

- Put together 30 minutes or more of whole body physical activity (e.g. walking, cycling, swimming, dancing) on most days.

**Proposed outcome:**

**Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but doesn't get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**

(for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or, swim, row, dance etc. for around 10 minutes each)

**6. If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise**

**OR**

**If you can, take part in regular, vigorous exercise for added health benefits.**

**Preferences:**

Option 1: 4%

Option 2: 96%

Total response: 28%

***Comments:***

- Define 'more vigorous'
- Use physical activity instead of exercise
- Omit 'if you can'. Don't give an option.
- Use 'activity that makes you puffed' rather than 'vigorous'.
- How often is it necessary to take part in vigorous activity?

***Alternatives:***

- For added health benefits, take part in regular, vigorous exercise.
- More exertion (vigorous exercise) gives added health benefits
- If possible, take part in regular vigorous physical activity for added health benefits.

**Proposed outcome**

**If possible, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise (that is activity where you get out of breath) for extra health and fitness benefits.**

**7. Combine physical activity with healthy eating**

***Comments:***

- Omit
- What about smoking and other lifestyle patterns. Be more specific or reject.
- Links with Nutritional guidelines which is good
- Combining' sounds like eating while you exercise.

***Alternatives:***

- Combine physical activity with health eating to maintain a healthy body weight
- Maintain a healthy body weight by balancing physical activity and food intake
- Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating

**Proposed outcome:**

**Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**

**Additional guidelines**

**1. Regular physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy**

***Comments:***

- Agree with a special guideline for pregnancy, but not women
- Define advice for pregnant women more clearly
- Need a 'doing' (action) word similar to other guidelines
- Add 'but check with your physician.'
- May need to define whether to maintain activity or increase in pregnancy.
- May need to be more prescriptive for health and safety reasons

***Alternatives:***

- If you can, take part in physical activity every day because regular physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy.
- Regular physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy
- Regular, appropriate physical activity contributes to a healthy pregnancy

**Proposed outcome:**

**For a healthy pregnancy**

**Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.**

**Summary of proposed changes**

1. Reduce the number of guidelines to 5, plus one for pregnancy
2. Add examples to those guidelines which need further explanation
3. Use separate guidelines for children and adolescents
4. Test guidelines and wordings of different guidelines, in consumer groups.
5. Change the order of the guidelines such that these can be adopted progressively by the elderly, the obese and the disabled according to their limitations.

Draft 4 of the guidelines (below) arose from the first stakeholder response discussed above.

## **Physical activity guidelines for Australians**

(Draft 4)

(Underlined alternatives are for testing in consumer groups)

- 1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**
- 2. Be physically active every day in as many ways as you can**  
(e.g./for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, use the stairs instead of the lift, or do things by hand instead of using machines)
- 3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**
- 4. Put together a t least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but doesn't get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**  
(e.g./for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or, swim, row, dance etc. for around 10 minutes each)
- 5. If possible, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is activity where you get out of breath) for extra health and fitness benefits.**

### **For a healthy pregnancy**

- 6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.**

### **For the elderly or the obese**

Try to carry out at least points 1- 4

### **For the disabled**

Where possible try to carry out at least points 1-3.

Modifications were also made to the guidelines for young Australians as follows:

### **Physical activity guidelines for young Australians**

1. All children and youth should be physically active daily, or nearly every day, as part of play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school and community activities, and in ways which they enjoy and can maintain.
2. Children and youth should engage in three or more sessions per week of activities that last 20 minutes or more at a time and that require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion, but are not necessarily competitive.

### **Guidelines to support physical activity amongst young Australians**

1. Provide opportunities to develop fundamental action skills, confidence and success.
2. Provide opportunities for both boys and girls to participate in activities they enjoy in ways they enjoy
3. Where possible, encourage self-powered transport
4. Ensure the physical environment provides convenient, safe and appropriate opportunities for activity.
5. Provide opportunities for (encourage) participation in a variety of activities
6. Provide knowledge and experience of all the components of health-related fitness i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility etc.
7. Reduce the emphasis on competitive sports and exercise in children
8. Encourage weight bearing activity in all children

## Appendix D: Report of the second stakeholder review of guidelines

Draft 4 of the guidelines as developed from the first stakeholder review was sent back to the advisory board and all those attending the national workshop. Minor changes were made resulting in draft 5 (see below):

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 5**

(Underlined words are options to be tested in consumer groups)

**1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g./for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, do things yourself instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none and more is better than a little)

**3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**

**4. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but does not make you 'huff and puff'/get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**

(e.g./for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or more, or combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each)

**5. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is, where you 'huff and puff' ) for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3-4 days a week, for extra health and fitness benefits.**

#### **For a Healthy Pregnancy**

6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.

#### **For people who are elderly, very unfit or obese**

Try to carry out guidelines 1- 4 at least

#### **For people who are disabled**

Try to carry out guidelines 1-3 at least.

Draft 5 was then sent back to the wider group of stakeholders for a second review.

**Those consulted:** All names collected by the National Weight Control Strategy team at Deakin University, plus extras gathered through word of mouth. Total number = 204.

**Response rate:** 15/204 = 7%

### **General Comments**

- looking good/almost there
- comprehensive and concise/don't need to be added to or subtracted from
- If they're labelled 'physical activity' guidelines should the terminology be varied a bit (?)
- Provide preamble (as with kids to make clear that 30 mins of moderate exercise is the healthy minimum. Give context for what follows/set of words leading into the guidelines.
- Point out (may be in preamble) that any activity is better than none.
- Define 'physical activity' in the preamble.
- Add somewhere that 'some physical activity is better for your health than no physical activity - moderate is better.
- Put in somewhere that 'it's never too late to start.
- Dietary guidelines have pyramid 'model' for expressing the approach. May be worth doing here. (several comments)
- May be an idea to give warning about over-activity (in preamble)
- Maybe re-number e.g. with 1 as an over-riding principle or as 1, then 1a, 1b etc.
- Preamble great
- Unless the concept of everyday habit is included, most people will start with good intentions and abandon ship when a busy week comes along. Perhaps extend to add the phrase "... and make it a habit."
- why recommendations for specific groups? It gives the idea that the recommendations are too strenuous for very sedentary people. However even point 5 is OK for the sedentary - by the words 'if you can' this is already indicated. Too many exceptions makes it too complicated.

### **1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

#### **Comments**

- Neither movement or physical activity are the right terms
- Don't like 'movement'/physical activity is a better term

### **2. Be physically active every day in as many ways as you can**

(for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, use the stairs instead of the lift, or do things by hand instead of using machines)

### Comments

- Take out 'physical'
- 'Be active in as many ways as you can at home, work and recreation'.
- Drop the use of housework
- examples are good

i.e. Be active every day in as many ways as you can at home, work and recreation..

(for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, or do things by hand instead of using machines. Some physical activity is better than none)

### **3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**

#### **Comments:**

- What is healthy eating?/ even without a more active lifestyle you should have a balanced or healthy diet.
- good combination of diet and lifestyle
- delete 'to maintain a healthy body weight'. People will think they need to diet and diets don't work (?)
- why put in 'to maintain a healthy weight?' - it should be just to be healthy.

### **4. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but doesn't get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**

(for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or, swim, row, dance etc. for around 10 minutes each)

#### Comments

- Suggests you can walk for 30 minutes or do the others for 10 minutes each
- How feasible is rowing
- 'Add short sessions of moderate physical activity to make 30 minutes on most days'.
- The sentence '...for around 10 minutes each is ambiguous'
- No need to explain the intensity if examples are used.
- would prefer that 'at least 10 minutes' be included in this.
- leave out the underlined text. It is negative
- no 2 already recommends that being active is of importance and that some is better than nothing, therefore no need to say 'of moderate intensity'

### **5. If possible, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is activity where you get out of breath/huff and puff) for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3-4 days a week, for extra health and fitness benefits.**

### **Comments**

- Leave 'exercise' instead of physical activity if we are talking about vigorous
- Should this be after warming up.
- 'Build up to more vigorous activity, according to what you can do'.
- 'Strive to enjoy'....
- '...where you huff and puff/leave in the 'huff and puff'.
- add - about 20 minutes continuously, 2-3 times a week
- Enjoy from some regular, vigorous activity (that is where you 'huff and puff) for extra health and fitness benefits, if you can - about 20 minutes continuously for 3.4 days a week
- don't need 'for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3-4 days a week' - any vigorous activity will help.

### **For a Healthy Pregnancy**

**6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.**

#### Comments:

- do we need this?
- Pregnancy fits into the other guidelines
- you need to say more about pregnancy if anything is said

### **For the elderly or the obese**

Try to carry out at least points 1- 4

#### Comments

- Try to stick to Guidelines 1 to 4, at least
- omit 'obese'. This word is awful - 'very unfit' would describe anyone, regardless of size.

### **For the disabled**

Where possible try to carry out at least points 1-3.

#### Comments

Try to stick to Guidelines 1 to 3 at least.

## **Physical activity guidelines for young Australians**

Comments were also taken regarding the physical activity guidelines for young Australians i.e:

1. All children and youth should be physically active daily (or nearly every day), as part of play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise, in the context of family, school and community activities, and in ways which they enjoy and can maintain.
2. Children and youth should engage in three or more sessions per week of activities that last 20 minutes or more at a time and that require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion, but are not necessarily competitive.

### **Comments**

- Take out the numbers 1 and 2 in the first 2 statements if they are below
- First para is too long, needs to be broken in 2
- Should have something about reducing TV viewing
- perhaps provide examples e.g. 'by.....'
- Remove (or nearly every day) and read 'It is essential that children are physically active every day.'
- 'at least three sessions
- While movement skills are important for ACHPER and sports people, any form of activity should be encouraged first and foremost. The unskilled or poorly skilled child needs to feel good about being active - rather than feel bad about inadequate skill levels.
- Is there any way to encourage incidental/spontaneous activity through these guidelines - also as a family responsibility

### **Proposed changes:**

1. All children and youth should be physically active daily (or nearly every day), as part of play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise. This can be in the context of family, school and community activities, and in ways which they enjoy and can maintain.
2. Children and youth should take part, three or more times per week, in activities that last 20 minutes or more at a time and that require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion, but are not necessarily competitive.

## **Guidelines to support physical activity amongst young Australians**

1. Provide opportunities to develop fundamental action skills, confidence and success.

### **Comments:**

- substitute 'physical'/'movement' for 'action'/'
- substitute 'experience' for 'develop'
- substitute 'motor' skills for 'action' skills.

2. Provide opportunities for both boys and girls to regularly participate in activities that they enjoy in ways that they enjoy

**Comments:**

- Add 'fun' opportunities

3. Where possible, encourage self-powered transport (particularly walking and bicycle use)

- Use 'travel' instead of transport - more active
- add 'by providing bike racks and access, sponsoring a 'bike day' etc.

4. Ensure that the physical environment provides convenient, safe and appropriate opportunities for activity.

**Comments:**

- take out 'appropriate'

5. Provide opportunities for (encourage) participation in a variety of activities

- combine with 2

**Comments:**

- Use Encourage or it sounds too much like 2.

6. Support learning about all of the components of health-related fitness (strength, endurance, flexibility etc.)

**Comments:**

- Is this needed? Part covered in 5.
- add examples e.g. 'by.....'

7. Provide more opportunities for non-competitive sports and exercise.

**Comments:**

- need to be cautious about being too politically correct
- change to 'redirect emphasis from competitive to non-competitive sports and exercise in young people'
- this could be attacked by the Sport Australia people
- add examples e.g. 'such as.....'

8. Encourage weight bearing activity in all children for healthy bone development

**Comments:**

- Give examples of 'weight bearing'

Results of this phase of the research resulted in draft 6 of the guidelines. This is shown below.

## **Physical activity Guidelines for Australians - Draft 6**

(Underlined words are options to be tested in consumer groups)

### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of activity required for good health and a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness training or sporting achievement. They also do not include stretching, warm-up and cool down requirements associated with a more advanced exercise program and for which other guidelines are available.

**1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g./for example: walk or cycle instead of using the car, work in the garden, do things yourself instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none and more is better than a little)

**3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating to maintain a healthy body weight.**

**4. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (that is activity which is energetic, but does not make you 'huff and puff'/get you out of breath) on most days of the week.**

(e.g./for example: walk, cycle or play an active sport for 30 minutes or more, or combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each)

**5. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise/physical activity (that is, where you 'huff and puff' ) for a minimum of 20 minutes, 3-4 days a week, for extra health and fitness benefits.**

### **For a Healthy Pregnancy**

**6. Carry out regular, light to moderate intensity physical activity which is comfortable and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy.**

### **For the elderly, the very unfit or the obese**

Try to carry out guidelines 1- 4 at least

### **For the disabled**

Try to carry out guidelines 1-3 at least.

## Appendix E: International and further expert consultation

Draft 6 of the guidelines was sent to eight overseas specialists in the area. In addition, there were extra comments received from some local stakeholders not originally circulated. The main comments related to the addition of specialist guidelines for pregnancy, the elderly and the disabled. It was considered that as the guidelines are in hierarchical form, and as they have an introductory Preamble, they are suitable for all people, and specialist guidelines are not necessary. As a result, the changes were made to draft 7 shown below.

### **Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians** (Draft 7)

#### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health and a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. They also do not include stretching, warm-up and cool down requirements associated with more advanced exercise programs. For best results all guidelines should be followed. Otherwise do in from 1-5.

**1. Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g. make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, working in the garden, or doing things yourself instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little).

**3. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating.**

**4. Put together at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all days of the week.**

(e.g. walk, cycle or play a sport for 30 minutes or more, or combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each)

**5. If you can, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness benefits.**

## **Physical Activity Guidelines for Young Australians**

### **1. Children and youth should be physically active every day.**

This can be through play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise. It can be in the context of family, school and community activities. And it should be in ways which they enjoy and can maintain.

### **2. Children and youth should also engage in at least three, preferably more sessions per week of moderately vigorous activities that total 20 minutes or more at a time. These activities need not be competitive.**

## **Guidelines to support physical activity amongst young Australians**

1. Provide opportunities for boys and girls to regularly participate in a variety of fun activities that they enjoy.
2. When possible, encourage self-powered transport (particularly walking and bicycle use).
3. Ensure that the physical environment provides convenient and safe opportunities for activity.
4. Help children learn confidence and experience success while developing movement skills.
5. Support learning and mastery of the components of health-related fitness (i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility)
6. Encourage regular weight bearing activity (i.e. where body weight is not supported, such as in walking or running) for healthy bone development.
7. Discourage the over-use of inactive leisure such as TV or video watching, or computer games.

## Appendix F: Consumer Testing 1. Focus Group Report

### Summary

A total of eight focus groups testing draft 7 were run in Sydney, Melbourne and country NSW to test the acceptance and understand ability of the draft guidelines. The guidelines were well accepted and understood at all levels. Some minor changes to wording were recommended and a third guideline proposed for the Guidelines for young Australians. This reflects concern about the increasing influence of audio-visual technology coupled with perceived safety issues amongst parents. Testing of a physical activity pyramid and ladder showed that both clarified the guidelines significantly for most people. The activity pyramid was overwhelmingly regarded as the most effective visual presentation of the guidelines and this was thought to complement significantly the written guidelines.

### Sample Selection

Focus group participants were selected by professional recruiters. In all cases these involved individuals who carried out 'no regular exercise'. The groups and area of location were as follows:

Melbourne	men 24-45
	men 40-65
	women 24-45
Sydney	women 24-45
	women 40-65
	men 24-45
Bathurst	mixed 40-65
	mixed 24-45

All groups were recorded and conducted by one of the principal investigators. A standard form was used to objectively assess comprehension of individual guidelines with rating taken for understand ability and acceptance.

## **Focus Group Findings**

### **General - Guidelines for Australians**

#### ***The guidelines are understandable and acceptable to the target audience***

There was general approval of the concept of physical activity (PA) guidelines and of the approach presented here. Overall, the visual approaches (i.e. pyramid and ladder) were regarded more highly than the written guidelines, although both were seen to be complementary.

In all groups the connection with the food pyramid was mentioned (as a positive), although there was sometimes some initial confusion because of the difference in the upper triangle of the food and activity pyramids. It was noted by several people that the top of the food pyramid meant eating LESS foods whereas the top of the exercise pyramid still meant exercising, although the type of vigorous activity mentioned can be carried out less frequently. After some initial reaction however, the concept was understood by all.

#### ***Previous health promotion is the main barrier to acceptance***

The greatest potential stumbling block to acceptance of the guidelines appears to be, ironically, the success of previous health promotion aimed at encouraging regular vigorous activity. Whilst the concept of 'accumulated' activity is now understood with the revised wording of guideline 4, there is still some disbelief, based on earlier learning, that this could be so. After understanding the scientific basis of this concept however, it is regarded as a relief that this level of benefit can be achieved so easily.

#### ***Providing a preamble sets a back-drop for the guidelines themselves***

Initially, the guidelines were presented with no preamble. After developing these with specialists in the field it was then decided to add a preamble for public clarification. The preamble was universally understood, liked and accepted in all focus groups. In particular, this establishes the nature of a hierarchical order for the guidelines to follow and therefore establishes a mental-set to read the guidelines in order.

#### ***There is no need for mention of special groups***

Initial guidelines (draft 6) also included instructions for special groups such as older persons, disabled persons, the obese and pregnant women. Following advice from international experts, these were eliminated in draft 7 because the hierarchical nature of the guidelines enable them to now cater for all groups. To ensure this was acceptable at the consumer level, group members were asked if special consideration was needed for

these groups. It was unanimously agreed in these groups that the current guidelines meet these criteria in their present form.

### ***The order could be changed***

Instead of 'interrupting' the physical activity guidelines with guideline 3 on nutrition, it was suggested this may be put last (as number 5). The other guidelines can then be seen more clearly as a hierarchical order.

### **General-Guidelines for Young Australians**

#### ***Separate guidelines for children are necessary***

A separate set of guidelines for young Australians was seen as necessary and useful by all group members. There was less universal agreement however as to the effectiveness of these guidelines. The main concern was based around the target audience for guidelines. While it was agreed that guidelines could not be directed at child readers, it was thought they needed to be understood by this audience. On this basis the guidelines were simplified from those developed internationally by Sallis and Patrick (1996).

#### ***Mention needs to be made of reducing inactivity in the guidelines***

Modern technology and safety are widely regarded as the two main causes of inactivity in children. It was regularly stated in the groups therefore that guidelines for young Australians should include some mention of the need to reduce inactive leisure, particularly TV viewing. The nature of such a recommendation however was controversial with some group members suggesting that this must be written in a way which would not create guilt in parents.

#### ***Information to support guidelines is useful***

As well as the three main guidelines, the information to support these guidelines is seen as useful. After changes in the wording of these, all were clearly understood and regarded as important and actionable. There was some confusion in some groups about who these were aimed at and one man made a point of stating that he did not know enough to provide information to children about their exercise level. Overall however, the supporting guidelines were well understood and accepted with an acknowledgment of the importance of action for children.

## Specific - Guidelines for Australians

### **Guideline 1: Think of movement/physical activity as an opportunity, not an inconvenience**

Out of a highest score of 4, this guideline rated consistently at an average of 3.5. It was generally acknowledged that this was different from the other guidelines in that it was a "*thinking*" thing .... "*a mind-set*" or "... *a better way of thinking*".

*" It's a good phrase to fix in your mind"*

There was generally a positive reaction to the guideline and the general concept was well understood. There was one comment about '*...an inconvenience for what? Health?*' However, this was not a general consideration, particularly in the context of the other guidelines.

The term 'physical activity' was used alternately with 'movement' to compare clarity. In general, 'movement' was regarded as more "user friendly", although both terms were acceptable to most of those interviewed. One comment was that "*...Physical activity sounds like having to work at it, whereas movement is friendlier.*"

Another comment was that this "*...is a 'feel good' message instead of a chore.*"

*Adapted guideline: **Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience***

### **Guideline 2: Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g. make a habit of walking or cycling instead of using the car, working in the garden, or doing things by hand instead of using machines. Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little).

This guideline scored an average rating of 3.75. It was well understood and almost regarded as an axiom by most people. The explanations underlining the guideline were clear and well accepted, although it was agreed by most that this could be shortened to state that 'Some movement is better than none and more is better than a little.'

Some participants saw this as a physical extension of guideline 1, which sets the stage. Guideline 2 also becomes even clearer after seeing the pyramid.

The most common barrier referred to in the groups was 'time'. This guideline helps to overcome that however because it can be seen as being done throughout the day. The guideline also "*makes good sense*" and for that reason was perhaps regarded as the most positive and 'warmest' of the guidelines.

The guideline could be tested with the lesser wording. However, it may be useful to keep the longer explanation within a general explanation of guidelines for the public.

*Adapted guideline: **Be active every day in as many ways as you can.***  
(Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little)

### **Guideline 3: Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating**

The average rating for this guideline was 3.6. Generally it was regarded as a 'motherhood' type statement which, although important, does not add too much to the other guidelines. Most people saw it as necessary to get the benefits from an active lifestyle and the link with good nutrition was well understood. One negative comment amongst young men was that it has been said "*...so many times before that I switch off.*"

Some common comments were:

*"...there's no point in going on diets and things unless you have an active lifestyle"*

*"Don't drive to McDonalds. Fast walk to the fruit shop."*

The message is seen as a suggestion rather than a directive and is therefore regarded as positive. If there is any question, it is about "*what is healthy eating?*" All understand the purpose, but need to know a bit more about the type of eating that is 'healthy'. Confusion in the media about what constitutes healthy eating is common.

The national nutritional guidelines however are well known and well accepted, particularly in the pyramid form.

Because of the nature of this guideline (i.e. not in order of exercise guidelines, it was thought advisable to put it last on the list.

*Adapted guideline:* No change but re-order as number 5.

**Guideline 4: Put together at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.**

(e.g: combine short sessions of different activities of around 10 minutes each or walk, play sport or cycle for 30 minutes or more. The 30 minutes total need not be continuous)

Average rating was 3.2. Initially there was still some confusion with this guideline. While it could be accepted that accumulated exercise may be sufficient for health benefits, there was some concern (particularly amongst women) that "*...most people would do that anyway.*" As one woman said half-jokingly:

*" I already do that. So why do I feel so bad?"*

As a result, the word *extra* was added to physical activity and this caused no further confusion.

Although the explanations given below the guideline were found useful, it was agreed that all of this was not needed. Pointing out that activity could be in 1, 2 or 3 sessions, rather than having to be continuous, was enough to clarify the issue. The more detailed explanation may still be used in an explanation of the guidelines.

As advised by overseas experts, it was possible to drop the term mild-to-moderate intensity from this guideline because of the revised wording. In questioning, there was no confusion about the intensity without this extra wording.

There is still some concern that there is 'left over baggage' relating to this guideline from previous health promotion which suggests that exercise must be vigorous for health benefits. A typical comment from an older man was:

*"... you wouldn't even get a sweat up doing 10 minutes"* (i.e. exercise = sweat).

The principle is less likely to be accepted at first by young men, who regard exercise as 'something vigorous'. Anything less is seen as not really worth the effort.

The concept of accumulation was understood by the more educated group members. Education, such as that through Active Australia, may need to be directed at clarifying this concept to the general public. The proposed guidelines for physical activity will also be an invaluable tool for achieving that health promotion objective.

Once the concept is understood, there is general relief at the potential.

*... "If they say that doing manual tasks is good for you, you'd probably put more into it."*

*" Food has changed and machines have made the difference. Everybody has 2-3 cars."*

*"If it was put to you as easy as that, you'd be less apprehensive about doing it."*

*"I like it because it doesn't take so much of your time,*

The addition of context for this guideline came from a general acceptance of an extra guideline tested which stressed the value of 'community, work and social life' in carrying out physical activity. The idea of incorporating this context was well received, although it was thought that a separate guideline provided a different dimension. For this reason, the extra wording was added as clarification in guideline 4 i.e:

***Adapted guideline: Put together at least 30 minutes of extra physical activity on most, preferably all, days.***

(This can be for example as 3x10 minutes, 2x15 minutes or 1x30 minutes and can be part of work, family, community or social life)

**Guideline 5: If you can, enjoy some regular vigorous activity for extra health and fitness benefits**

Average rating 3. Most people accepted the rationale for this guideline but those in these groups did not see it as applicable to them. If the guidelines can be followed cumulatively, most were prepared to stop before they got here.

Amongst young men, this was seen as *real* exercise and therefore was regarded highly. However, none could see themselves doing it because:

"...I'm not the gym type." or "I hate gyms."

"It makes good sense, but I can't see me doing it."

These same young men also found it hard to reconcile the term 'enjoy' with this guideline, although this didn't seem to detract from its importance, supporting the notion that exercise is typically thought by this group to be good for you, but painful.

The guideline is seen as referring to the traditional notion of exercise. The most often cited examples were going to a gym, lifting weights or jogging. For that reason the guideline is directed to those who are already fit. Although for many, it was not thought to be for them, it was regarded as good because they feel that people "....should be told what to do."

"...there is obligation in the sounding of this message and therefore is good."

On another level the guideline was seen as:

"....an invitation to go to better health."

Some saw the use of the term "If you can" as a possible cop-out to those who may not want to do it. Others however thought that this clearly indicated that it was meant for those without health problems or disabilities. One possible suggestion was to change it to "if you are able....". This was tested in later groups and found to be well accepted.

***Adapted guideline: If you are able, enjoy some regular vigorous activity for extra health and fitness.***

### **Visual presentations**

The guidelines were presented in two forms, a pyramid or a ladder (figures 1 and 2). Both visual presentations were thought to increase the clarity of the guidelines but the pyramid was seen as better than the ladder:

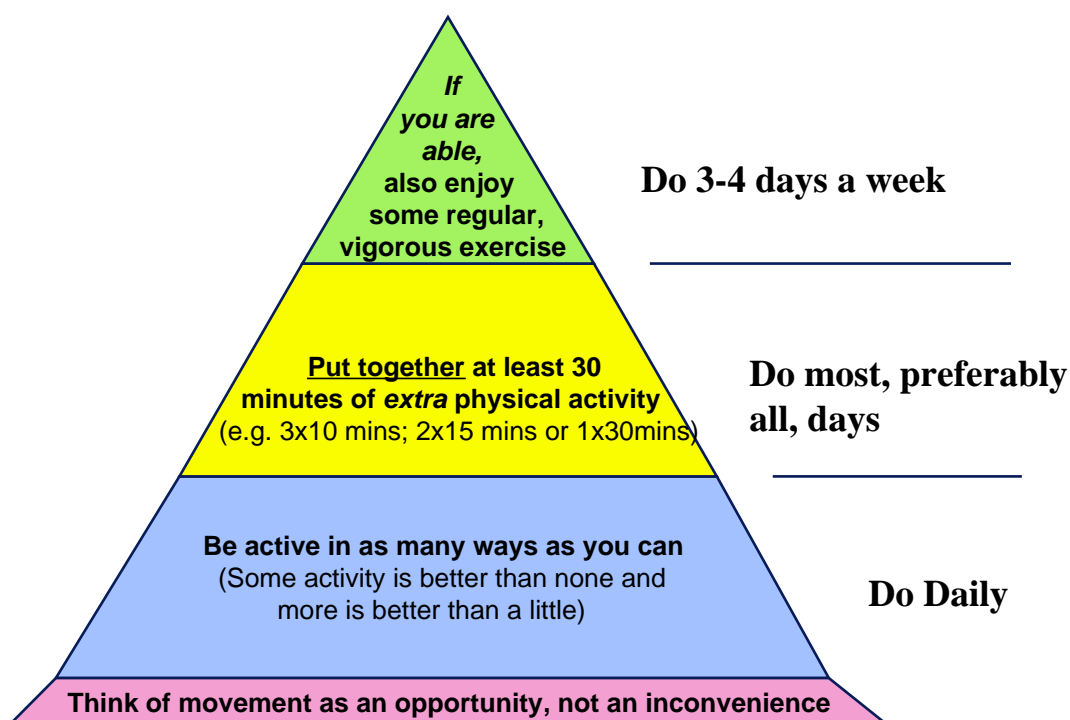
"...because it's got a peak. You know you can get there."

Changes in the wording on the pyramid followed changes in the wording of the general guidelines. With three levels, and a lower base for guideline 1, the pyramid presents a

clear and easily understood direction. Colour and cartoons on the pyramid were suggested as adding to its possible acceptance.

Figure 1:

## The Physical Activity Pyramid



**For better health and a healthy body weight, aim to go as high as you can on the pyramid**

**Figure 2:**

## **The Physical Activity Ladder**



**For better health, climb as high as you can on the ladder**

## Specific - Guidelines for Young Australians

### **Guideline 1: Children and youth should be physically active every day.**

(e.g. through play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise. It can be in the context of family, school and community activities. And it should be in ways which they enjoy and can maintain.)

Although seen as somewhat verbose, this guideline was well accepted. There was a suggestion that it could be made slightly more akin to guideline 2 in the Guidelines for Australians by adding

"...physically active every day in as many ways as they can."

The final 2 sentences could also be combined to increase the simplicity of the statement.

The term 'youth' was questioned by some participants as cumbersome and not highly regarded amongst young people. It was thought that this should be changed to either 'Young Australians' or 'children and teenagers'. The latter term was adapted for the modified guideline.

### ***Adapted guideline:* Children and teenagers should be physically active every day in as many ways as they can.**

(This can be through play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise. It can be in the context of family, school and community activities which they enjoy and can maintain.)

### **2. As well, children and youth should carry out at least three, preferably more sessions per week of moderately vigorous activities totalling 20 minutes or more at a time. This need not be competitive.**

Again, this guideline was accepted and understood as important for children. Although several group participants stated that

*"...kids do this anyway. They're always running around."*

Others pointed out that safety issues and technology had reduced the need for children to be active. Increases in the weight of children had become important.

Some slight modifications were made to the wording to make this more understandable e.g:

***Adapted guideline: 2. As well, children and teenagers should carry out at least three, preferably more sessions per week of moderately of vigorous (but not necessarily competitive) activities totalling 20 minutes or more each day.***

After initial testing of the guidelines to support activity, several group members thought it was appropriate to add a third main guideline related to use of inactive leisure time to the main guidelines. This would then supersede the use of item 7 in the guidelines to support physical activity. Most agreed that this was important, although several pointed out that it would need to be subtly worded so parents do not feel guilty about using TVs etc as a form of 'baby sitting'. It was regularly stated that:

*"... parents are so busy these days you can't always help it."*

*"...it's difficult to do, because you're so bust, even though you know it's true."*

The following was therefore tested and accepted as a third guideline for young Australians:

**Guideline 3: Inactive leisure such as TV and video watching, or computer games should not take the place of active play among children and teenagers.**

### **Specific - Guidelines to support physical activity in young Australians**

Adaptations to the tested guidelines to support activity resulted in the following adaptations:

1. Provide opportunities for boys and girls to regularly participate in a variety of fun activities.
2. Where possible and safe, encourage walking or bicycle use for transport instead of motorised vehicles.
3. Ensure that the physical environment provides convenient and safe opportunities for activity for enjoyment.
4. Help children learn confidence and experience success while developing movement skills.
5. Support learning of the different types of health-related fitness (i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility)

6. Encourage regular weight-bearing activity, for example walking or running, (where the body weight is not supported as it is in cycling or swimming) for healthy bone development.

### **Results of Focus Group Testing.**

#### **Modified Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians (Draft 8)**

##### **Preamble.**

The guidelines below refer to the minimum levels of activity required for good health and a healthy body weight. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. They also do not include stretching, warm-up and cool down associated with more advanced exercise. For best results all guidelines should be followed. Otherwise do in order from 1-5.

**1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

**2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(Some activity is better than none, and more is better than a little).

**3. Put together at least 30 minutes of *extra* physical activity on most, preferably all days.**

(This can be, for example, as 3x10 minutes, 2x15 minutes or 1x30 minutes and can be part of work, family, community or social life)

**4. *If you able*, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness benefits.**

**5. Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating.**

### **Modified physical activity guidelines for young Australians**

**1. Children and teenagers should be physically active every day in as many ways as they can.**

(This can be through play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise. It can be in the context of family, school and community activities which they enjoy and can maintain.)

**2. As well, children and teenagers should carry out at least three, preferably more sessions per week of moderately vigorous (but not necessarily competitive) activities totalling 20 minutes or more each day.**

**3. Inactive leisure such as TV and video watching, or computer games should not take the place of active play amongst children and teenagers.**

### **Modified guidelines to support physical activity in young Australians**

1. Provide opportunities for boys and girls to regularly participate in a variety of fun activities.

2. Where possible and safe, encourage walking or bicycle use for transport instead of motorised vehicles.

3. Ensure that the physical environment provides convenient and safe opportunities for activity for enjoyment.

4. Help children learn confidence and experience success while developing movement skills.

5. Support learning of the different types of health-related fitness (i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility)

6. Encourage regular weight-bearing activity, for example walking or running, (where the body weight is not supported as it is in cycling or swimming) for healthy bone development.

## **Appendix G: Consumer Testing 2: Intercept Interview Report**

### **Background**

Draft 8 of the guidelines was subject to quantitative consumer testing. The qualitative research (Appendix F) was designed primarily to assess whether consumers understood each of the guidelines and to modify wording and examples where appropriate.

Consumer intercept interviews were deemed necessary to allow probing of actual and potential misunderstandings.

### **Objectives**

The primary objective was to ensure that the guidelines as developed to that stage (draft 8) were understood by members of the general public, especially relatively inactive persons from a lower SES background.

Secondary objectives related to the ability of the guidelines to serve a motivational (or inspirational) function. Hence the guidelines overall were rated on their personal relevance to respondents; how realistic the guidelines were perceived to be for 'ordinary' people to follow; how respondents felt about following the guidelines 'more than they do now'; and the believability of health benefits accruing from guidelines 2 and 4.

A further objective was to assess people's reactions to the pyramid as a visual presentation of the guidelines. This was done in two ways: (1) half the respondents received the list of guidelines and half were given the pyramid before being asked how they felt about following the guidelines 'more than they do now'; (2) all respondents were asked to rate the pyramid on several evaluation attributes.

### **Sample**

Intercept sampling took place in high traffic shopping locations whose catchment areas consisted primarily of lower SES residents. Two locations were selected in each of Sydney, Perth and Melbourne. The interviewing was conducted in April 1998.

Interviewing occurred after 4pm on weekdays and on weekends to avoid a bias toward non employed persons. Quotas were imposed to ensure equal proportions of males and females across equal proportions of 18-29, 30-49 and 50-79 year old respondents. A total of 400 interviews was obtained: Sydney - 130; Perth - 140; and Melbourne - 130. The sample characteristics appear in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Sample Characteristics

<b>State</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
NSW	130	32.5
WA	140	35.0
Melbourne	130	32.5
	400	100.0
<b>Occupation</b>		
student/unemployed	49	12.3
home duties/retired/ blue collar	106	26.5
white collar	117	29.3
highly skilled/prof.	79	19.8
no response	34	8.5
	15	3.8
	400	100.0
<b>Sex</b>		
male	203	50.8
female	195	48.8
no response	2	.5
	400	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
18-29 years	132	33.0
30-49 years	137	34.3
50-79 years	131	32.8
	400	100.0

### **Procedure**

Potential respondents were approached and informed that the survey was seeking their opinions about 'physical activity'. Given the need for respondents to be able to read the guidelines, a literacy test was administered before continuing. The following type of respondents were excluded:

- those who 'exercised regularly to keep healthy' either vigorous exercise or walking for half an hour a day or more';

- those with a medical condition or disability that prevented them from doing physical activity like walking or gardening;
- those with 'anything to do with health, medical or fitness industry', or a close friend or relative with such links.

### The Questionnaire

After completing the screening questions, respondents were told that "The Commonwealth Department of Health has developed physical activity Guidelines for Australians. These guidelines indicate what levels of physical activity are recommended for people for good health. They are not guidelines for fitness or sports training. They are guidelines for health". They were then given the guidelines to read and retain while answering a series of questions about the guidelines.

### Summary of Major Findings

The guidelines in total were received very positively, engendered a self-assessment in many, and a motivation to be more physically active - or at least an appreciation that they should be more physically active (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Cognitive Responses to Guidelines Overall

	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
good idea/true/common-sense/agree	106	26.5
agree partially	10	2.5
should do more	89	22.3
self-assessment of activity	68	17.0
normal things do anyway	18	4.5
mention physical activity	156	39.0
mention nutrition	70	17.5
mention health	66	16.5
self-not active	27	6.8
tells what to do	6	1.5
enjoyment	3	.8
difficult to do	41	10.3
negative	7	1.8
other	58	14.5
don't know/none	36	9.0

The perceived meaning of the guidelines was tested for comprehension. Guideline 1 is seen as an exhortation to be physically active and to involve a 'think positive' outlook on physical activity (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Perceived Meaning of Guideline 1

	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
think positive/enjoy	96	24.0
take time to exercise	7	1.8
make exercise part of daily routine	29	7.3
take opportunity when can	17	4.3
do some exercise/keep mobile	43	10.8
a little better than nothing/just do something	19	4.8
'move it or lose it'	4	1.0
any movement is exercise	9	2.3
don't be lazy/don't be idle	36	9.0
opportunity for health	15	3.8
be thankful can move	23	5.8
be active as much as possible	14	3.5
movement/activity->health	30	7.5
mention 'opportunity'	6	1.5
'self explanatory'		1.8
good idea	9	2.3
other	33	8.3
don't know/none	65	16.3

Interviewees were then asked how they would follow guidelines 2-4 (Tables 4-6). Walking and generally being more active made up the bulk of the responses for guidelines 2 and 3 and moderate activity plus some extra activity were seen as necessary for guideline 4.

**Table 4: How Would Follow Guideline 2**

	f	%
walking/more walking	185	46.3
generally be more active/do more	80	20.0
moderate plus activities	63	15.8
housework	27	6.8
gardening	24	6.0
manual labour	4	1.0
shopping	2	.5
exercise/fitness	14	3.5
mild activities	7	1.8
3x10 minutes	2	.5
already do/job is active	37	9.3
would do it/try to	22	5.5
wouldn't do it/no time/no energy	12	3.0
don't know	17	4.3

**Table 5: How Would Follow Guideline 3**

	f	%
walking/more walking	138	34.5
generally be more active/do more	6	1.5
moderate plus activities	135	33.8
housework	1	.3
gardening	7	1.8
lawn mowing	1	.3
exercise/fitness	12	3.0
mild activities	3	.8
3x10 minutes	11	2.8
2x15 minutes	7	1.8
already do/job is active	12	3.0
would do it/try to	111	27.8
wouldn't do it/no time/no energy	34	8.6
don't know	11	2.8
not applicable	1	.3
no response	1	.3

**Table 6:** How Would Follow Guideline 4

	f	%
walking/more walking	70	17.5
generally be more active/do more	13	3.3
moderate plus activities	315	78.8
manual labour/gardening/housework	7	1.8
exercise/fitness	4	1.0
mild activities	17	4.3
already do/job is active	3	.8
would do it/try to	16	4.0
wouldn't do it/no time/no energy	46	11.5
don't know	26	6.5
not applicable	2	.5

On three 5-point bipolar scales 'very good - very bad', 'very motivated - very discouraged' and 'very enthusiastic - very disinterested', the overall mean rating across all three scales was 2.3 for the guidelines list and 2.4 for the pyramid (low score indicates positive rating - see Table 7)). In all cases, the majority of respondents scored in the top two boxes.

**Table 7:** Attitude to Guidelines by Version

	<b>Guidelines</b>	<b>Pyramid</b>
good-bad	2.16	2.20
motivated-discouraged	2.38	2.45
enthusiastic-disinterested	2.43	2.45

The pyramid was favourably received: 85% considered it a 'good' rather than 'bad idea'; 86% nominated it 'easy' rather than 'difficult to follow'; 80% 'encouraging' rather than 'discouraging'; and 86% 'easy' rather than 'difficult to remember' (Table 8).

**Table 8:** Attitude to Pyramid

	<b>Guidelines</b>	<b>Pyramid</b>
	%	%
good	87.4	85.1
easy to follow	83.4	86.1
encouraging	80.4	80.1
easy to remember	85.4	86.1

On a 4-point bipolar scale, 34% rated the guidelines 'very' realistic for people to follow, with a further 57% stating 'quite realistic' (Table 9). Only 7% claimed the guidelines were unrealistic to follow. There were no significant differences by sex or age.

**Table 9:** How Realistic for People to Follow by Sex (% in parentheses)

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Row total</b>
very realistic	64 (31.5)	71 (36.6)	135 (34.0)
quite realistic	120 (59.1)	106 (54.6)	226 (56.9)
quite unrealistic	7 (3.4)	12 (6.2)	19 (4.8)
very unrealistic	7 (3.4)	3 (1.5)	10 (2.5)
don't know	5 (2.5)	2 (1.0)	7 (1.8)
<b>Column total</b>	203 (51.1)	194 (48.9)	397 (100)

Missing Observations: 3

On a 4-point scale anchored at 'not relevant', 34% rated the guidelines 'very' relevant to them personally, with a further 40% stating 'quite' relevant. Ten percent claimed the guidelines were 'not relevant' to them personally (Table 10). There was no substantial difference by sex, but 18-29 year olds were less likely than older persons to see the guidelines as 'very' relevant: 28% versus 38% and 36% for 30-49 year olds and 50-79 year olds respectively.

**Table 10: Personal Relevance by Sex**

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Row total</b>
very relevant	68 (33.5)	66 (33.8)	134 (33.7)
quite relevant	75 (36.9)	84 (43.1)	159 (39.9)
a little relevant	34 (16.7)	29 (14.9)	63 (15.8)
not relevant	24 (11.8)	15 (7.7)	39 (9.8)
don't know	2 (1.0)	1 (0.5)	3 (0.8)
<b>Column total</b>	<b>203 (51.0)</b>	<b>195 (49.0)</b>	<b>398 (100.0)</b>

Number of Missing Observations: 2

On a 4-point scale anchored at 'no difference', 61% perceived a 'lot' of health benefits from following Guideline 2, with a further 28% stating 'somewhat'. Only 4% claimed that following Guideline 2 would make 'no difference' to their health (Table 11). There were no substantial differences by sex or age.

**Table 11: Health Benefits perceived by following guideline 2 by Sex**

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Row total</b>
a lot	117 (57.6)	125 (64.1)	242 (60.8)
somewhat	59 (29.1)	53 (27.2)	112 (28.1)
a little	14 (6.9)	7 (3.6)	21 (5.3)
no difference	11 (5.4)	6 (3.1)	17 (4.3)
don't know	2 (1.0)	4 (2.1)	6 (1.5)
<b>Column total</b>	<b>203 (51.0)</b>	<b>195 (49.0)</b>	<b>398 (100.0)</b>

Number of Missing Observations: 2

On the same 4-point scale anchored at 'no difference', 72% perceived a 'lot' of health benefits from following Guideline 4, with a further 18% stating 'somewhat'. Only 3% claimed that following Guideline 2 would make 'no difference' to their health (Table 12). There were no substantial differences by sex or age, although 5-79 year olds were less likely than younger age groups to nominate 'a lot', and more likely to nominate 'somewhat'.

**Table 12:** Health Benefits of Following Guideline 4 by Sex

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Row total</b>
a lot	141 (69.5)	145 (74.4)	286 (71.9)
somewhat	46 (22.7)	27 (13.8)	73 (18.3)
a little	9 (4.4)	12 (6.2)	21 (5.3)
no difference	4 (2.0)	7 (3.6)	11 (2.8)
don't know	3 (1.5)	4 (2.1)	7 (1.8)
<b>Column total</b>	<b>203 (51.0)</b>	<b>195 (49.0)</b>	<b>398 (100.0)</b>

Number of Missing Observations: 2

The data of Tables 11 and 12 suggest a perception that increased activity leads to increased health benefits.

The hierarchical nature of the guidelines appears well understood. When asked how they would follow guidelines 2, 4 and 5, the relative mentions of 'walking' versus moderate intensity activities (e.g., jogging; aerobics; swimming; sports; etc) were as follows (Tables 4-6):

***Guideline***

How follow	2	4	5
Walking	46%	35%	18%
Moderate intensity	16%	34%	79%

**Conclusions**

The guidelines are understood by virtually all respondents and have a motivational capacity amongst many. Substantial majorities also consider the guidelines realistic to follow and personally relevant. The pyramid illustration of the guidelines was favourably received by a substantial majority. There were no differences by age or gender that would warrant attention.

No changes to the guidelines are recommended as a result of this testing.

## Appendix H: Report of 3rd Stakeholder Review of Guidelines

Mail-outs of draft 8 were sent to stakeholders, national workshop attendees and the Scientific Advisory Committee for a 3rd time. The mail-out included only Guidelines for Australians and the proposed guidelines for young Australians. Stakeholders were advised to comment only if they felt necessary.

Twenty responses (10%) were received. Seven of these had no further comments and expressed agreement with the guidelines. All other comments were related to minor issues rather than overall approach and some had previously been considered. Most were semantic or grammatical changes, all of which were made if considered appropriate. Other issues raised were:

### **Low activity guidelines (1, 2)**

1. Could nos 1 and 2 be combined, as some people think of 'movement' as 'bowel movement'; expand no. 1 to emphasise the mental/emotional/ motivational reasons why you should choose to be physically active e.g. "**respecting yourself, deciding you're worth it, making activity a priority because it's fun and you deserve it.**"
2. Drop 1 and 2 as there is no scientific evidence for them.

### **Nutrition guideline (5):**

1. Make no. 5 no 4 as this should have a higher priority, and /or expand the nutrition guideline i.e. "**Combine a more active lifestyle with healthy eating in accordance with the National Food Selection Guide and the Dietary Guidelines for Australians.**"
2. Guideline 5 is appropriate but should qualify 'healthy eating' (e.g. **eat more fresh fruit and vegetables, breads and cereals - preferably whole grain. Eat less sugar, salt and fat - particularly saturated fat**)

### **General**

1. Place cycling before walking in the explanations of the guidelines (from the Bicycle Federation of Australia).

2. Some people may think there is 'too much to do', especially if they do as suggested in points 4 and 5.
3. Qualifying statements in 2 and 3 could be dropped to make the guidelines more direct.
4. Perhaps provide a separate set of children's guidelines in 'kidspeak'.

This resulted in a 9th draft being developed, with the main additions being expansions of the examples for guidelines 2 and 3 (see page 18). A final draft, draft (draft 10) was developed after a final meeting of the Advisory Board. At this stage it was determined to leave the guidelines for children for further development by those with special expertise in this area. Draft 10 of the Guidelines for Australians and the final draft of the guidelines for young Australians are shown below.

# Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians

## **Preamble.**

The guidelines refer to the minimum levels of physical activity required for good health. They are not intended for high level fitness or sports training. Try to carry out all guidelines and for best results combine an active lifestyle with healthy eating.

## **Guidelines**

### **1. Think of movement as an opportunity, not an inconvenience.**

(e.g. where moving the body in any way is necessary, or an option, this should be seen as an opportunity for improving health, not as a time-wasting inconvenience.)

### **2. Be active every day in as many ways as you can.**

(e.g. make a habit of cycling or walking instead of using the car, or do things yourself instead of using labour-saving machines.)

### **3. Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all days.**

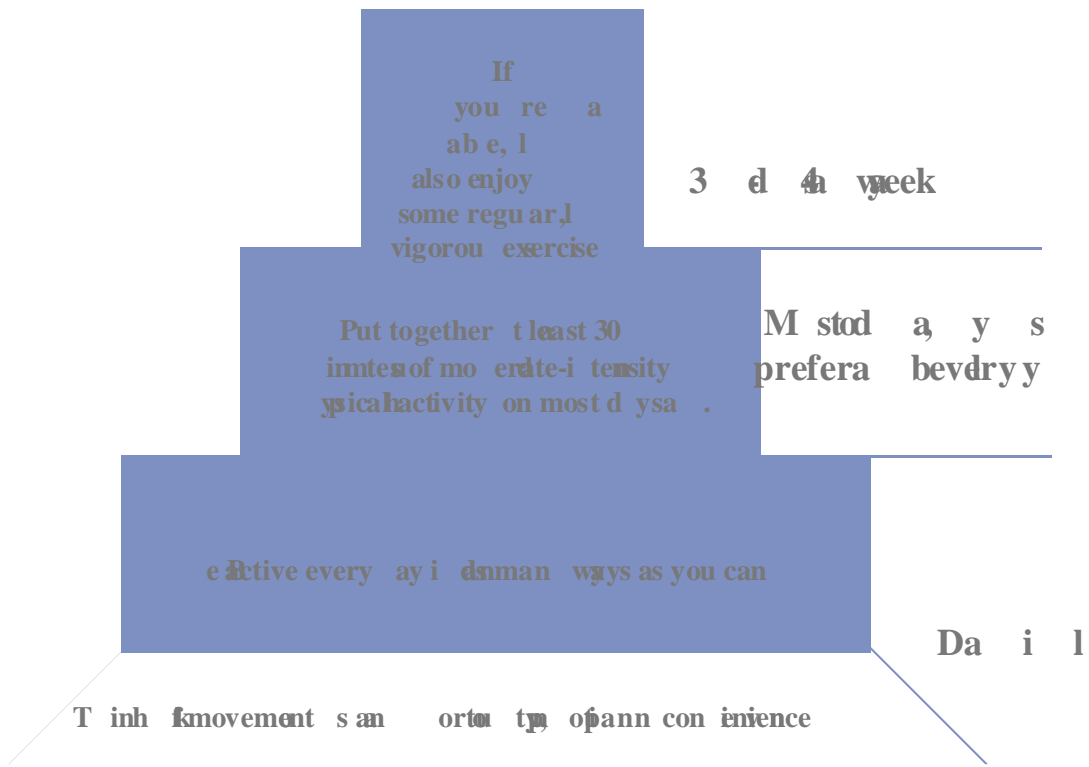
(e.g. Moderate-intensity activity includes things such as walking or cycling briskly. Combine short sessions of different activities of around 10-15 minutes each to a total of 30 minutes or more. The 30 minutes total need not be continuous.)

### **4. If you are able, also enjoy some regular, vigorous exercise for extra health and fitness.**

(Vigorous exercise is that which makes you 'huff and puff'. For best results this should be added to the above guidelines on 3-4 days a week for 20 minutes or more each time.)

## Appendix I: Other outcomes from the report

### (a) A proposed physical activity pyramid



## **(b) Draft Physical Activity Guidelines for Young Australians**

### **1. Children and teenagers should be physically active every day in as many ways as they can.**

(This can be through play, games, sports, work, transportation, recreation, physical education, or planned exercise. It can be in the context of family, school and community activities which they enjoy and can maintain).

### **2. As well, children and teenagers should carry out at least three, preferably more sessions per week of vigorous (but not necessarily competitive) activities totalling 20 minutes or more each day.**

#### **Guidelines to support physical activity amongst young Australians**

1. Provide opportunities for boys and girls to regularly participate in a variety of fun activities.
2. Where possible and safe, encourage walking or bicycle use for transport instead of motorised vehicles.
3. Ensure that the physical environment provides convenient and safe opportunities for activity for enjoyment.
4. Help children learn confidence and experience success while developing movement skills.
5. Support learning of the different types of health-related fitness (i.e. strength, endurance, flexibility)
6. Encourage regular weight-bearing activity, for example walking or running, (where the body weight is not supported as it is in cycling or swimming) for healthy bone development.
7. Take care to ensure that inactive leisure such as TV and video watching and computer games do not take the place of active play amongst children and teenagers