



THE HON KATE ELLIS MP
Minister for Sport
MEDIA RELEASE

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Aussie kids walk to Beijing to get fit

Olympic fever has hit the nation with more than 100,000 kids throughout Australia starting to jump, run, hop and skip all the way to Beijing.

To celebrate the Beijing 2008 Olympics and Paralympics, kids from the Australian Sports Commission's Active After-school Communities (AASC) program have donned pedometers and will record their jumps, skips, hops and steps during a theoretical 'journey' to Beijing, China.

The Minister for Youth and Sport, Kate Ellis, today joined Olympians and Paralympians to launch the Journey to Beijing campaign together with children from schools around Canberra.

Ms Ellis said she was excited to see kids from all around Australia getting into the Olympic spirit.

"It's wonderful how international events like the Olympics and the Paralympics can help motivate kids to get active and to have fun," she said.

"Part of the Olympic spirit is about getting people together and participating in sports and recreational activities, and that's what the AASC program has done for thousands of kids around Australia."

More than 100,000 kids from more than 2,000 schools and out of school hour care services throughout the country are taking part in the campaign.

Judy Flanagan, Director of Community Sport for the Australian Sports Commission, believes the Journey to Beijing campaign will greatly add to the value of the already hugely successful after-school activities provided by the AASC program.

"The Olympic and Paralympic Games inspire kids of all backgrounds. This gets kids watching, thinking and talking about sport and motivates them to get out there and be active," Ms Flanagan said.

The AASC program is an Australian Government initiative run by the Australian Sports Commission. The program is free for primary school children and encourages them to become more physically active and enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

For more information about the AASC program, visit www.ausport.gov.au/aasc.

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