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Physical Literacy – Just another trend or a new insight into effective strategies for increasing physical activity across the lifespan?



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Abstract. Physical Literacy is a term that was first identified in academic literature in 1993. It has since then steadily captured the interest and imagination of a growing number of academics and professionals worldwide. Its impact has moved beyond its origins in school based physical education to embrace community programs for all ages and a wide range of target populations. Its concepts and principles have become a part of the university preparation of professionals in Nursing, Child Studies and Social Work. This presentation reviews the current international literature concerning the concept of physical literacy, its operationalisation and measurement. It then focuses on the implications of the concept for the adoption of a consistent lifespan based approach to enhancing the well-being of the community through enriched movement experiences. It concludes with a report of some recent and current studies focused on exploring the value of physical literacy as a means to better understanding and more effectively managing some of the lifespan transitions which have frequently proved to be problematic in retaining desirable levels of physical activity involvement.

Biography. John Saunders is Associate Professor in the School of Exercise Science based at Brisbane. He holds the Bachelor of Arts with honours from Oxford University, the Bachelor of Science from Loughborough University, the Master of Arts from Leeds University, the Masters of Business Administration from the University of Hull, the PhD from the University of Queensland and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education from Nottingham University. He has taught at the tertiary level in Universities and Colleges in Australia, Singapore and the UK for over thirty years serving in Faculties of Education, Business, Science and Health Sciences. John has been actively involved in sport as a foundation member of the Australian Rugby Union's national coaching panel, national coach of Singapore rugby and Director of the Victorian Institute of Sport. He joined the ACU staff in 1995 where he has served as Head of School of Nursing and Human Movement (Victoria) Head of School of Human Movement (Victoria) and Deputy Dean in the Faculty of Health Sciences. He has served as co-coordinator of the ACU Elite Athlete program since its incorporation into the elite athlete friendly university program in 2006. John is widely experienced in international physical education having recently acted as President of the International Society for Comparative Physical Education and Sport. Previously he served as Regional Vice-president for the International Council for Health Physical Education, Recreation Dance and Sport (ICHPERDS), Executive Board member for the International Council for Sports Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE) and Executive Board member for the Australian Council for Health Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER). He is currently Editor in Chief of *International Sports Studies*. His current research interests are in the areas of holistic athlete development, child motor development, sustainable sport development and the integrity of sport.