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Effective Communication for Promoting Healthy Activity

Key Principles and Techniques for Stakeholder Engagement



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Agenda

Introduction

The Challenge

Core Principles

COM-B Model

Target Audiences

Monitoring

Thank you

Project Team

 **Kinetic Analysis BV**

 **Sport Drenthe**

 **Unione Italiana Sport per Tutti**

 **Spor Istanbul**

 **Surpass Sport Systems Ltd.**

The Communication Gap

Many public campaigns remain abstract, failing to provide the practical tools needed to turn intentions into daily habits.

The Goal

Translate evidence and innovation into concrete actions that can be adopted in schools, families, and communities.

Communication must be multi-sectoral, involving schools, parents, health professionals, and sports organizations to create a unified active environment.

Core Principles – Equity, Inclusion, and Fun

Prioritize Inclusivity

Focus messages on groups with the lowest participation rates, specifically girls, low-SES populations and children with disabilities.

Positive Atmosphere

Emphasize fun, self-improvement, and teamwork rather than high-stakes competition or winning.

Inclusive Language

Ensure that health services and programs are promoted as accessible, relevant, and affordable for everyone.

Accessibility

Communicate the availability of low-cost or no-cost programs, such as equipment loan schemes or subsidies, to remove financial barriers.



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The COM-B Model



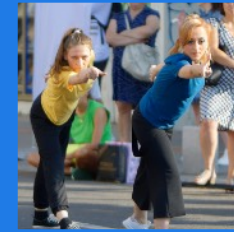
Capability

Provide practical tips and information to help individuals develop the physical and psychological skills needed for activity.



Opportunity

Use communication to highlight existing spaces (like parks and schools) and social environments where activity is possible.



Motivation

Design interventions that increase the desire to be active through social engagement and inspiration.

Peer Inspiration and Success Stories

Peer-to-peer Influence

Utilize models like the "BASE" program, where peer-led inspiration and social engagement motivate inactive individuals to start moving.

Highlighting Success

Share real-life stories of individuals who transitioned from sedentary lifestyles to active ones to serve as powerful sources of inspiration.

Student Involvement

Involve children directly in designing activity programs; their input improves uptake and makes the message more relatable to their peers.



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Engaging Schools and Educators

Whole-of-School Approach

Communicate the value of "active recess," movement breaks during lessons, and physically active teaching methods (e.g., Finnish Schools on the Move).

Positive Coaching

Train educators and coaches in positive techniques that build confidence and prevent the negative impact of bullying or exclusion.

Timetable Protection

Ensure that planners and educators prioritize and protect time for Physical Education (PE) and active recess in the school schedule.



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Engaging Families: The Home-School Link

Practical Tools for Parents

Host family sports afternoons to demonstrate the school's commitment to healthy lifestyles, supported by leaflets with specific tips for active play and nutrition.

Introduce not Deny

Suggest parents add healthy options rather than focus on removal of unhealthy habits, such as drinking a glass of water before a sugary drink.

Role Modeling

Encourage parents to be active with their children, as co-participation is a significant driver of child activity levels.



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Community Campaigns & Public Awareness

Simple, Clear Messaging

Use media campaigns (TV, social media) to broadcast clear goals, such as "Kids need 60 minutes of play a day!", with accessible suggestions on achieving these goals.

Multi-Sectoral Policy Support

Capacity planners should communicate across sectors to link urban planning (e.g., bike lanes, safe crossings, car-free zones) with health goals (e.g., active travel to school)

Mass Participation Events

Sponsor and promote events like family sports days or "play streets" to make movement a normal and visible part of community life.



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Checklist for Delivering Quality Programs



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Monitoring and Evaluation



✓ RE-AIM Framework

Is the program measuring Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, and Maintenance?



✓ Objective Tracking

Are digital tools (apps or pedometers) being used to provide children with feedback on active minutes?



✓ Inform Action with Data

Schools and public authorities should use monitoring data (e.g., surveys) to identify at-risk groups and tailor their messaging accordingly



✓ Transparency and Safety

Ensure that all data collection and monitoring processes are communicated clearly to parents to maintain privacy and trust.



Next Webinar

30 September 2026 12:00 CET

Engaging Children and Older Adults in Active Lifestyles



Project Conference

28 October 2026, Verona (IT)

Educators, Capacity Planners, Policy Influencers and Municipal Sports Partnerships

Pilot Projects, Impact Results, Policy Recommendations.



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Key Takeaways & Action

Communication must engage the target audience with clear and simple actions they can take.

Immediate Action Step: Review your communication materials and strategy from the perspective of your target users.



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