



EDITORIAL

Editorial: Volume 41, Issue 1

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The *Australian Journal of Environmental Education* is pleased to present Volume 41, Issue 1 – a Special Focus on the Intersections of Physical Literacies.

In the first issue of Volume 41, we present a Special Focus on Physical Literacy as it intersects with sustainability and environmental education. We showcase six invited manuscripts and introduce them in this editorial.

The Special Focus explores the role of physical literacy in promoting an understanding of and engagement with ecological principles among students and educators alike. Invited contributions in this focus discuss how physical literacy can be a powerful conduit for fostering health education through environmental stewardship, promoting sustainable practices, and cultivating a sense of responsibility towards preserving our natural world. This collection not only highlights practical implementations such as embodied pedagogy and eco-centric approaches in physical education but also delves into the philosophical and ethical considerations that underpin these practices, aiming to inspire a comprehensive integration of physical and environmental health education.

Environmental education works closely with other research fields to extend relevant solutions. How can we, as a society, enhance the likelihood by educative measures that individuals choose an eco-friendly mode of transportation requiring additional muscular effort (“active transportation”)? How can we design teaching material in health and physical education to cognitively engage students for sustainability issues? How do we raise awareness within the school system about the carbon footprint of sports clothes? How can we educate individuals about the biopsychosocial health value of activity-promoting green spaces? All these exemplary questions highlight the interdisciplinary interface between environmental education and physical education research.

In recent years, the concept of “physical literacy” has strongly enriched the scientific perspectives on physical education. The merits of the concept were, in most instances, linked to the argumentation that physical education can and should fulfil more than just the optimisation of performance or techniques. Therefore, physical literacy integrates physical, cognitive, affective and social aspects, benefiting engagement in physical activities for life. The discussions around “literacy” to be physically active have not yet been concluded and hold potential for integrating ecological aspects to align active lifestyles with sustainable behaviours. We, as researchers, are committed to using this open space for conceptual enrichment by discussing physical literacies in the context of environmental education. The current Special Focus issue contains six manuscripts in health and physical education that exemplify work at this interface and inspire work for environmental education.

Manuscript 1: Research at the Nexus Between Physical Education and Environmental Education: A Narrative Integrative Review Through a Physical Literacy Lens

By: Johannes Carl, Kathryn Riley, Jacqui Peters and Peta White

Capitalising on the interdisciplinary potential between environmental education and physical education, the first contribution synthesises research at this nexus from a physical literacy lens. The authors performed an integrative review to screen for articles at this nexus, resulting in the assignment of 129 primary studies into five inductively derived categories: (a) conceptual discussion and argumentative patterns, (b) curricular discussion and international comparisons, (c) programming and intervention content, (d) teacher and enabler perspectives and (e) student outcomes and perspectives. While the conceptual and curricular discussions pertaining to the nexus principally underscore the opportunity to align pedagogical practices with physical literacy, the categories on programming, teachers and student perspectives illuminated challenges to the realisation of theory-informed practical implementation. One potential conflict emerges in the subjects' diverging call for stronger ecological (environmental education) versus anthropocentric (physical education) orientations.

Manuscript 2: Decolonising Physical Literacy for Human and Planetary Well-being

By: Kathryn Riley and Lucy Delgado

The second contribution argues that physical education requires a shift away from skill orientation to foster human flourishing through embodied experiences across multiple and diverse movement contexts. Although physical literacy might present an adequate corrective, mainstream conceptions of physical literacy remain unduly narrow as rooted in colonial logics that continue to separate humans from the Earth and manifest positions of power. Adopting collaborative autoethnography, this manuscript seeks to strengthen culturally relevant and meaningful physical literacy to promote physical activity and the holistic health and well-being of Indigenous, or specifically, Red River Métis teachers and learners. The authors introduce a re-conceptualisation of human–Earth relationships as cultivated through movement with land. This (re)visioning, in turn, can strengthen educational practices and processes that more adequately attend to both human and ecological flourishing in the era of global climate change.

Manuscript 3: Promoting Physical (Ecological) Literacy through Physical Education: Everyone's Response-ability in a World Gasping for Air

By: Jacqui Peters

The third contribution elucidates the potential for educational institutions to address the prevailing socioecological exigencies of our epoch. Specifically, physical educators possess the capacity to cultivate students' physical literacies in alignment with principles of sustainability. However, to fulfil their pivotal pedagogical function, educators must transcend a circumscribed emphasis on sport-specific techniques, prescriptive pedagogical models and a competitive ethos. Employing autoethnographic vignettes through a posthumanist analytical framework, the author delineates the extant challenges and emergent possibilities within physical education, underscoring the indispensable role of affect in the pedagogical and learner trajectories.

Manuscript 4: Transformative Potential of Friluftsliv in Physical Education: Insights from an International Student Program

By: Lisa Lefèvre, Christophe Schnitzler, Hakon Engstu, Mary Schirrer

The fourth contribution identifies Friluftsliv as a profound Norwegian concept stressing experiential connection with nature. The authors have a French background and describe student experiences from a year-long programme at the University of South-East Norway dedicated to

Friluftsliv for international physical education students. The manuscript investigates the transformative potential of Friluftsliv on students' physical literacy and environmental variables through observations and creative focus groups. In summary, the teaching methods not only enhanced students' skills, knowledge, social connections and motivation to engage with nature but also enabled affective transformation. A predominating anthropocentric perspective was replaced with a more eco-centric view and deepened students' connection with the natural environment. Experiential outdoor education, with a winter expedition turning out to be the most memorable experience, can play a crucial role in nourishing both physical literacy and environmental stewardship.

Manuscript 5: Exploring Plogging's Usefulness and Feasibility in Schools: Insights from Physical Education Teacher Education Students

By: Carlos Martínez-Mirambell, Olalla García-Taibo, Andreas Fröberg, Salvador Baena-Morales

The fifth contribution reports findings from a collaboration between Spanish and Swedish researchers examining plogging—an activity combining jogging with litter collection. Based on 80 qualitative interviews with physical education teacher education (PETE) students, the authors identified mixed perceptions regarding the implementation of plogging in schools. Plogging offers a valuable opportunity for holistic development through the promotion of physical literacy and environmental stewardship. However, this study revealed a lack of institutional and curricular support for incorporating such innovative activities into schools and their communities. Therefore, this study highlights the need to develop educational strategies to facilitate the integration of plogging into physical education.

Manuscript 6: Physical Education for a Sustainable Future: Merging Promotion of Health Through Physical Literacy With Global Environmental Responsibility

By: Christophe Schnitzler, Thomas Royet, Thibaut Derigny, Valerian Cece

The sixth and final contribution of this Special Focus issue has a visionary ambition. Challenging the traditional focus of physical education on narrow health, this theoretical-conceptual contribution explores how a re-definition of health through the lenses of OneHealth, EcoHealth and Planetary Health can augment physical education by coalescing individual health and environmental sustainability. An incorporation of these holistic frameworks has the potential to move physical literacy beyond individual health outcomes to foster environmental stewardship and global health consciousness.