

Driving social inclusion through sport and physical activity (DSISPA) – the Armidale newly arrived migrant, refugee and friends regional sport network

Dr Kristy O’Neill (UNE) and Professor Penelope (Pep) Serow (UNE)

The 2020-21 DSISPA project led by Dr Kristy O’Neill and co-investigator Professor Pep Serow will deliver a free, flexible and community based opportunity for Armidale residents from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to build their physical activity levels. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health (\$224,677), the program aims to promote increased moderate-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) levels and improve holistic health through building new friendships, social connections and capacity building towards independently accessing existing local sporting providers. Sport and physical activity are central aspects of Australian culture, particularly in regional areas as a primary means of social connection. It is important that our newest citizens from CALD backgrounds have the skills, knowledge and confidence to share in these activities as part of building a sense of belonging within the Armidale community. Overall, people from CALD backgrounds Australia-wide can be less likely to participate in local sport or meet recommended physical activity guidelines for several cultural, financial and/or linguistic reasons.

‘Sport 2030’ (Department of Health, 2019) objectives state that every Australian regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity or geographic location should be able to exercise in safe, fun and inclusive ways. Furthermore, the vital nature of learning to swim and

water safety cannot be underestimated in Australian society given the widespread interest in recreating around pools, beaches, lakes, dams and creeks among families. Alongside providing enjoyable and productive ways to utilise spare time, opportunities for children and young people to maintain regular MVPA engagement and sporting participation is essential. Increased fitness, enhanced mental health, better school concentration and performance, creativity and the development of social skills are just a few of the key learning and wellbeing benefits (Dudley et al., 2021; Miller, 2018). Out of school community sporting experiences also have the added benefit of reinforcing key curriculum learning in Health and Physical Education (ACARA, 2021), as well as *Belonging, Being, Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations, 2009) regarding Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) and motor development. Each of these areas have demonstrable impact on subsequent lifelong physical activity levels.

The program will be available during Terms 1 – 4 for two years and will include activities such as gym memberships, fitness classes, swimming lessons, team-based sports (e.g. volleyball, futsal, soccer and netball) and be targeted towards families and individuals of all ages. The range of activities will expand based on available providers and community interest as the project develops. In late 2020, a community advisory group comprising Armidale-based support services for migrants and refugees, sport and recreation providers and Ezidi youth met with the DSISPA team to strategise an action plan and shortlist of activities considered most beneficial to potential participants. Collaborating with other organisations is a valuable process in community-based work, while also reinforcing the benefits of community partnerships to

building equity in health; a central tenet of the 1986 Ottawa Charter that continues to be of relevance today (WHO, 2017).

Research and evaluation will run concurrent to the DSISPA program and we seek to inform best practice approaches for helping migrants and refugees transition to a new community. It is intended these findings may be used Australia-wide, particularly to benefit regional areas in their long-term goals of settling new residents who have experienced former hardship, and often trauma. This project will regularly employ multiple data collection strategies across the two years (8 school Terms) via pre/post interviews and Photo Voice methods.

Using sport and physical activity as a vehicle, the DSISPA grant opportunity ultimately aims to contribute towards developing resilient, cohesive and harmonious Australian communities. Collaborating to find positive strategies to enhance health, bolstering physical and mental wellbeing, and increasing local social networks is a critically important shared goal in the current global climate of the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you are interested in this project and would like to know more, please contact Dr Kristy O'Neill via kristy.oneill@une.edu.au

Master of Applied Leadership

The School of Education at UNE is excited to offer a new Masters level course in the field of Applied Leadership. This course has been designed to provide an exploration of leadership principles and practices as they are applied across a wide range of fields. The cutting edge content is packaged within units such as 'Foresight, insight and hindsight in leadership' and 'Agency in leadership: Planning and policy'. The Master of Applied Leadership is aimed at existing and aspiring leaders in the public sector and other education organisations. It provides readily transferrable knowledge and skills in the ever-changing landscape of organisational quality and efficiency.

From within the Master of Applied Leadership, UNE has developed a specialisation in School Leadership, which attempts to address the specific leadership needs and practices required in schools. The focus is to support school leaders in their day to day practice, and as such, this variation of the course is designed for existing school leaders and comes with a generous Advanced Standing for eligible applicants.

Further information regarding this exciting new course is available on the UNE website at: <https://www.une.edu.au/study/courses/master-of-applied-leadership>. Alternatively, should you wish to discuss what suits you best, please feel free to contact Associate Professor Brian Denman (bdenman@une.edu.au). If you are interested in discussing eligibility requirements for the School Leadership specialisation, please contact Genevieve Thraves (gthraves@une.edu.au)

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Remote Classroom Modelling: A professional learning model for in-service primary teachers of STEM working in Regional, Rural and Remote Schools

Dr Nadya Rizk (UNE), Dr Subhashni Taylor (JCU) and Adjunct Professor Neil Taylor (UNE)

The foundations of STEM competence develop in the primary years of schooling when students begin to develop a self-belief in their ability as STEM learners. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that primary school teaching of STEM is adequately equipping students with the creative problem solving, critical thinking, active learning and quantitative skills they need for engaging with STEM. Nevertheless, primary teachers are often generalist teachers who lack the specialised knowledge, skills and confidence in STEM disciplines. Furthermore, primary teachers are most vulnerable in their first years of teaching when they adjust to the demands of their new teaching role. These vulnerabilities are pronounced further when the workplace is in Rural, Regional or Remote (RRR) contexts.

To support primary teachers in delivering engaging and sustained STEM lessons, we have designed and prototyped an innovative Professional Learning (PL) model that builds on existing teachers' capabilities in teaching STEM and that is delivered via remote classroom observations. According to Desimone (2011), some of the most influential professional learning experiences occur via peer observation of teaching within classrooms. The benefits of peer observations are numerous and include improving student outcomes, reducing isolation, encouraging teachers' self-reflection and providing exposure to a multitude of teaching