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# The Importance of Physical Literacy: European and global perspectives

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# Presentation Overview

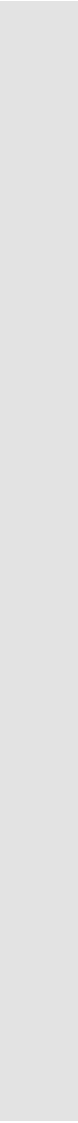
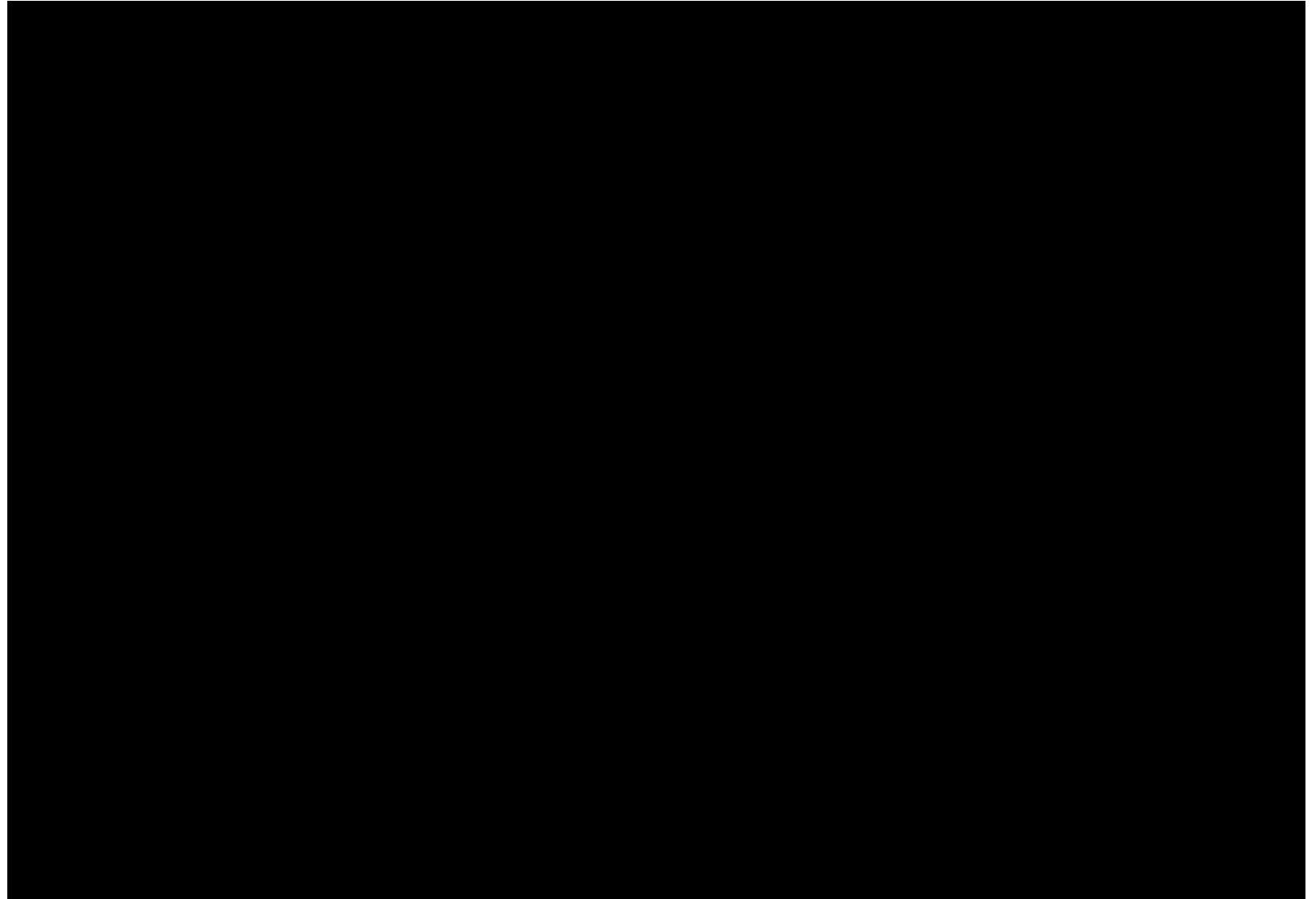
- Physical Literacy Overview
- The Importance of Physical Literacy
- European and Global Perspectives
- Moving Physical Literacy Forwards



# Physical Literacy Overview



# What is Physical Literacy?



Nurture positive attitudes and behaviours towards engagement in physical activity...  
for **all** and for **life!**

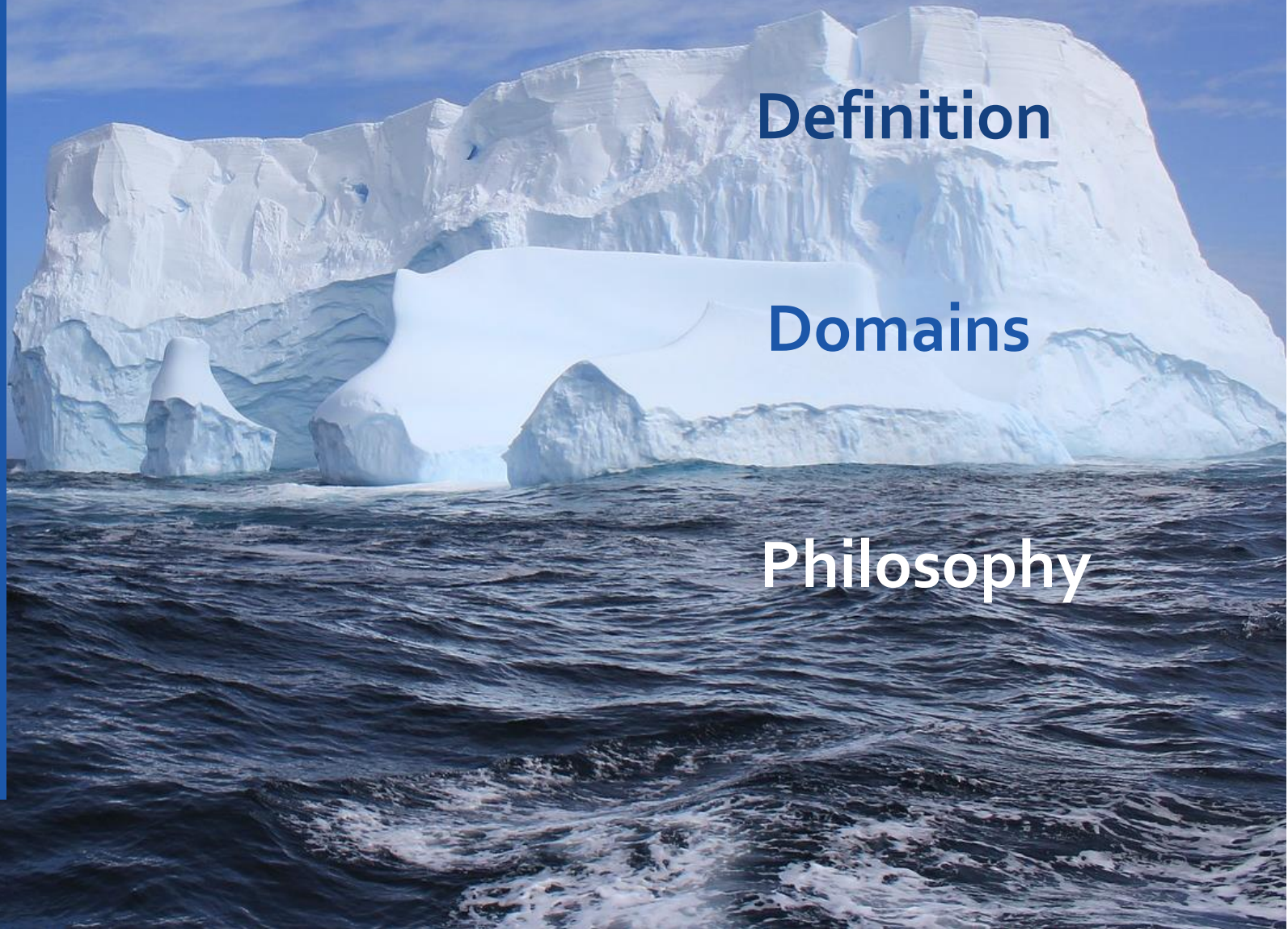


# Physical Literacy

**Definition**

**Domains**

**Philosophy**



Physical Literacy is defined as:

“the **motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding** to **value** and take **responsibility** for **engagement** in physical activities for life”

(IPLA, 2017)

Physical  
Literacy  
Definition





# Underpinned By Three Philosophical Schools of Thought



Monism	Existentialism	Phenomenology
Holistic approach that values <b>each attribute equally</b>	Wide variety of <b>rich interaction</b> with a <b>range of environments</b>	Positive Experiences for <b>All</b>





# Holistic Concept Designed to Promote Lifelong Participation in Physical Activity

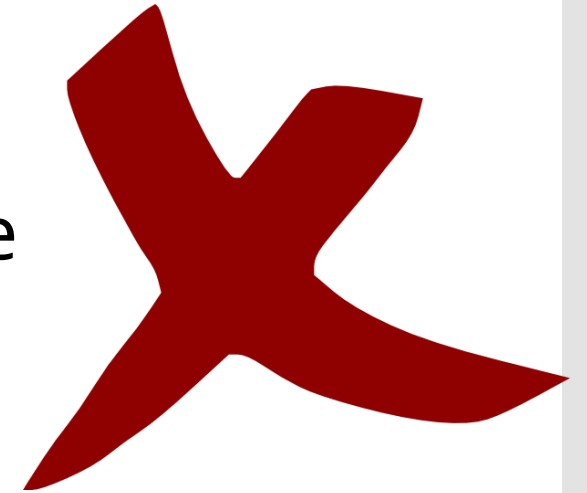
Affective		Physical	Cognitive	
Motivation	Confidence	Physical Competence	Knowledge and Understanding	Engage
	Confidence	Physical Competence	Knowledge and Understanding	Apathy
Motivation		Physical Competence	Knowledge and Understanding	Anxiety
Motivation	Confidence		Knowledge and Understanding	Frustration
Motivation	Confidence	Physical Competence		Confusion

Opportunities



## Common Misconceptions

- FMS or ABC's
- Just another 'literacy'
- Teaching literacy through PE or PA
- Taught
- Achieved or accomplished
- Labelled as literate or illiterate
- Just for children
- Just for the education sector



# Importance of Physical Literacy



## Decline in Physical Activity Levels

- Decline in physical activity levels for many countries globally
- Increase in sedentary behaviour and physical inactivity for many countries globally
- With children being significantly affected with a rise in childhood obesity and inactivity



# Why Is Physical Literacy Important?

Article 12 of the **United Nations Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)** set out the following fundamental guidelines that pertain to physical activity.

1. Recognise the right of everyone be able to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
2. Take steps to achieve the full realisation of this right including:
  - The provision for the healthy development of the child.
  - The prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and **other\*** diseases (\***Hypokinetic**)



# How Physical Literacy Can Contribute

- Physical literacy aims to promote engagement in physical activity for life which, can help to contribute in the promotion of health (holistic health).
- Physical literacy also aims to develop a stronger sense of embodiment as an essential component required in order to flourish.



# European and Global Perspectives



## Global Interpretation

Physical literacy as a concept has gained significant global interest in recent years from researchers, policy makers and practitioners alike (Edwards et al., 2016, and Spengler, 2015).

Physical literacy is however, being interpreted very differently across organisations and countries worldwide, with varying definitions and recommendations for practice (Edwards et al., 2016).





# Definitions

Group	Country	Adopted Definition of Physical Literacy
Sport Wales	Wales	Physical Skills + Confidence + Motivation + Lots of opportunities = Physical Literacy
PHE Canada	Canada (Montreal)	Individuals who are physically literate move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person
Sport for Life	Canada (Toronto)	Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life
SHAPE America	USA	Physical literacy is the ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person
Sport New Zealand	New Zealand	The motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding required by participants that allows them to value and take responsibility for engaging in physical activity and sport for life
Australian Sport Commission	Australia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Core / process - Physical literacy is lifelong holistic learning acquired and applied in movement and physical activity contexts</li> <li>2. Components / constructs - It reflects ongoing changes integrating physical, affective (subsequently renamed 'psychological'), cognitive and social capabilities</li> <li>3. Importance - It is vital in helping us lead healthy and fulfilling lives through movement and physical activity</li> <li>4. Aspiration / product - A physically literate person is able to draw on their integrated physical, affective, cognitive, and social capacities to support health promoting and fulfilling movement and physical activity - relative to their situation and context</li> </ol>



# IPLA Global Reach



# Moving Physical Literacy Forwards



## Next steps...

More research and empirical evidence in practice

Operationalising a holistic approach

Research conducted over the full life course (and longitudinal research)

Multi-sector research moving beyond education

Further clarity and alignment in approach



# Thank you

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# IPLA

INTERNATIONAL PHYSICAL  
LITERACY ASSOCIATION

**"Choosing Physical Activity  
For Life"**



[www.physical-literacy.org.uk](http://www.physical-literacy.org.uk)



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# References

- International Physical Literacy Association (IPLA) (2016) *Physical Literacy Definition*. Available at: [www.physical-literacy.org.uk](http://www.physical-literacy.org.uk)
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