

TIPS for ASF Coordinators.....From Other Coordinators

We asked the ASF Coordinators that came along to the autumn presentations for the TOP TIPS that they would give to other ASF coordinators. This is their advice:

<p>Arlene Thompson <u>St Brigid's GNS,</u> <u>Killester,</u> <u>Dublin 5</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make sure principal and other staff members know about the Active School Flag process, have it on agenda for staff meetings and keep them up to date with new initiatives taking place in the school. (ASF Notice board to update staff, pupils and parents, include a short piece in monthly newsletters and regularly update website) ✓ Compile a list of ideas you wish to achieve, set out a time frame and concentrate on 2 or 3 per year and do them well e.g. set up a running initiative, get parents involved in ASW (send a note inviting parents to help out in any areas - yoga, Irish dancing, cricket, Frisbee etc.), set up an ASF section on your website - keep it updated and maybe ask another member of staff to help you, introduce yard play and equipment. <p>There are SO many things schools can do, my advice is to start small and do things well rather than doing loads half-heartily.</p> <p>ASF Case Study School</p> <p>Active School Week DVD</p>
<p>Oreena Lawless, <u>St Francis NS.</u> <u>Blackrock,</u> <u>Co. Louth</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take it slowly - there's a lot to work through! Use the self-evaluation questionnaires at the start of each section to promote group discussion at a staff meeting, even if you only cover one section at a time! ✓ Keep it manageable - you will get lots of ideas from the school community (pupils, staff and parents) but if you start with just one area for improvement from each section you will create a culture of success at the outset. <p>Go n'éirí le gach scoil páirteach ann :)</p> <p>LINK to Power Point</p>
<p>Orlaith Ní Ghealagáin <u>Gaelscoil Longfoird,</u> <u>Co. Longford</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Get the whole school involved, teachers, pupils, school community and parents. 'Ní neart go cur le chéile' ✓ Start with the basics e.g. clean out your sports equipment room and make a liosta 'fearais Spóirt' <p>LINK to Power Point</p>

<p>Verena Cunningham</p> <p><u>St Clare's NS, Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Meet with the principal, in the first instance, and then have an open discussion with the entire staff. Everyone must be on board to ensure success. ✓ Ingenuity is required. A lot is achievable with very little. That goes not just for physical resources and equipment, but time also! ✓ Introduce new initiatives gradually - give each one a chance to embed before embarking upon the next. ✓ Pupil ownership is key - make it their project and they will be with you every step of the way. ✓ Delegation is important - the role of the co-ordinator is just that, to co-ordinate so assemble a good ASF committee at the outset <p>LINK to Power Point</p> <p>Link to Website – 2015/2016 Progress</p> <p>Link to Website – 2016/2017 Progress</p>
<p>Aideen Carthy,</p> <p><u>Scoil Maelruain SNS, Tallaght, Dublin 24</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create an enthusiastic active committee of children as they will be the ones to encourage the whole school attitude. ✓ Ask for help and support from parents involved in sports, nutrition etc. and local associations. <p>Link to Website</p>
<p>Triona Mc Menimen</p> <p><u>Faugher NS and Holy Trinity NS, Co Donegal</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sets goals and targets early in the school year for each section of the application form ✓ Work with other nearby schools especially if you're a small school- sharing resources, ideas and events is great for the teachers and children
<p>Brid Golden</p> <p><u>St John of Gods GNS, Waterford City</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We found it very useful to compile an action plan which comprised of a plan of actions/improvements in each area outlined on the application form. The action plan listed all our proposed activity for the year and also listed who was responsible for implementing each action and the agreed time frame for completion. The plan was very much a live document which was constantly evolving. Progress with the plan was discussed at regular staff meetings and during Croke Park Hours. ✓ We devised surveys at the start of the year. The teachers' survey examined the amount of time spent on PE in each class and how well each strand was being catered for. The survey results were used then to highlight the PE strands most in need of attention.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We also surveyed the children and parents to access the levels of physical activity engaged in each day. This was most useful as we were able to establish how active the children were each day and compare this to national averages. The results of the surveys were presented to teachers, parents and children and this helped to get buy in to the process creating needed enthusiasm and momentum <p>Link to website – 2015/2016 ASF Campaign</p> <p>Link to website – 2016/2017 ASF Activities</p>
<p>Eoin Maloney</p> <p>Caherconlish NS, Co Limerick</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have two active coordinators if possible. Two heads are better than one. ✓ Don't hesitate to ask anyone in local community for help you'll be amazed at how many people are out there willing to help. <p>Link to PRIMARY SCIENCE Physical Activity Project</p> <p>Primary Science Project – Process and Photos</p>
<p>Catriona Cosgrave</p> <p>Scoil Áine, Raheny, Dublin 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Having a 'one-pager' for your staff when presenting at initial staff meeting to outline the basics and exactly what you will require from them. I had anticipated presenting the ASF power point itself, staff meetings often do not allow for such time. It's often useful for colleagues to have a one pager going away from meeting to digest what is involved and come back to you with any questions ✓ If possible, try and link with parents early on in the process. They may have a richness of expertise that you may not know about. The children loved their family members coming in for short 4-6 week sessions in various activity areas or indeed during yard time to do playground games. I would recommend sending out a survey early in the process to them. <p>ASF Power Point</p>
<p>Our Top TIPS</p>	<p>Here are a few TOP TIPS and GREAT IDEAS that we picked up from teachers that attended the presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photocopy the Self-Evaluation (SE) sheets and distribute in advance of meeting – One teacher told us that she distributed photocopies of the SE sheets and asked teachers to allow teachers to complete them anonymously. Teachers returned the completed SE sheets to her mail box in advance of staff meeting. She felt that this made it easier for teachers to be totally honest in their replies. You can access PDFs of the SE forms on the home page of the website under FIND OUT MORE – Getting Started

- **Physical Activity Awards** – In one school pupils receive one point if they eat a piece of fruit and 2 points if they eat a vegetable for their lunch. Every class, in accordance with numbers the numbers in their class, has a Healthy Eating target that they have to reach each week. If they hit their target they are rewarded with extra playtime in the yard on Friday. We thought that this was a GREAT idea but unfortunately don't have the name of the school that made the suggestion.
- **Class Fitness Videos** – In Mullingar ETNS, junior infants made their own fitness video using the iMovie app on the iPad, during a wet day last autumn when they couldn't get outside for breaks. The children were put into groups of 4/5 and did simple exercises such as jumping jacks, running on the spot and high knees. Each clip lasted for 10 seconds. Their teacher then put the short clips together on iMovie, added some background music to get them moving and made a 3 minute 'Get Fit' video. The video was shared across the school and the other classes in the junior end of the school used this video for their classroom breaks also. 5th class liked the idea so much that they also made their own fitness video for the senior end of the school which included more difficult exercises such as sprinting on the spot, press ups and quad stretches. This video was also shared across the school and used from 3rd-6th. A great alternative to the Busy Breaks CD and GoNoodle on those long wet days in the classroom.
- **Take Lots of Photos** – Lots of teachers told us how important it is to keep a record of things as you go. This year we are asking schools to document all their ASF activities on their school website, as opposed to making a file. So take lots of photos as you go! The website also serves as a great way to keep the whole school community up to date with everything that your school is doing to get pupils more active. Maybe consider giving one of the pupils on the ASF committee the role of photographer.