

HOBBIES FOR SCHOOLS

A GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS
AND OTHER ORGANIZERS



THE FINNISH MODEL FOR
LEISURE ACTIVITIES



The aim of the Finnish model for leisure activities is to give every child and young person an opportunity to enjoy a fun and free activity in connection with their school day.



MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Hobbies for Schools –

A guide for organizations, associations and other organizers

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FOREWORD

Children and young people are at the heart of the Finnish model for leisure activities. Leisure activities must be inspiring to children and young people, correspond to their wishes and interests, provide them with new knowledge and skills, and, of course, with the opportunity to make new friends.

The key success factors of the Finnish model are the professional instructors, organizers and clubs involved. Their professional role offers instructors a unique opportunity to promote the self-esteem and development of a young person or child. A good instructor can be the reason why a child keeps attending the activity week after week. The Finnish model allows many children and young people to access hobbies that have not previously been available in their area or have been financially inaccessible to them.

Equality is a key aspect of the model. We must make hobbies and leisure activities equally available to children and young people across all Finland. This calls for close collaboration between municipalities and nationwide organizations.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage leisure activity organizers to create new content for their activities. It is important that we listen to the younger generation and their interests and ideas. At best, professionals from different fields working with children and young people may also gain important insights into different matters, such as what could motivate them to do sports, read or what kind of films they would like to watch. By doing this they can also give the younger generation an important sense of achievement.

Making the Finnish model for leisure activities a reality is an important building block of our shared future, and therefore can have significant positive long-term impacts.

I wish all readers of this guide a positive and insightful journey in promoting leisure activities.

Antti Kurvinen
Minister for Science and Culture



“Making the Finnish model for leisure activities a reality is an important building block of our shared future, and therefore can have significant, positive long-term impacts,” says Antti Kurvinen, Minister for Science and Culture.

QUICK START GUIDE: HOW TO GET STARTED WITH THE FINNISH MODEL FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The aim of the Finnish model for leisure activities is to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people by ensuring that all of them have an opportunity to enjoy a fun and free activity in connection with their school day. Municipalities organize leisure activities for the grades 1 to 9 of basic education. Activities are also offered to students of private and training schools.

The Finnish model for leisure activities gives organizers an opportunity to collaborate with municipalities by offering activities in connection with the school day. As a part of this model, municipalities provide free leisure activities for children and young people by purchasing the required services from parties such as sports clubs and other organizers. During the school year 2022–2023, a total of 267 municipalities in mainland Finland are participating in the model.



1

CONTACT THE MUNICIPALITY'S LEISURE ACTIVITY COORDINATOR AND FIND OUT THEIR NEEDS

- Do not hesitate to offer up your own organization's activity or ask for an opportunity to organize a presentation during a school break or at a leisure activity event, such as the national leisure activity week (Harrastusviikko).
- The person responsible for leisure activities in a municipality usually works in the sports, culture, youth, or education department.

2

TAKE PART IN AN ORGANIZER MEETUP

- Read the objectives and obligations of schools' leisure activities with care, and ensure that you understand them.
- Think about how your organization could contribute to them.

3

SIGN A WRITTEN COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE MUNICIPALITY OR PARTICIPATE IN A CALL FOR TENDERS ORGANIZED BY THE MUNICIPALITY

- Make a written agreement on the division of responsibilities and obligations between your organization and the municipality. Commit to the agreement you have drawn up together.
- Find out who is responsible for arranging insurance for the participants and instructors of the activities, unless this has already been specified in the agreement.

4

ENSURE THAT THE INSTRUCTORS RECEIVE ADEQUATE TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

- The instructor's expertise must be sufficient for organizing high-quality leisure activities that are open for all children and young people.
- All policies and rules of order relating to the facilities used for the activities should be discussed in advance.
- Seasonal planning and reporting must be completed in accordance with the municipality's instructions.

5

TAKE CARE OF PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS THOROUGHLY AND IN GOOD TIME

- Ensure that things run smoothly in case there is a need for substitute staff, or an activity must be cancelled.
- Follow the municipality's seasonal reporting instructions.
- Pay your instructors and invoice the municipality on time.

6

COMMUNICATIONS ARE EVERYTHING

- Ensure that your organization's communications clearly answer at least the following questions: What kind of activities do you organize? Who coordinates them? Where can potential participants find additional information?
- Publish information on how to get involved regularly. Try to make the joy that the activities bring to the participants visible.
- Ask the municipality for guidance on the use of social media, photography and video permits, and use the jointly agreed hashtags. Always tag the agreed organizations in your posts.
- Tell the children, young people and families about the different ways that they can get involved in your organization's activities. For example, inform participants and their families of opportunities to attend activities more often and in a more goal-oriented manner, and make sure to inform participants how to attend camp- or course-type activities outside school.
- Let your leisure activity coordinator know that you are interested in continuing the collaboration.

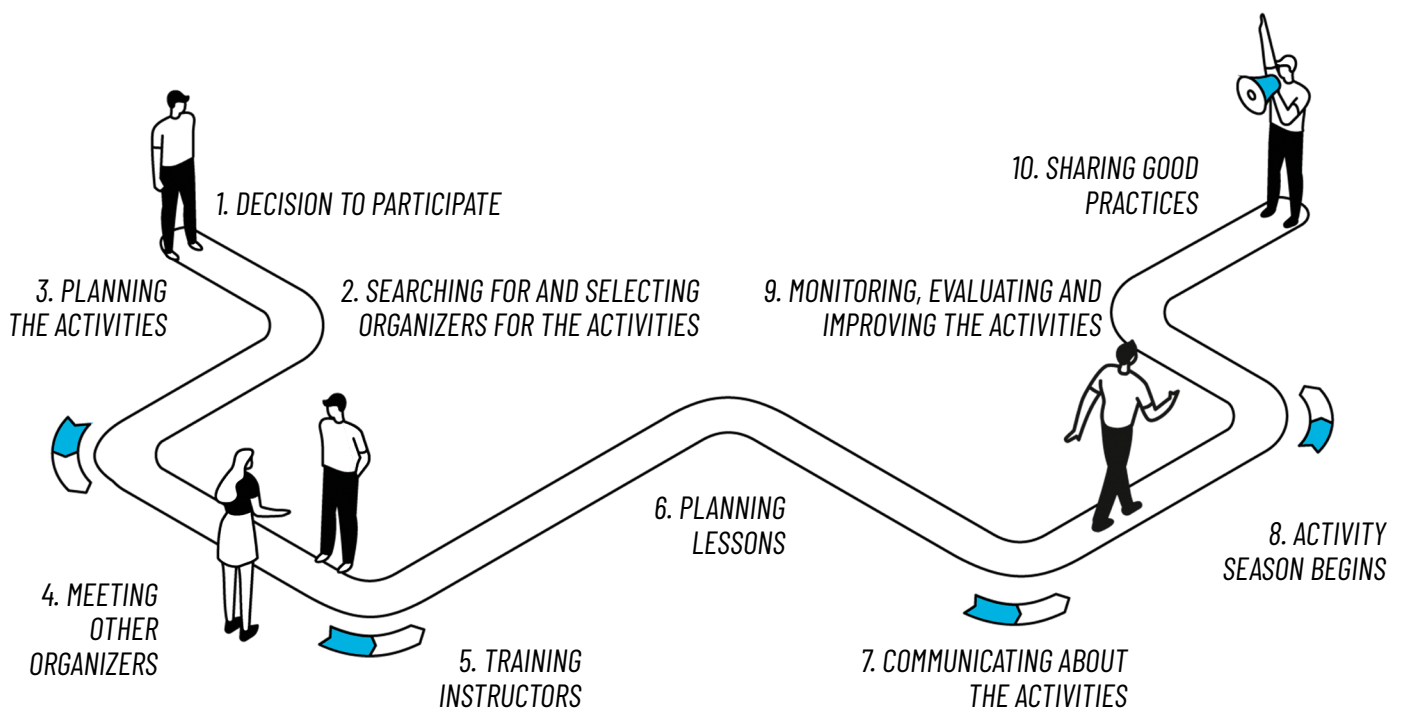
ANNUAL LEISURE ACTIVITY CALENDAR

The seasons for leisure activities organized at schools are divided into the autumn and spring semesters, interspersed with school holidays and various events. Municipalities often start planning the activities offered to students and looking for partner organizations already during the previous term. Organizers should therefore contact municipalities sooner rather than later.

THE ANNUAL PLANNING CYCLE FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES USUALLY INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING PHASES:

1. First, the children's and young people's wishes are identified.
2. Searching for and selecting organizers for the activities.
3. Planning and organizing the activities.
4. The activity season itself.

The organizers should think in advance about how their organization's annual activity period matches the school's activity periods. Always ensure instructors' availability before you commit to organizing any activities. The students' holidays can be seen in the annual planning cycle. Leisure activities may be offered to students during holiday periods if the municipality wishes so.



WHY, HOW AND ON WHAT CONDITIONS SHOULD YOU BE AN ORGANIZER?

All organizers should set their own goals for leisure activities organized in connection with the school day in advance and think about any limitations that may be associated with them. This allows the organizers to define the framework for the collaboration and provides a framework for the activities. The organization's collaboration with the school will also be guided by its own vision and values.

The goals set for the activities may include, for example, increasing the variety of leisure activities and opportunities for participation available to local children and young people, increasing public awareness of the leisure activity, or acquiring members for the organization. The areas, timetables and contents of the activities are often taken shape by the available instructors, facilities and the organization's own core activities. If the organization wants to adapt its activities or expand to new areas, it is a good idea to think, in advance, about how activities are organized, who are the relevant target group, and how the target group can be reached.

In terms of funding, the organization must decide what its profitability objectives are. Is it enough if the proceeds cover the costs associated with the activities, or does the organization wish to make a profit? Acquiring new members or customers may require the use of the organization's own funds.

Running school leisure activity groups offers many organizations a reasonable and economical way to find work for their employees. Leisure activity groups may be organized in connection with the school day, i.e. immediately before or after lessons, during the usual school semesters. The best case scenario is to have several group sessions during the same day. This will also allow the students to get familiar with the hobby, and may inspire them to get involved in the organization's other activities



BEFORE SIGNING UP, THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

1

Why do you want to collaborate in organizing these activities, and what are your organization's goals?

2

Which resources are you able to and want to invest in this collaboration?

3

What will the leisure activity group sessions include?

4

Who will serve as the instructor?

5

When and where are they available?

6

Who will they be instructing (e.g., primary or secondary school students)?

7

Where can you get a substitute instructor to fill in if the regular instructor becomes ill, for example?

8

Once you have answered these questions and if you feel that participating in the Finnish model for leisure activities would be a good fit for your organization, contact the person who is responsible for leisure activities in your municipality and tell them what your organization could offer students. In most municipalities, the activities are coordinated by a person who has been hired specifically to manage activities related to the Finnish model for leisure activities. This person usually works in the sports, culture, youth or education department of the municipal administration. They act as a coordinator between the leisure activity providers and the schools.



SEARCHING FOR AND SELECTING ORGANIZERS FOR THE ACTIVITIES

Once the municipality has consulted the children and young people regarding their wishes, it will identify potential organizers for the activities. The goal is to find a variety of experts from different fields based on the interests of the children and young people.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Each municipality is individually responsible for organizing the leisure activities. Some municipalities use their own staff to organize activities, whereas others will organize a separate call for applications to find the right people. Municipalities may also use competitive tendering. The leisure activities may also consist of young people's own voluntary activities in a supervised environment. The municipality's website and application form usually contain more detailed information about the process and tell the applicants who to contact for more information. Many municipalities may contact leisure activity organizers directly. For this reason, all organizers should ensure that their contact details can be found on the website dedicated for finding appropriate leisure organizers ([Löydä harrastuksen järjestäjä](#), available in Finnish).

The municipality will provide the selected organizations with more detailed instructions on how to plan, organize, report and evaluate their activities.

In addition to the Finnish model for leisure activities, municipalities are also searching for activity providers to provide the other club and leisure activities taking place at the school. It pays off to simply contact the municipality and inform them of your organization even if your organization's particular activity has not been directly mentioned among the children and young people's wishes.



The activities organized as a part of the Finnish model for leisure activities are selected based on the children and young people's wishes and interests.

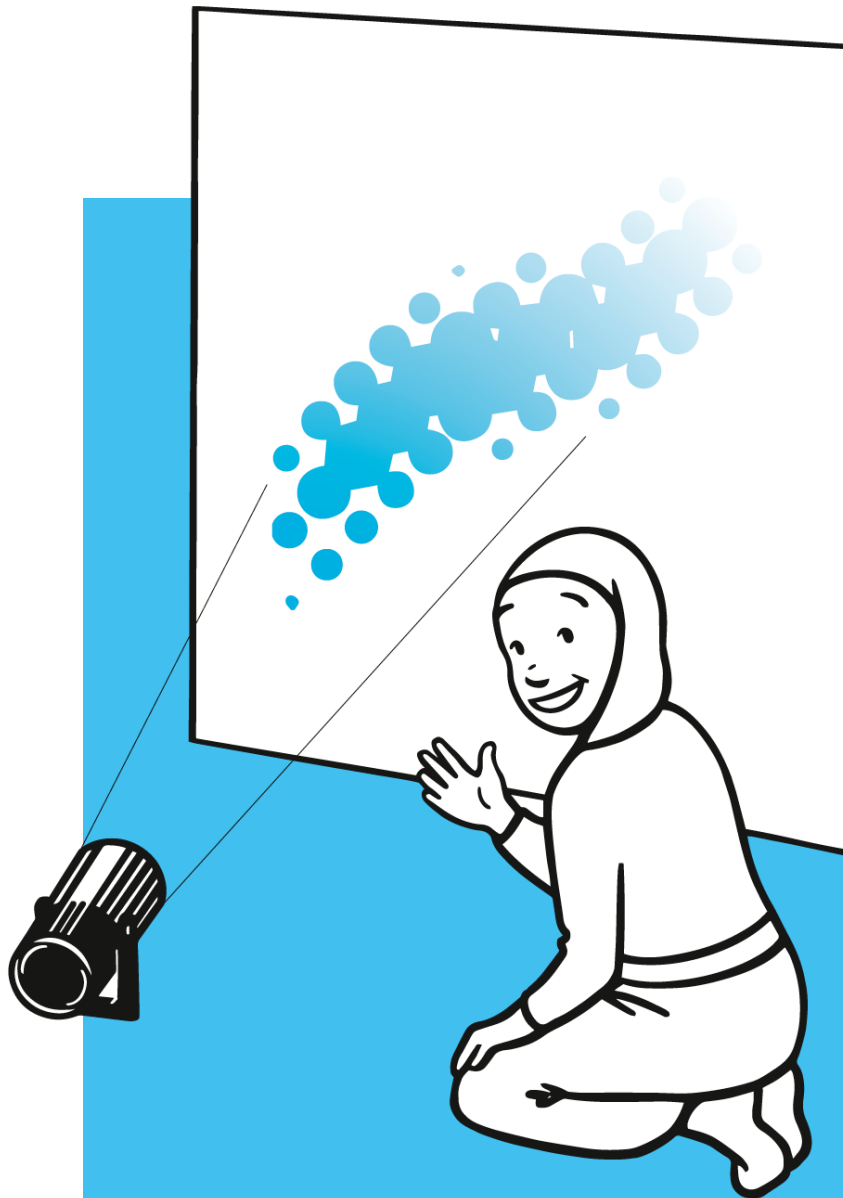
AGREEMENTS

The municipality will usually conclude a written agreement with the leisure activity organizer. The agreement may encompass the whole school year or, alternatively, only cover certain, agreed activity sessions. The agreement should specify precisely the division of responsibilities and obligations between the municipality and organizers. This allows for better collaboration. For more information on what the agreement should cover, see the next chapter.

SAMPLE AGREEMENTS FOR MUNICIPALITIES CAN BE FOUND AT:
WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING THE ACTIVITIES

Sufficient planning, focus, commitment and a genuinely enthusiastic approach from the instructors are all important factors that ensure good quality. For this reason, the planning and organizing work done before the actual leisure activity season is an essential part of a successful season.



MEETING OTHER ORGANIZERS

After the municipality has selected the leisure activity organizers it wants to collaborate with, it will often invite them all to a joint meeting. The meeting will serve to discuss the goals and practical aspects of leisure activities provided at school. Oftentimes, the organizers and municipality will also map out a more detailed plan for action together, specifying any objectives, prerequisites, the division of responsibilities, how to move forward and how the leisure activities are funded. Meetings may also take place during the leisure activity season. In these meetings, the focus will be on consulting other organizers and sharing and developing best practices.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF GROUPS

Municipalities organize a wide range of leisure activity groups. Some groups focus on one activity in particular, whereas others may try out several different hobbies, for example. The activities are adapted to the wishes and interests of the children and young people, as well as the organizing party's specific skillsets. For example, if the group in question is animal-themed, the participants may both care for and feed animals, or it can alternatively be organized as an art group that focuses on producing animal-themed pieces.

The organizers must agree on their specific way of involvement with the municipality. Not all organizers have to commit to running a leisure activity group for the entire school year. Collaborating with other organizers allows also the children and young people to participate in and become more familiar with several different hobbies. At the same time, even the organizers who do not have the resources for organizing a regular weekly activity group on their own also have a chance to get involved.

LEISURE ACTIVITY SEASONS AND EVENTS

The leisure activity season starts in September at the latest, and lasts until the end of the school year. Some municipalities divide the activities into autumn and spring semesters. Municipalities can independently determine the duration of the leisure activity group sessions. However, the sessions must be long enough to give participants the feeling that they have genuinely participated in a leisure activity.



A skilled instructor can inspire participants and keep the classes interesting throughout the leisure activity season.

FACILITIES

Leisure activity organizers will agree on the use of suitable spaces for activities and the practical matters relating to them with the municipality. In most cases, a suitable space can be found at or near the school, but activities can also be organized elsewhere if there are good reasons for doing so. For example, participants may perceive the leisure activity to be more inspiring if there is an environmental change involved, such as moving away from school facilities. Secondary school students in particular can find changing places and facilities motivating. The most important thing, however, is that the facilities are suitable for the leisure activity and that the municipality accepts that they are used for the intended purpose. Municipalities will organize transport between the school and the leisure activity facilities if necessary, and provide children or young people with school transportation if necessary.

COMPENSATION FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Each leisure activity provider will agree the remuneration paid for the instructing work directly with the municipality. The remuneration will be paid in the manner defined by the municipality e.g. at the end of the leisure activity season. The organizer is not allowed to charge the children and young people taking part in the activity. Municipalities and organizers should also agree beforehand how they will deal with remuneration for any missed group sessions, for example in the event that the instructor becomes ill, any cancellations, and what will happen if the leisure activities are interrupted mid-season.

LANGUAGE USED

The municipality and organizer will agree on which language will be used as the primary language of the leisure activities. It is advisable to write the texts introducing the leisure activity in the language used in the organization's activities.

GROUP SIZE

The municipality and leisure activity organizer will agree on the maximum number of participants for each group separately. The group size is determined by factors such as the instructor's proficiency, the facilities and equipment used, insurances, the special support needs of the participants, the number of instructors and the nature of the activities in question.

SUBSTITUTION ARRANGEMENTS

The leisure activity organization must ensure that suitable substitute instructors are available. This helps to avoid cancellations. If cancellations still occur, they must be dealt with in accordance with the municipality's specific instructions.

REGISTRATION AND ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Registration may be organized through the municipality, for example. This ensures that the municipality is kept up to date on the situation of the leisure activity groups at all times. The registration may also be organized directly by the party organizing the leisure activity. In this case, however, the municipality must ensure that the organizer complies with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation and will record and submit participants' attendance information in a manner that is deemed acceptable by the municipality. The organizer and municipality should agree on the practices applied for participants queueing for a place in the group and what to do if a participant is absent for several group sessions without informing the organizer.

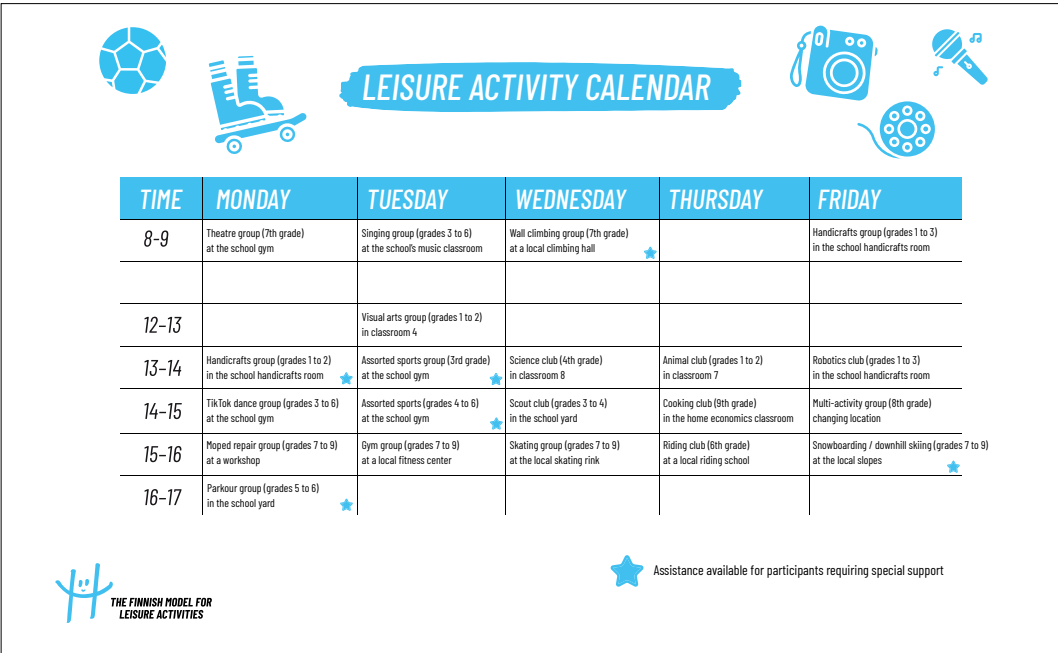
INSURANCE

The organizer and municipality must always agree jointly how group participants and instructors are insured. In most cases, the municipality insures the participants directly and provides the organizer with separate instructions on how to use the insurance. The practices on how instructors are insured vary a great deal. Often, the instructors are already insured by the organization, which already provides sufficient accident and liability insurance. Insurance policies, as well as the terms and conditions, should always be thoroughly reviewed before the season begins.

LEISURE ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Each municipality should compile a schedule of the leisure activities available, or a similar resource where all available leisure activities are presented in one place. Before compiling this schedule of activities, the municipality and the organizer will agree the details of the activities, such as when the activity season begins and ends, how many sessions will the groups have during this time and at which times, where the sessions are organized, which language will be used and what is the maximum number of participants for each group.

AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT A MUNICIPALITY'S LEISURE ACTIVITY SCHEDULE CAN LOOK LIKE.



The image shows a template for a 'LEISURE ACTIVITY CALENDAR'. At the top, there are icons for a soccer ball, a skateboard, a camera, and a microphone. The calendar is a table with columns for days of the week (Monday to Friday) and rows for time slots (8-9, 12-13, 13-14, 14-15, 15-16, 16-17). Each cell contains details about a specific activity group, including the grade level and location. Some cells have a blue star icon, indicating that special support assistance is available for participants. At the bottom left, there is a logo for 'THE FINNISH MODEL FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES'. At the bottom right, there is a blue star icon with the text 'Assistance available for participants requiring special support'. A large blue arrow points from the text 'AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT A MUNICIPALITY'S LEISURE ACTIVITY SCHEDULE CAN LOOK LIKE.' to the calendar template.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8-9	Theatre group (7th grade) at the school gym	Singing group (grades 3 to 6) at the school's music classroom	Wall climbing group (7th grade) at a local climbing hall ★		Handicrafts group (grades 1 to 3) in the school handicrafts room
12-13		Visual arts group (grades 1 to 2) in classroom 4			
13-14	Handicrafts group (grades 1 to 2) in the school handicrafts room ★	Assorted sports group (3rd grade) at the school gym ★	Science club (4th grade) in classroom 8	Animal club (grades 1 to 2) in classroom 7	Robotics club (grades 1 to 3) in the school handicrafts room
14-15	TikTok dance group (grades 3 to 6) at the school gym	Assorted sports (grades 4 to 6) at the school gym ★	Scout club (grades 3 to 4) in the school yard	Cooking club (8th grade) in the home economics classroom	Multi-activity group (8th grade) changing location
15-16	Moped repair group (grades 7 to 9) at a workshop	Gym group (grades 7 to 9) at a local fitness center	Skating group (grades 7 to 9) at the local skating rink	Riding club (8th grade) at a local riding school	Snowboarding / downhill skiing (grades 7 to 9) at the local slopes ★
16-17	Parkour group (grades 5 to 6) in the school yard ★				

★ Assistance available for participants requiring special support

THE FINNISH MODEL FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES

DOWNLOAD A SCHEDULE TEMPLATE AT
WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The municipality and organizer should agree on the implementation of marketing and communications related to the leisure activities. Usually, the municipality and organizer will communicate information on the leisure activities through the communication channels of the municipality, school and leisure activity organizers. The parties may use the logos and presentation videos of the Finnish model for leisure activities in these communications.

The marketing materials should include information such as who the group is aimed at and which activities the sessions involve, how to register for the group, who will act as the instructor, and when the group will meet. Videos, photos and descriptions of the contents of the offered leisure activities, activity locations and their accessibility, for example, can help children, young people and their families to find and pick the hobbies that are the best fit for them.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS OF PARTICIPANTS

Organizers must discuss and review the property rights and permission matters related to photographing or taking videos of the participants, any interviews or feedback (statements, written feedback) and works created by the participants. Photos, videos or feedback may not be published without the prior consent of the parents or guardians of each participant. In addition, any works created by children or young people may not be photographed or otherwise made public or distributed without consent. The easiest way to acquire consent is to include consent forms or similar in the registration process.



*SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR AN
EXAMPLE OF A LEISURE ACTIVITY
ADVERTISEMENT*



HEADLINE SUCH AS “WANT TO TRY OUT DIFFERENT LEISURE ACTIVITIES?”



A short description of the leisure activity in question. Such as “In our multi-activity group, you get to try out all kinds of different hobbies, like floorball, scouting, drawing or cooking. The group is a low-threshold activity – no previous experience of any sport or other activity is required.

Join us to try all kinds of fun things together!”

WHAT?

Describe the activities the group concentrates on. Make sure to include the group's name.

Example: “A multi-activity group is a group that tries out different leisure activities together. The activities are selected based on the participants' wishes.”

WHAT TO BRING?

Describe the clothing and equipment that participants should have.

E.g. “Dress in comfortable clothing that does not restrict movement, such as a T-shirt and pants made of stretchy fabric. Indoor shoes are recommended, but not mandatory. Please bring a water bottle with you.”

WHERE?

Write down the exact address where the activity takes place. Remember to describe exactly how the facilities can be accessed: “The multi-activity group takes place at the Hobbyvalley school, Hobby road 4 a, 00123 Hobbyvalley. The group meets in front of the main entrance of the school building before the sessions. The main entrance is located in the school courtyard and is marked with the letter A. You can reach the school on foot from the nearby Hobby Road, by car or by bus number 12. Bike racks and parking are located on the forest side of the school building.

HOW TO REGISTER?

Give instructions on how to register for the group.

E.g. “You can register for the group by sending an email to hobby@hobbyvillage.fi by January 3rd, 2022. If you want to visit a session before registering for the group, contact Ilana Instructor by email or by phone at 0100 123 4567. Spots in the group may open up during the season as well, so inquiries are welcome throughout the spring term.”

WHEN?

Provide precise information on the weekday, time and regularity of the meetings, as well as any relevant holiday periods.

E.g. “The group meets on every Tuesday from 2 pm to 3 pm from January 4th 2022 to May 17th, 2022.”

WHAT DOES IT COST?

Free of charge. Any groups organized under the Finnish model for leisure activities are always free of charge to participants.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

To make sure that the guardians can be sure that the group is suitable for their child or young person. E.g. “The sessions are held in a different location each time. For more information on accessibility, please contact Instructor X by phone at 0100 123 4567. Please also notify Instructor X of any special support equipment or assistance needs in advance.”

ADD YOUR OWN MUNICIPALITY'S OR ORGANIZATION'S LOGO HERE IF YOU WISH. If your social media channels or website include additional information on the leisure activity group, also add links to them.



DOWNLOAD THE LOGOS AND THE ADVERTISING TEMPLATE AT
WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE

INSTRUCTORS' SKILLS

Whether they are a student, a teacher or an adult person in some other role in the participants' life, a skilled instructor is able to keep participants engaged during every session. They will ensure that sessions are stimulating and inspiring throughout the leisure activity season and that the participants have an opportunity to affect how the sessions are planned and implemented. They work well with children and young people and are open to their feedback for further improvement of activities.

INSTRUCTORS' SKILLS

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Municipalities may inquire if the instructors would like to attend training courses and organize different training events as needed. Alongside their families, friend groups and school, leisure activities are an important environment for a child's or young person's growth and development. It is therefore important that the instructors possess the right skills and competencies. Instructing a leisure activity group is a great responsibility, and the instructors may become important adult figures in the children's and young people's lives. At best, instructors can affect children's and young people's social development in a meaningful and positive way. The instructor should be aware of their own understanding of children and be able to examine their own pedagogical background and experience as a group leader.



A skilled instructor is able to create a safe, high-quality environment for leisure activities where all children can feel competent and experience feelings of success.



CRIMINAL RECORD EXTRACTS OF INSTRUCTORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Most municipalities require the instructors of leisure activity groups to submit a criminal record extract before the start of the leisure activity season. The aim of this requirement is to protect the personal integrity of the minors involved in the activities and to ensure their personal safety.

REMUNERATION PAID TO THE INSTRUCTORS

Each organizer will agree on the remuneration paid to instructors directly with the instructors themselves. If the organizer is an association that does not wish to take the role of an employer, other options must be explored. These include paying the remuneration through the organization's respective district organization or another similar party, for example.

INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION

Before the organizer begins providing of leisure activities, all instructors must be instructed regarding the school's rules, rescue plan and ways of working. This can be done either by the school or another party coordinating the leisure activities. The school and activity organizers should agree on how the loaning of equipment, facilities or keys is implemented, for example. Usually, the abovementioned instructions are provided by school staff. In many cases, municipalities and schools have compiled an orientation folder for instructors, where the instructors can easily find and review all central information.

If the leisure activities are organized in facilities located outside the school, the organizer is generally responsible for the safety and suitability of the facilities, as well as any safety-related orientation or instruction given to the instructors. The organizers must agree on the division of responsibilities in advance with the municipality.

***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON CRIMINAL RECORD
EXTRACTS AND HOW TO ORDER THEM (IN FINNISH):
WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIGE***

A GOOD INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION SHOULD INCLUDE AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- Values, objectives and quality recommendations for leisure activities organized in connection with the school day
- The school's mission statement, rules and rescue plan
- Information on the exact address of the facilities used for leisure activities, locations of the nearest fire hydrants, exit routes and first aid supplies storage locations
- The school's strategies for dealing with emergencies: preventative measures against bullying, crisis and safety guidelines
- Guidelines and rules for communications between the school and students' families
- How the General Data Protection Regulation affects the activities and use of personal data
- Instructions on the use of facilities and equipment
- Information on how the school is guarded at night, as well as details of any school transport provided for the students
- The regulations pertaining to the physical integrity of the students
- The notification procedure specified in the Child Welfare Act
- Rules and regulations related to confidentiality
- A clarification of relevant liability and insurance related matters
- Arrangements for substitute instructors
- Contact details of the leisure activity contact person and the principal of the school

BEFORE REGISTERING AS AN ACTIVITY ORGANIZER, PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- The goals and contents of the leisure activity group sessions
- Starting date and length of the season, any periodization
- Duration and time of the sessions
- Session contents and the environments where they are organized
- The activity's target group and who it is recommended for
- The maximum number of participants
- The number, roles and responsibilities of instructors
- Assigning a contact person for the group
- Registration proceedings and any queuing policies
- When and in what phase the communications and marketing are implemented
- Monitoring and evaluation methods and dates for joint meetings

READ THE LEMPÄÄLÄ MUNICIPALITY'S STARTING PACKAGE FOR INSTRUCTORS (IN FINNISH) AND VIEW THE ORGANIZER DESIGN TEMPLATE ON OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE

PLANNING THE ACTIVITIES

When planning the leisure activity season, it is a good idea to write down the basic information regarding each session. These records help not only to plan and organize the activities better, but also aid in marketing them to the right target groups. It is easier to carry out evaluations and improve activities if the relevant measures have been agreed on before the organization starts providing the activity in question.

It is a good idea to draw up a lesson plan for each individual session. A pre-planned session is easier for the instructor and can be more readily adapted if needed. Good planning improves the general learning atmosphere and allows the participants to develop friendships with one another.

It is also a good idea to include opportunities for consulting and listening to the participants in the lesson and in the seasonal plans. When these opportunities have already been recorded in the plans, they are more likely to be realized. At the same time, this serves to ensure that the activities remain in line with the participants' wishes.

Providing families with precise information on planned activity sessions and any required equipment makes their everyday lives easier. The plans can be distributed to the participants on paper, sent to guardians by email or posted on the organization's public website.

PARTICIPANTS' PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORMS

In some situations, the instructor may be provided with information about the participants of the group before the leisure activity season starts. These descriptions of participants make the instructors' work easier by helping them to prepare for the upcoming season. The municipality and the organizer must ensure that the instructors know how to correctly handle the preliminary information forms they receive. The forms include a significant amount of personal information that must not fall into the wrong hands. Each form must be stored and destroyed in accordance with the provisions of EU's General Data Protection Regulation.

SAFETY

Each instructor is responsible for ensuring that the participants in the group observe good manners and all relevant safety guidelines. The instructors must make sure that all participants are comfortable attending the group and are accepted as who they are. When instructing the group, the instructor must be genuinely present in the moment and take each participant into account. The environment the leisure activities are practiced in and the equipment used must be safe and intact, and the instructor must be able to give first aid in situations that require it. The organization and municipality should agree on instructions on how to act if a participant leaves the group before the session has ended or acts in a threatening manner.

BULLYING

Leisure activity groups have zero tolerance for bullying. If any bullying situations occur, instructors must be quick to intervene. Many schools already have guidelines on how situations involving bullying should be dealt with. The instructors should follow the municipal guidelines also in the context of leisure activities.



The leisure activity environment and equipment must be safe to use.

INVITING PARTICIPATION

It is important to involve children and young people in the planning and implementation of the activities, both before and during the leisure activity season. Working together is inspiring and increases commitment. At the same time, it ensures that the activities remain in line with the participants' expectations. Genuinely listening to the participants and responding to their wishes (as far as this is possible) makes the leisure activities more enjoyable for them and increases the chances that they will continue to engage in the activities.

MAKING FRIENDS

Friends are of paramount importance to children and young people's lives in general, but friendships are also an important component of leisure activities. Many children will come to a leisure activity group with a friend, or at least in hopes of finding new friends. A good instructor is able to support the children and young people as they form and maintain friendships in the context of leisure activities. Ensuring that the group members encounter each other in varying social situations and dividing the group into pairs or different groups may improve group atmosphere.

REPORTING

Each activity group instructor will report on the activities in accordance with the guidelines provided by the municipality. The guidelines vary depending on each municipality.

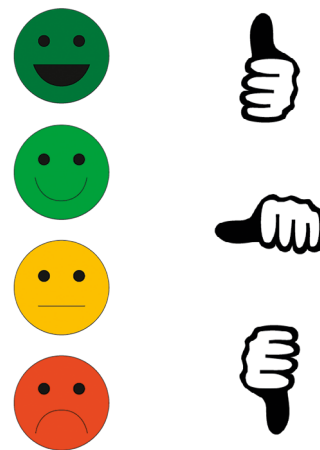
EVALUATION

Evaluation is a hallmark of high-quality organizational operations. The instructor should self-evaluate their performance after each group session. It is always a good idea to ask the participants for feedback, as it can then be taken into account when planning the next session. After the leisure activity season is over, the organization should work together with the municipality to evaluate the activities and identify

measures for improvement. The municipality may, for example, send the participants' families a feedback questionnaire and then review the answers with the organizer in connection with the seasonal evaluation.

SMILEY FACES AND THUMBS UP FEEDBACK

Children and young people can give feedback on the content of the sessions e.g. by giving a thumbs up, thumbs down or a diagonal thumbs up, or by pointing to a picture of a smiley face that best reflects their feelings. The instructor can write down the different parts of the session point by point on a flipchart, for example, and go through these points with the participants at the end of the session. The participants can then be asked to react to each point with a thumbs up or down or a suitable smiley face. If the instructor wants more precise feedback, they can ask the participant e.g. if they would like to explain why they chose a certain smiley face.



THANKING EVERYONE

At the end of the leisure activity season, it is a good idea to thank everyone who has been involved in the activities. The instructors, the municipality and any partners, as well as the children and young people participating in the activities, all deserve a big thank you.

EMPOWER THE CHILD IN PRACTICAL WAYS

“

SHOW INTEREST AND GIVE GENUINE PRAISE. DO NOT ALWAYS SIMPLY WRITE OFF THE CHILD'S WORK WITH PRAISE, BUT RATHER STOP AND CONCENTRATE ON THE ACTIVITY AT HAND: ASK QUESTIONS, DISCUSS, MARVEL AND ADMIRE THE DETAILS TOGETHER WITH THE CHILD.

ASK THE CHILD: 'WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR DRAWING? WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING IN YOUR MAIN CHARACTER'S LIFE AT THE MOMENT? IS THIS THE END OF YOUR PERFORMANCE, OR WILL YOU STILL CONTINUE THAT DANCE MOVE?'

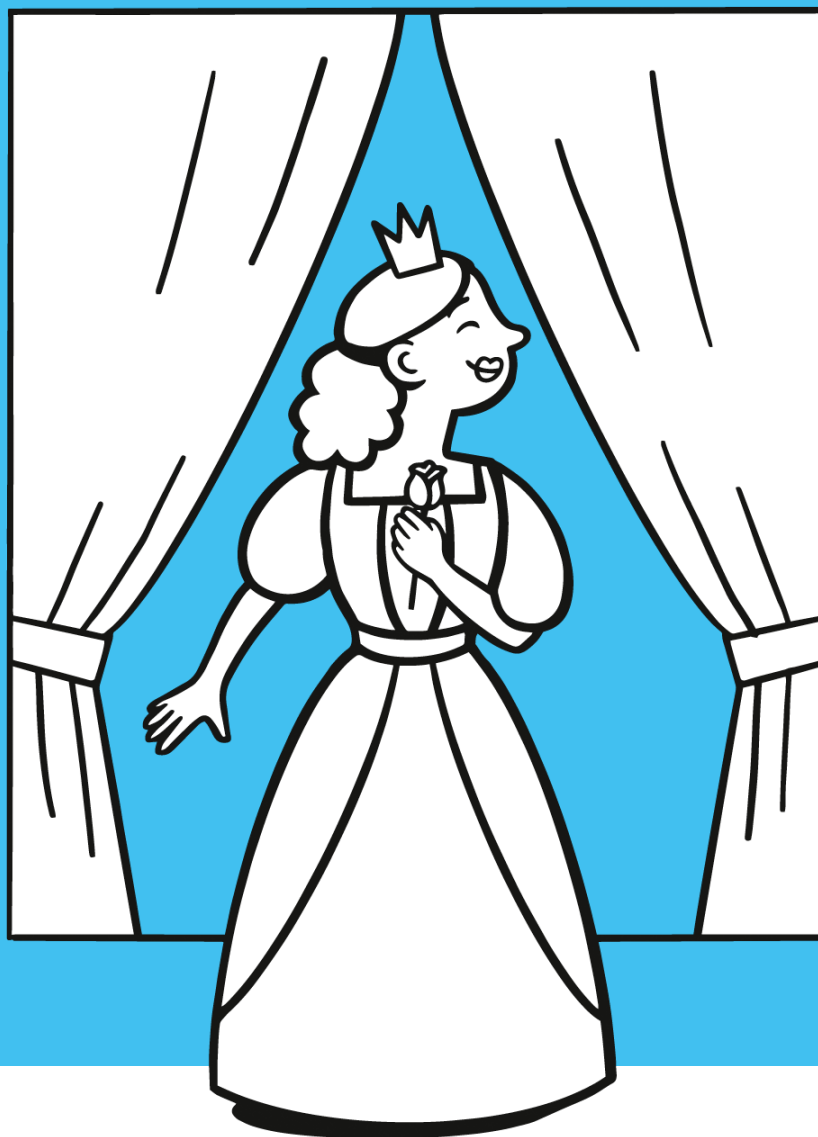
ALLOW THE CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON TO DO THINGS FOR THEMSELVES INSTEAD OF STEPPING IN TO COMPLETE THEM ON THEIR BEHALF. GIVE THEM TIME. CHANGES TO PLANS OR DIRECTIONS ARE NOT A PROBLEM. THEY ARE A NATURAL PART OF CREATIVITY AND EXPERIMENTATION. EACH OF US HAS OUR OWN WAY OF EXPRESSING OURSELVES, AND WE ALL LEARN NEW THINGS AT OUR OWN PACE. THIS SHOULD BE RESPECTED.

DO NOT PUT DOWN YOUR OWN PERFORMANCE. TELL THE CHILD WHAT YOUR WORKS ARE ABOUT. ALLOW THE CHILD TO ASK QUESTIONS."

Pilvi Kuitu

Source: Kohti lapsen näköistä osallisuutta -book.

READ THE E-BOOK (IN FINNISH) ON OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE



LEISURE ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL

Offering activities in connection with the school day provides an easy way for children and young people to get involved in different leisure activities. Short distances, a familiar environment and the presence of school friends, along with the fact that the activities are free of charge, lower the threshold for attendance. Activities provided in connection with the school day also increase the amount of time families spend together.

The goal of offering leisure activities at school is to give each child the opportunity to engage in at least one hobby for the duration of their entire basic education. The activities should give the participants a chance to work together, to feel competent and share experiences of success and joy. These activities are organized by municipalities' educational, cultural, youth and leisure services, as well as the third sector organizations and companies.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES AND CLUBS AT SCHOOLS

In most municipalities, the different types of leisure activity groups and clubs organized at schools run in parallel. They receive funding from a variety of different sources, which may affect the goals set for the club, the price for attendance, as well as how the activities are organized.

The Finnish model for leisure activities is a model that provides children and young people with leisure activities based on their interests and wishes. The activities offered under this model are free of charge for the participants and are organized either at the school or in nearby facilities. It offers children and young people an opportunity to explore and participate in various activities in connection with their school day either before the lessons start in the morning or after they end in the afternoon during school terms. Leisure activities may also be provided in connection with the morning and afternoon activities provided by the schools.

Morning and afternoon activities are offered to students in grades 1 to 2 and for special needs education students up to grade 9. The activities provide the children and young people with a safe environment before and after school, and they are governed by the Finnish Basic Education Act (628/1998). Morning and afternoon activities support the children's and young people's growth and development and help families to raise them.

Schools' own clubs are included in the curriculum and are governed by the Basic Education Act and the core curriculum for basic education. They are in line with the educational objectives of the school and provide goal-oriented activities similar to leisure activities. The clubs are free of charge.

Other leisure activity groups and clubs offer students leisure activities that are organized at or near the school. They offer students a chance to try out different leisure activities and are either inexpensive or free of charge.



Leisure activities provided at school ensure that the children have more equal chances to participate in different hobbies.



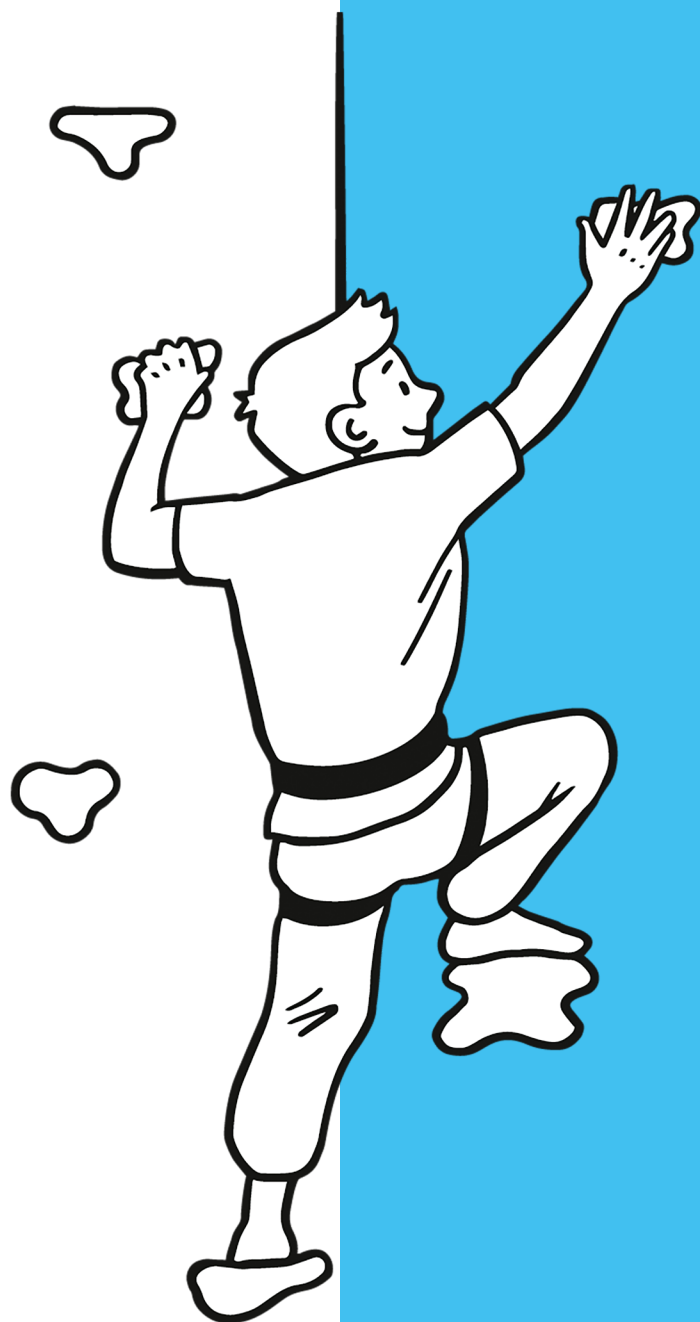
THE FINNISH MODEL FOR LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The goal of the Finnish model for leisure activities is to utilize leisure activities to increase children's and young people's wellbeing. The activities should support students' learning of new things, self-improvement and help them find and further improve their own strengths. The model is run by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The Finnish model for leisure activities aims to provide each and every child with a genuine opportunity to be included and heard. The municipalities must select and organize the specific activities in accordance with information received from consulting the children and young people on their interests.

Under this model, the municipalities can either organize the activities themselves or purchase them from sports clubs, cultural or youth organizations or other activity providers with expertise in working with children and young people. The leisure activities may also consist of young people's own voluntary activities in a supervised environment.

The Ministry of Education and Culture gives annual grants to municipalities to help them implement the model. Municipalities can apply for the grant through the Regional State Administrative Agencies' online services. You can find more information on the grant application process on the website of the Finnish model for leisure activities at www.harrastamisensuomenmalli.fi/en.



GOALS OF THE ACTIVITIES

The Finnish model for leisure activities is meant to provide children and young people with enjoyable, free activities in connection with their school days.

“Enjoyable” means that the activities should be genuinely engaging and interesting for children and young people, encouraging them to attend the activity sessions week after week. The municipality will map out the children and young people’s interests before drawing up a leisure activity schedule. The instructors should ask the children and young people for feedback throughout the leisure activity season.

The fact that the activities are free of charge is an important element of equal, fair access to leisure activities. Since the leisure activities must not cause any costs to the families, the Ministry of Education and Culture supports municipalities covering the costs of the activities with a separate grant.

Activities organized in connection with the school day may take place immediately after the school day ends or before lessons start in the morning. Each organizer must agree with the municipality on how and when activities will be organized. Leisure activities may also be provided in connection with the morning and afternoon activities provided by the schools. If an organizer wishes to participate in organizing activities under the model, they must commit to the goals and objectives set for it.



The activities offered under the Finnish model for leisure activities are based on the wishes and interests of children and young people.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Outreach activities are an important part of the Finnish model for leisure activities. The goal of outreach activities is to find a suitable leisure activity for every child or young person who has not yet found a hobby that suits them, but would like one. Outreach activities may be carried out by means of discussions with children and young people, for example. Outreach activities organized by municipalities may be carried out by many different organizations. In most cases, it is implemented by staff working in the education, youth, leisure or sport departments of the municipal administration.

Instructors should be prepared to encounter new participants trying out leisure activities throughout the activity season. Children and young people who come to the group or club through outreach activities should receive special time and attention (so-called positive special treatment). The instructor must find ways to get those trying out the activity to fall in love with it and to come back to the group again and again. Even the instructor’s own enthusiasm and encouragement can often inspire the child to participate in the activities again.

LISTENING TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WISHES

The activities offered under the Finnish model for leisure activities are based on the wishes and interests of children and young people. The municipalities will map out these wishes on a school-specific basis before sketching out their desired activity offering. Municipalities can either utilize the results of the Ministry of Culture and Education's Student Survey or conduct their own surveys or consultations to identify the children and young people's areas of interest.

Organizers should also be aware of the wishes of children and young people in the area. For more information on the matter, contact the person responsible for leisure activities in the municipal administration. The results of the national Student survey classified by area can be found on the website of the [Ministry of Education and Culture](#) (in Finnish). Organizers should pay special attention to the school and class specific responses, as this will help them to offer their services to the areas where there is most demand.



NATIONAL LEISURE ACTIVITY WEEK AND TRYING OUT DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

The national leisure activity week, leisure activity and hobby fairs and other similar events provide children and young people with the opportunity to see and experience what the particular activity is really like. They help children and young people to find pleasant ways to spend their free time.

Many schools take part in the national leisure activity week that is organized in September after the start of the school year. During the week, students can try out different activities and hobbies from the fields of sports, science, culture, arts and more. The purpose of the event is to help children and young people to find the right leisure activity for themselves. Find more ideas on how to try out different activities on the website of the national leisure activity week: www.harrastusviikko.fi (in Finnish).

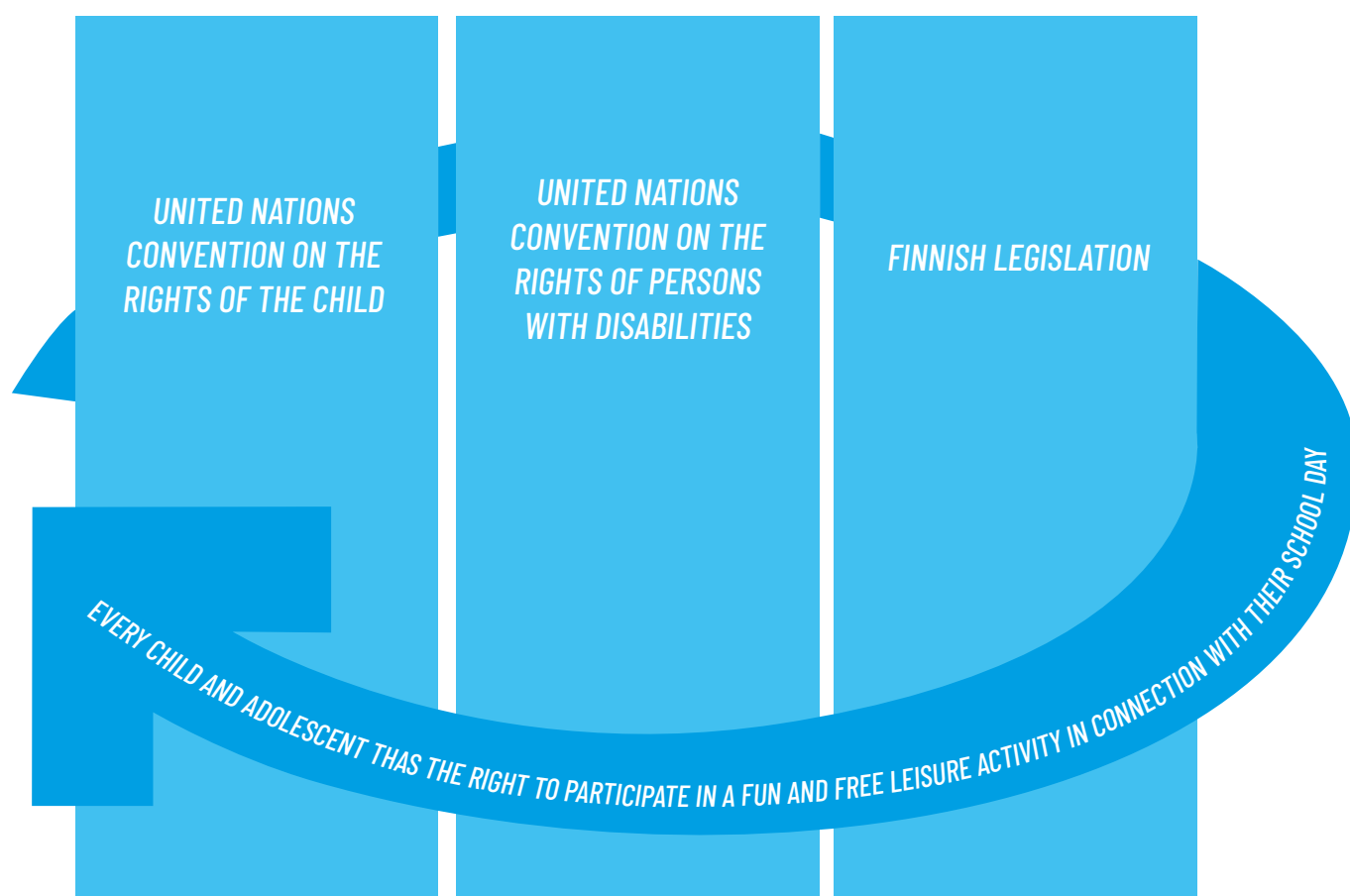
For organizers, the national leisure activity week is a great opportunity to present and market their activities to the students. Local events highlight not only leisure activities provided at school, but also activities that the children and young people can participate in the evenings and during holidays. Find out more about when the national leisure activity week is implemented in your municipality by contacting the municipal administration. The official social media tag for the national leisure activity week is #harrastusviikko (#nationalleisureactivityweek). The tag should be used in all marketing and communication efforts related to the event. Organizations can also contact schools and offer to give presentations of their leisure activities at school during breaks outside the national leisure activity week.

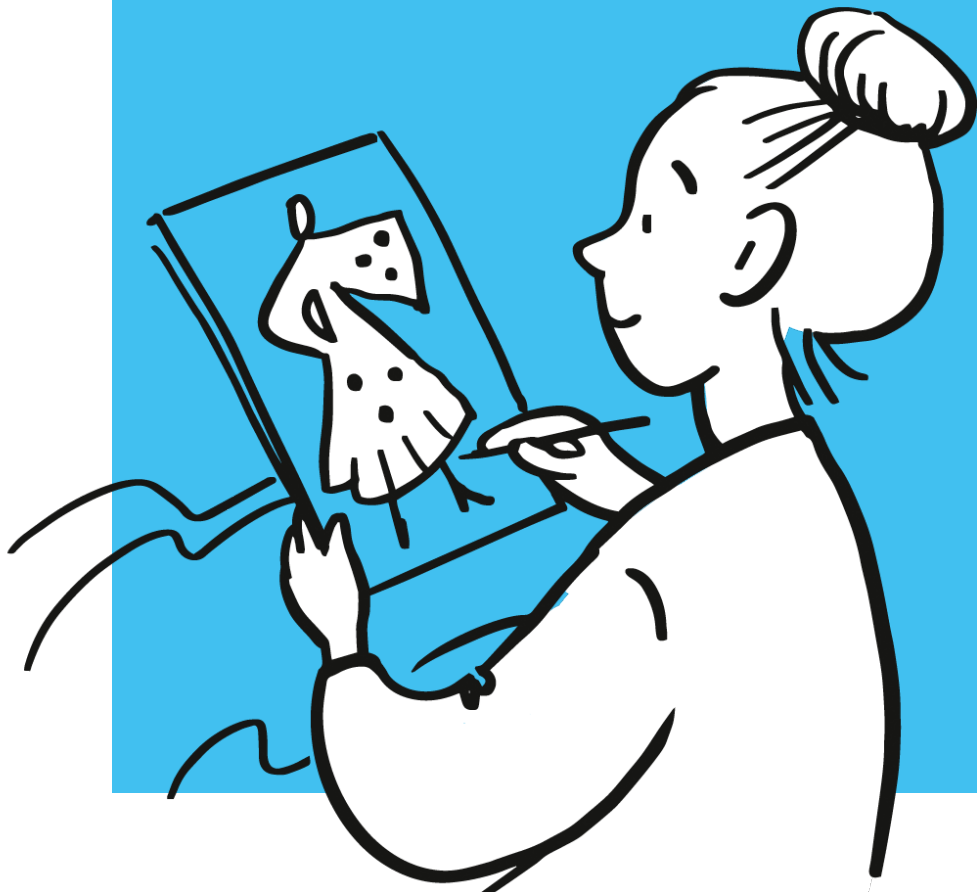


The national leisure activity week allows leisure activity organizers to demonstrate their activities at schools.

EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON HAS THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN A LEISURE ACTIVITY THEY ENJOY

All parties organizing leisure activities at schools must undertake to respect the rights of the children and young people who participate in these activities. Children's and young people's leisure activities are governed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as the applicable Finnish legislation. Each instructor must plan the sessions they supervise in accordance with these values and objectives.





LEISURE ACTIVITIES OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

In a leisure activity group that is open and accessible to all, all participants feel welcomed and that they can manage as well as any other children in the group. The starting point is that all children should be able to attend the activities as they are, and the instructor will adapt the program of the group according to the group's needs and interests.

Accessible communication means that all information is easy to find, understandable and that the language used is fluent and easy to comprehend. This makes participating in the activities easier for everyone.

ACTIVITIES OPEN TO ALL

Many leisure activity groups or clubs are open to all. Everyone is welcomed in the group as they are. Acting as an instructor for an open group may require different skills than instructing other leisure activities. All instructors should be provided with additional training as required before the start of the season. When marketing open leisure activity groups, it is important to use e.g. diverse imagery to communicate that the group is in fact open to all and even children with special support needs can participate.

ACCESSIBLE LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Accessible leisure activities focus on ensuring that the information on the activities can be found easily, the information is presented in an easily understandable form and published in an accessible format.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

Full physical accessibility cannot always be guaranteed, as the types of activity groups and the facilities used vary greatly. It is important that the organization's website include sufficient accessibility information and the contact details of a person families should contact for more information. This allows all families to make their own decision regarding participation in the group and to assess different options, such as using the services of an assistant.

ASSISTANCE

Assistance is an important part of accessibility. The information provided regarding each group should make clear who is responsible for acquiring the required assistance: the organizer or the participant themselves. In addition to this, the description should mention if the assistant is able to join the activity free of charge. Organizers should discuss and agree on the use of assistance with the municipality before the start of the season.

Reasonable adjustments can promote equality among children and young people in the context of leisure activities. Adjustments can include, for example, providing students with different assistive devices depending on their needs.



REVIEW MATERIALS ON ACCESSIBILITY RELATED THEMES
(IN FINNISH) ON OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE

USE NATIONAL LOGOS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION TOOLS

There are different logos and other communication tools available that have been created to signal that an activity is open to all. The accessible art hobby badge (Saavutettava Taideharrastus) and the Lasten Liike quality badge signal that the leisure activity is accessible, organized in accordance with the principles of equality and that all children are welcome to participate. The organizations who use these badges are committed to respecting diversity of children in terms of language, gender, disability and physical characteristics, for example. The aim of organizations using these badges is to organize activities that are suitable for all children and thought by skilled and trained teachers and instructors in a safe and positive atmosphere who listen closely to the children's feedback and wishes. The aforementioned badges communicate that an activity is open for all, therefore helping families to find the right activity groups for their children.

LASTEN LIIKE LOGO

This signals that the leisure activity in question is a high-quality sporting activity. The logo communicates that the organization is committed in making their activities open to all and that the instructor of the group has attended a dedicated Lasten Liike training.

ACCESSIBLE ART HOBBY BADGE

This is a communication tool created for arts organizations. The badge indicates that the organization is willing to support all children in their artistic pursuits.



**Accessible
Art Hobby**

READ MORE ABOUT LASTEN LIIKE AND ACCESSIBLE ART HOBBIES (IN FINNISH)
ON OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.HARRASTAMISENSUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE



READY-MADE MATERIALS, TEMPLATES AND IDEAS

The implementation of the Finnish model for leisure activities is designed and built together with leisure activity organizers. By sharing our experiences with one another, we can improve our activities and make it possible for even more children to participate in a fun, interesting leisure activity. You can find a selection of best practices and different materials for leisure activities on the Finnish model's website at harrastamisesuomenmalli.fi (in Finnish). If you have any best practices or materials you would like to share with other organizers, do not hesitate to send them in! You can share your materials and practices easily using the Share a best practice form (Ilmoita hyvä käytänne, in Finnish). Tell us your success story, and we will share it with the rest of the community.

SHARE A BEST PRACTICE FORM (IN FINNISH) AT:
WWW.HARRASTAMISESUOMENMALLI.FI/ENGUIDE

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact point

- Support and networking opportunities for municipalities and leisure activity organizers
- Collecting and sharing best practices and useful materials

harrastamisensuomenmalli.fi/en/

Regional State Administrative Agencies

- Guidance on grant use: how to apply for, use and report on the use of grants.
- Appeals and applying for extensions

aviavustukset.fi

Ministry of Education and Culture

- General management, improvement, monitoring and evaluation of the model
- Determining the requirements of grant application
- The national Student survey

okm.fi/en/the-finnish-model



The Finnish model for leisure activities supports opportunities for children to spend their leisure time in a safe and meaningful way and prevents loneliness by promoting a variety of different leisure activities.

The Hobbies for Schools guide for schools and other organizers provides further information on how an organization may participate in implementing the Finnish model for leisure activities. The guide also sheds light on what factors should be considered during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the leisure activities.



**THE FINNISH MODEL FOR
LEISURE ACTIVITIES**