

Media release

Thursday, 12 November

Schools triathlon challenge already smashing records

The 2015 Schools Triathlon Challenge is just one week away and participation records are already being smashed.

The eighth annual challenge was launched today with 3,456 southern Tasmanian students currently registered for the two day event at Bellerive Beach, with a record 140 students participating from Princes Street Primary, making up around 80 per cent of all grade 3-6 students at the school.

130 schools across the state are taking part in the challenge, with southern Tasmanian schools lining up at the start line on the 19 and 20 November, and northern Tasmanian schools kicking off on the 25 and 26 November at the Devonport Bluff.

The Devonport challenge has attracted 1,308 participants, bringing the grand total of students participating around the state to 4,764.

Schools Triathlon Challenge organiser Tim Smith said this year's participation is outstanding and he is proud of Tasmanian schools for encouraging participation in the event.

"We work really hard to get students active, especially considering if students aren't involved in competitive sports by the end of primary school they are less likely to make physical activity a priority in their future," Mr Smith said.

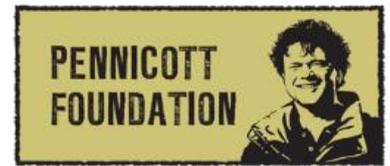
"Students who do not enjoy competitive sports can often finish primary school and have a preconceived idea that they are not 'sporty' or active people, the triathlon aims to give students an opportunity to enjoy the feeling of being physically active, it's all about finding the right fit for the individual and hopefully from there they can take on other active pursuits."

"We are proud to have two prominent Tasmanian partners for this year's event who support our mission. Diabetes Tasmania and the Pennicott Foundation are actively working within the community to spread our message of healthy, active lifestyles for students.

"Our event philosophy is to help promote active and healthy lifestyle choices for students, provide a pathway for students to become engaged in physical activity and to provide students with an opportunity to undertake an achievable personal challenge."

Student participation is the cornerstone of the event, students are encouraged to get involved regardless of their current fitness levels, ability, previous experience or preferred sport.

Diabetes Tasmania CEO Caroline Wells said it's never too early to practice good habits of healthy eating and active lifestyles.



“We are always looking for ways to encourage young people to engage in healthy living, and getting the message out there to children at such a crucial age we hope we can help get them into good habits,” Ms Wells said.

“Reducing your risk of health problems in the future is more than eating healthily, you need to get out there and get active, and it’s never too early to start.”

“Education around hydration is one of our key messages again this year, letting the children know that in most situations sports drinks offer little hydration value when compared to drinks such as water and milk and are also higher in sugar.

“We are also working with Schools Triathlon Challenge to give healthy eating tips, how to prepare for the challenge and what to pack for the day as well as giving delicious and nutritious recipes.”

Robert Pennicott said the Schools Triathlon Challenge is doing a great job of getting children active and the healthy eating message was a vital part in helping students connect with an overall healthy lifestyle.

“Outside of competitive sport, Tasmania is well placed to offer Tasmanians with an amazing range of physically active lifestyle choices right here in their own backyards,” Mr Pennicott said.

The first day of the southern event will have 810 secondary students participating, with 2,646 primary school students involved on the second day.

For more information: Tim Smith, Schools Triathlon Challenge Event Director: 0417 552 181