



# BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



LEGISLATION ● ACTIVITIES ● ACTIVITY LEADERS ● RESPONSIBILITY

*Many children spend long hours each week day without the presence of adults.*

*The aim of before- and after-school activities is to prevent risks relating to children spending time alone and unsupervised.*



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## LEGISLATION FOR CHILDREN'S

In Finland Basic Education Act provides for before- and after-school activities.

The purpose is to give children a familiar and safe place to spend time after their school day and participate in varied and invigorating activities under adult guidance and supervision.

A child may also need such a place in the morning, waiting for school to start.

The activities have evolved and expanded into a natural part of the school day.



# LEGISLATION

## »» *Statutory aims for the activities*

- »» To support the home and school in rearing children and to promote the child's emotional development and ethical growth
- »» To promote children's well-being and equality in society and to enhance inclusion
- »» To offer children a wide range of opportunities to participate in guided and stimulating activities and give them a peaceful place for rest under the guidance and supervision of adults who are suitable and qualified for the job

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# SAFETY



*Children's social skills develop best in interpersonal relationships.*

*Asocial behaviour and the risk of exclusion may relate to feelings of loneliness and a sense of not being needed.*



## COOPERATION FOR THE BEST

Special attention in the content of before- and after-school activities is paid to play, creative activity and positive experiences, without forgetting breaks and rest. The content also relates to different goal-

oriented hobbies and activities that support children's growth, such as sports, manual and visual skills, self-expression in language and music, and household chores.



# ACTIVITIES

## »» *Extent and provision*

Under the Basic Education Act, before- and after-school activities are intended for pupils in the first and second years of comprehensive school.

Pupils with special education needs in all year-classes are entitled to before- and after-school activities which cater for the individual special needs as well as meet the overall aims of the activities.

The activities are mainly provided on weekdays between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. during the school year.

The activities can also be provided during holidays, for example autumn, Christmas and ski leaves.

Equal selection criteria must be applied to all children in admission to before- and after-school activities.

The National Board of Education decides on the aims and core content of before- and after-school activities.

The local authority is responsible for the coordination, evaluation and supervision of before- and after-school activities.

The local authority must adopt an action plan for the activities; this is intended to assure the continuity and quality of activities.

Before- and after-school activities must be offered three or four hours each school-day, totalling either 570 or 760 hours a year.

Moderate fees can be charged for the activities (€60-80/mo.)

## OF CHILDREN

School clubs and basic education in the arts may constitute before- and after-school activities. The activities also provide leisured circumstances for doing homework.



*The guided before- and after-school activities create jobs.*

*Local authorities and other activity providers employ thousands of qualified activity leaders to do this important social work.*



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## QUALITY THROUGH TRAINING

Carefully planned morning- and afternoon activities offer the best possible support to children in their school work and enable parents to reconcile work and family. It is important that the activities are planned in good cooperation with parents and schools.

In 2007 the activities employed 6,500 qualified activity leaders. The figure is expected to rise by another couple of thousands in the near future.

Training qualifying for activity leaders is provided by many educational establishments all over Finland.



# QUALIFIED ACTIVITY LEADERS

## »»» *Qualifications*

- »»» University degree
- »»» Post-secondary vocational diploma
- »»» Vocational qualification or equivalent
- »»» Competence-based vocational or specialist qualification
- »»» Other training or proven experience qualifying for work as activity leader for a group of children and aptitude for the job (up to 31 July 2009)

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Classroom, pre-primary, special-needs and subject teachers are also qualified to lead before- and after-school activity groups.

# RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN RESTS WITH ALL ADULTS

*Before- and after-school activities are being developed and harmonised in 15 regional networks.*

*National application forms can be downloaded from the [www.edu.fi](http://www.edu.fi) website.*

*Every child deserves the opportunities inherent in these activities!*

»»» All children entitled to before- and after-school activities are offered three or four hours of activities each school-day, totalling either 570 or 760 hours a year.

»»» Moderate fees can be charged for the activities (€60-80/mo.).

Local authorities that arrange or purchase before- and after-school activities get government transfers for the purpose.

»»» Ministry of Education  
P.O. Box 29  
00023 GOVERNMENT  
FINLAND  
[www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi)

»»» Finnish National Board of Education  
P.O. Box 380  
00531 HELSINKI  
FINLAND  
[www.edu.fi](http://www.edu.fi)



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