

Making Affordable Access to Recreation a Reality in Your Community



PRO Educational Forum
April 9, 2010

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Outcomes for Today



- Learn about the Provincial Policy Framework
- Understand the Community Action Plan Cycle
- Review Best Practices
- Share your challenges and successes and chart your course!

How did we get here?



- 2006 Ontario Task Group on Access to Recreation formed
- 2 provincial surveys on access policies (municipal and non-profit)
- Research Summary Report
- Promising Practices Guide
- Provincial Policy Planning Institute Nov/07
- Policy Framework and Toolkit

Task Group Vision



- **Everyone** has access to affordable recreation in their community in order to enjoy health and social benefits and to improve their prospects for a better future

Task Group Members



- Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Canadian Tire Foundation for Families
- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
- Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
- Ontario Municipal Social Services Association
- Ontario Public Health Association
- Parks and Recreation Ontario
 - In association with: Heart and Stroke Foundation; YMCA; United Way; Ministries of Health Promotion; Children and Youth Services, and Education.

	"DEMAND SIDE" Barriers faced by low-income families	"SUPPLY SIDE" Barriers faced by municipal and community providers
PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low awareness of programs and the importance of recreation • Parental mistrust • Lack of structured, culturally sensitive and accessible programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to engage communities and create responsive programs • Shortage of support and training for quality coaches, mentors and volunteers • Lack of structured, culturally sensitive and accessible programs
FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transportation and community-based infrastructure • Lack of places for both informal recreation and structured programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable access to community spaces • Maintaining infrastructure and facilities to meet current and future demands
AFFORDABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User fees • Stigma and complexity of fee subsidies • Transportation and equipment costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable funding • Cost pressures and competing priorities
CAPACITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of voice for low-income families • Lack of program integration and coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access policy expertise, coordination and frameworks • The will to take action
ACCOUNTABILITY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to measure success • Incentives and consequences

Benefits of Recreation



- **Physical health benefits**
 - Recreation that includes physical activity lowers the incidence of illness and obesity.
- **Psycho-social benefits**
 - Recreation fosters life skills; reduces risky behaviour; improves self-esteem; creates positive relationships.
- **Breaking cycle of poverty**
 - Regular involvement by children and youth in structured, skill building activities improves success in school and the labour market.
- **Government savings**
 - The above benefits result in savings (to health, social service and justice costs) and increase the tax base (when people avoid welfare and gain employment).

Policy Framework - Objectives



- **Affordability**
- **Places to Play**
- **Awareness**
- **Inclusion**
- **Capacity**
- **Collaboration**
- **Accountability**

Policy Objectives

■ Two Fundamental Policy Objectives:

1. Affordable Access Policies will be established in every community
2. A Core Set of Free, Universal Programs will be identified and available to children, youth and families



■ Three Supportive Policy Strategies

1. Community Access to Community Space
2. Targeted Community Outreach & Engagement
3. Partnerships & Collaboration

Making Access a Reality in your Community

- Policy versus program
- Implementation Toolkit to assist communities to realize policy objectives
 - Identifies the steps to creating a community action plan including:
 - Local research
 - Establish a local collaborative network
 - Develop an access policy
 - Move your community action plan forward
 - Monitor and evaluate your policy



Promising Practices

- Promising Practices Guide (2008) showcases 26 local initiatives
- Common themes emerge in the barriers these programs address:
 - *User fees*
 - *Transportation*
 - *Equipment costs*
 - *Awareness*
 - *Minimizing stigma*
- Common Concern: Sustainability



Promising Practices

The Guide is intended to:

- Provide solid examples of practices that have been successful in increasing access to recreation for low-income families;
- Enable municipalities and grassroots community organizations to adopt and/or adapt the promising practices
- Be used by CPRA as part of the Everybody Gets to Play initiative, as a resource for other provinces and territories.



MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE - H.E.A.R.T. – HELPING EVERYONE ACCESS RECREATION TOGETHER



Overview

- Community Coalition that began in 1999
- Equipment exchange; free/low cost programs

Participation

The Municipality of Port Hope, Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, HKPR District Health Unit, Port Hope Community Health Centre, YMCA Northumberland, Alderville First Nations Health and Social Services, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and the Northumberland United Way

Removal of Barriers

Communication and access

Website: www.joininnorthumberland.ca

Funding/Partnerships

- United Way, Healthy Communities grant

Town of Ajax – Playground Program



Overview

- Began with six locations; Grown to 23 neighbourhood park sites
- Universal
- Designed for children ages 6-12 years of age

Participation

- Over 24,000 visits each summer

Removal of Barriers

- Financial
- Transportation

Funding

- Part of the annual Recreation budget and is subsidized by tax \$

The Human League Association P.L.A.Y. Program – City of Greater Sudbury



Overview

- P.L.A.Y. helps children and youth (0-17 years of age), who are not already registered in a recreation activity

Participation

- 2007 - 356 children sponsored – Goal 400
- The average sponsorship cost per child is \$300.

Removal of Barriers

- Financial
- Equipment

Funding/Partnerships

- Many partnerships with organizations, corporations and community groups.
- Funding is received from a number of different sources e.g. Royal Bank, United Way, Jump Start, KidSport Ontario

The City of Mississauga – ActiveAssist



Overview

- Began in May 2009
- Provides financial assistance, based on eligibility, for recreation programs and services - \$275 annual credit per person

Participation

- Reached maximum of 2,500 people within 3 months launch of program
- 1,372 children; 1,041 adults; 86 older adults

Removal of Barriers

- Financial
- Language
- Equipment

Funding/Partnerships

- \$687,500 in potential subsidy
- No impact on the City budget

Activity – What are your Promising Practices



1. **Successes:** Everyone shares one program/initiative/policy in their community that removes barriers to participation for low-income citizens
2. **Challenges:** What are the challenges to implementing an access program or policy in your community?
3. **Opportunities:** What is your vision for your community?

Full Group Discussion



- Promising Practice
- Challenges
- Opportunities

Taking Action in your Community



- Use the Community Implementation Toolkit and other resources
- Remember – the Access Policy is only one aspect of your “access action plan”
- Spend the time creating a solid foundation
- Connect with a mentor
- Become a Champion in your community!

CHAMPIONS FOR SUCCESS



- ✓ Government
 - Federal Government
 - Government of Ontario
- ✓ Local Government
- ✓ Allied Organizations
- ✓ Community Organizations

Thank you



Questions and Comments

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