

MULTI- GENERATION PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTATION

An Initiative of Rural Response for Healthy Children

www.rrhc.on.ca

Funded by Government of Ontario



WELCOME

In 2018, Rural Response for Healthy Children undertook the delivery of a pilot initiative known as Strengthening Huron. A component of the initiative was the coordination and delivery of a series of multi-generation physical activity programs in villages throughout Huron County. The selected villages had minimal coordinated physical activity programs in their communities.

The intent of the pilot was to encourage an inactive population to become active, increase physical literacy and provide quality, safe and accessible programs for various populations. This work was achieved through the delivery of ten week multi-generation physical activity series in seven communities.

The group physical activities ranged from ice skating on an outdoor rink, zumba and pound, multi-team sports (i.e. pick-up baseball, soccer), cross training, dancing, pole walking and yoga.

Strengthening Huron had local partner support from Huron County Health Unit, Huron O.P.P and some family health teams, lower tier municipalities and service clubs. The initiative was funded by Government of Ontario through the Ontario Sports & Recreation Community Fund.

BEST PRACTICES



- Learn from other community organizations where gaps exist in physical activity in your area.
- Build relationship with identified communities by connecting with service clubs and existing community groups. There is a challenge when these groups do not exist. It is recommended that connecting with one person or a community leader is the best start. Sometimes the local municipal office will be able to help identify the community leader.
- Be curious. Ask questions and listen. Find out what works and doesn't work in the community. Learn about the ages and lifestyles of the residents. Identify local assets such as trails or community facilities. All this information will help you schedule a program that is right for the community.
- Identify physical activity leaders who are knowledgeable, trusted and have experience leading groups. Sometimes they are already known in the community.



BEST PRACTICES

- It is essential to provide trusted physical activity leaders for the series. Ask for a recent vulnerable sector police check and encourage them to take Respect In Sport online training to build their understanding and ability to stop bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination.
- Promote the physical activity series with posters, an article in the local printed newspaper, social media posts and word-of-mouth. In villages, posters placed at the grocery store, gas station, coffee shop, library, post office and churches is helpful.
- Provide healthy snacks and refreshments; encourage participants to bring their own reusable mug or water bottle, keep waste to a minimum.
- Access the wealth of physical literacy resources on the Internet. Schedule a 10 to 15 minute discussion for each session about the importance of physical literacy and provide information to further understanding at home.
- Use communication tools, such as opt-in text messaging, to stay connected with participants and share important information about class rescheduling, local physical activity opportunities and additional health information.