



**Understanding Accessibility and Inclusion Policies in Recreation
Settings in the Counties of
Lanark, Leeds & Grenville
March 31, 2012**

Written by: Kim Bergeron, Bergeron Consulting, Baltimore, ON

On behalf of the Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership

Executive Summary

Places within our communities are designed for recreational physical activity such as parks, trails, community centers, physical activity facilities (such as pools, gyms, tracks) schools, and playgrounds. There are also recreational spaces designed for playing sports such as playing fields (e.g., baseball diamonds, soccer fields, volleyball courts, basketball courts). These recreational settings offer social interaction for diverse people and cultures living in the same communities. However, not all recreational settings and programs offered are accessible or inclusive to everyone in the community.

The purpose of this project was to identify: a) programs offered for specific population groups (e.g., children, youth, families, older adults, people with disability) and b) policies that remove barriers or obstacles to recreation opportunities and policies to create an environment where everyone is able to fully participate) in the counties of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville. Municipal recreation and sport association representatives were invited to participate in an online survey and a telephone interview.

A total of 12 municipal recreation representatives completed the online survey and 6 completed the telephone interview. A Brockville & Area YMCA representative also participated in a telephone interview. A total of 13 sport association representatives completed the online survey and 3 completed the telephone interview.

The results were summarized for municipal recreation representatives and sport association representatives separately. Then both sets of results were reviewed to identify similarities and differences in the provision of accessible and inclusive recreation.

A number of similar results were found among respondents:

- There is agreement that recreation is for all to enjoy, fees for recreation should not be a barrier, recreation facilities are welcoming to everyone, and that financial assistance should be available when needed
- There are a variety of population groups offered opportunities by both municipal and sport programming;
- All respondents are working hard to reduce or eliminate fees to access recreation opportunities and create accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities. Greater detail was provided by municipal recreation than sport association respondents regarding how

this type of assistance is provided. However, both respondents mentioned the “Making Play Possible” program;

- All respondents identified transportation as a barrier;
- There is a lack of assistance by all respondents to overcome transportation barriers;
- There is agreement among all respondents that they are open to receiving information and resources on how to develop affordable access to recreation policies and making their recreational programming more accessible to all members of the community would be possible over time;
- There are a limited number of accessible and inclusive policies.

Overall, it was found that some efforts are being made to create accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities;

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction..... 5

Background..... 5

Methodology..... 9

Results and Data Interpretation..... 11

 Municipal Recreation Online Survey..... 11

 Municipal Recreation Telephone Interviews..... 17

 Sport Association Online Survey..... 22

 Sport Association Telephone Interviews..... 28

 Overall Summary of Results..... 29

Conclusion..... 30

Appendices..... 31

INTRODUCTION

In 2011, the Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership (the Partnership) completed a community picture report that provided an overview of the community and health profile related to six priorities: physical activity, healthy eating, injury prevention, substance and alcohol prevention, tobacco exposure and prevention and mental health promotion. The report also outlined the community consultation, partnership development and priority setting process used to identify community priorities and recommendations. The priorities related to physical activity were to provide “access to a variety of sport and recreation opportunities for children, youth, and families, and the need to create supportive environments”¹ The recommended action to achieve these priorities was “to provide a variety of opportunities for accessible and inclusive physical activity”² Therefore, as a next step, the Partnership identified the need to learn more about accessibility and inclusion policies in recreation settings.

The purpose of this project was to identify: a) programs offered for specific population groups (e.g., children, youth, families, older adults, people with disability) and b) policies that remove barriers or obstacles to recreation opportunities and policies to create an environment where everyone is able to fully participate) in the counties of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville.

BACKGROUND

People of all ages engage in recreational activity (i.e., walking, cycling, playing in playgrounds, sports) for enjoyment, exercise or health purposes.³ Places within our communities are designed for recreational physical activity such as parks, trails, community centers, physical activity facilities (such as pools, gyms, tracks) schools, and playgrounds. There are also recreational spaces designed for playing sports such as playing fields (e.g., baseball diamonds, soccer fields, volleyball courts, basketball courts). Additionally, communities are strengthened through residents’ participation in recreation and sport programs. Social interaction through participation in recreation settings help build connected, cohesive communities by developing social capital.⁴ An important part of this social interaction is the opportunities it offers for diverse

¹ Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership. 2011. Community Picture March 2011. p14.

² Ibid. p.14.

³ Sallis, Millstein & Carlson. 2011. Community Design for Physical Activity. In *Making Healthy Places: Designing and Building for Health, Well-being, and Sustainability*.

⁴ Bergeron, & Cragg. 2009. Making the Case for Active Transportation: Bulletin #7- Increasing Social Capital

cultures living in the same communities to learn about each other, increase cross-cultural understanding, and capitalizes on the strengths of each in contributing to community life.⁵

Several studies have found that living in proximity to parks, trails, lakes, and recreation facilities and having accessible recreation, exercise, or sport facilities in neighbourhoods tends to be associated with people doing more recreational physical activity.⁶ It has also been found that the quality of recreation facilities and access to these facilities both tend to be poor in low-income communities.⁷ Moreover, living in poverty has been found to be the greatest barrier to achieving physical and mental health.⁸ The benefits of recreation, however, can help mitigate these problems: “Canadian children and youth and by extension the entire family unit can be made resilient against the negative effects of poverty were there to be a public health approach to improve access to recreation for low-income families.”⁹ Recreation opportunities, therefore, can be viewed as a ‘first line of defense’ in combating the negative outcomes of poverty and for developing the resilience to achieve more positive outcomes. Accordingly, not all recreational settings and programs are accessible or inclusive to everyone in a community.¹⁰

The Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario¹¹ defines accessible and inclusive recreation as:

Accessible: citizens are able to access (recreation and parks) services without having to surmount undue obstacles or barriers; and

Inclusive: creating an environment where everyone, regardless of circumstance, is able to participate fully in their community to the best of their abilities. Inclusive communities, programs and services are (to the greatest extent possible): accessible to those who cannot afford to pay; barrier free; able to accommodate special needs; safe and hate-free; and include activities that value and incorporate diversity in culture, race, language and sexual orientation; and that support gender equality (p.4).

⁵ Torjman, 2004. Culture and Recreation: Links to Well-Being. Caledon Institute of Social Policy, Ottawa, ON.

⁶ See: Bauman & Bull. 2007. Environmental Correlates of Physical Activity and Walking in Adults and Children: A Review of the Reviews; Kaczynski & Henderson. 2007. Environmental Correlates of Physical Activity: A Review of Evidence about Parks and Recreation;

⁷ Lovasi et al. 2009. Built Environments and Obesity in Disadvantaged Populations. Epidemiologic Reviews, 31,

⁸ Totten, 2007. The Health, Social and Economic Benefits of Increasing Access to Recreation for Low-Income Families Research Summary Report.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Parks and Recreation Ontario. 2009. Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario.

Accessible and inclusive recreation is framed within this Charter as a right and not a privilege; “Everyone in Ontario has a right to quality, accessible and inclusive recreation and parks services in their communities-services that are essential for the health of Ontarians, the quality of life in our communities, and the sustainability of our environment.”¹²

The Ontario Task Group on Access to Recreation for Low-Income Families, with support from Parks and Recreation Ontario, has developed a policy framework for affordable access to recreation in Ontario. This policy framework provides a road map for government representatives, including municipal representatives, community organizations/representatives (i.e., Public Health Units, Community Health Centres, Social Services Organizations), educational and private sector representatives and low-income individuals to work together in a systematic, strategic manner to make affordable access to recreation a reality.¹³

In order to make this a reality and influence system change (e.g., to change how organizations (considered “systems”) operate) to create accessible recreation opportunities, the Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance recommends:

- Supporting and advance community planning and funding that ensures communities are safe and supportive of healthy active living by promoting mixed use of land, green spaces, provision and upkeep of safe walking routes.
- Investment in adequate facilities and programs to promote and ensure access to active living and physical activity (i.e. recreation centres, community trails, swimming facilities, playgrounds, bike paths and school facilities).
- Improve access to recreational activities and quality physical education programs for low-income groups and priority populations.¹⁴

The Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance’s toolkit for healthy public policies¹⁵ further recommends that physical activity, sports and recreation organizations:

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ontario Task Group on Access to Recreation for Low-Income Families. 2009. Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians Policy Framework Every One Plays.

¹⁴ Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance. 2010. Evidence-Informed Messages: Active Living and Physical Activity. p.3.

¹⁵ OCDPA. 2010. Toolkit for Healthier Communities-Influencing Healthy Public Policies www.ocdpa.on.ca/OCDPA/docs/OCDPA_HCToolkit.pdf

- Establish policies (i.e., fee assistance or subsidy programs for low-income participants, free universal programs, equipment trade-in programs, free transportation for youth) that reduce barriers to participation in physical activity, sport and recreation;
- Establish policies (i.e., related to active transportation, improved land use planning to reduce dependence on cars, connected walking routes, reduce road danger) that encourage walking in your community;
- Create coordinated community physical activity policies with recreation/sport providers, community groups and school boards to ensure that all children and their families have access and opportunities to participate in a wide range of physical activity programs throughout the year.

To assist municipal recreation providers, sport associations and other community organizations to be champions for social change, and create affordable access to recreation opportunities, a *Guide for Communities* has been created to assist in the development of a Community Action Plan for affordable access to recreation.¹⁶ Like wise, a number of Ontario municipalities have taken steps to develop policies and initiatives to create affordable access to recreation:

- County of Brant and City of Brantford- Can We Help Program
- Town of Milton- Fee Access Policy
- City of Toronto- Welcome Policy
- City of Oshawa- Service Rendered Voucher
- Town of Ajax- Affordable Access to Recreation
- Municipality of Port Hope- H.E.A.R.T. (Helping Everyone Access Recreation Together)
- City of Waterloo- Payment Assistance Program

¹⁶ Ontario Task Group on Access to Recreation for Low-Income Families. 2010. Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians Policy Development and Implementation Guide for Communities
www.prontario.org/index.php/ci_id/3721.htm

METHODOLOGY

An online survey and key informant telephone interviews were conducted with recreation providers between February and March 2012. The purpose of the survey and interviews was to gain a better understanding of accessibility and inclusion policies in recreation settings. Recreation settings include recreation infrastructure (i.e., playground equipment, sidewalks, trails, sport fields), and recreation facilities (i.e., community centres, schools, arena). The results were summarized for municipal recreation representatives and sport association representatives separately. Then both sets of results were reviewed to identify similarities and differences in the provision of accessible and inclusive recreation. The information gathered was used to develop recommendations for future actions by the Partnership to provide accessible and inclusion policies in recreation settings.

Participants

The Partnership identified recreation providers in municipal recreation facilities and sport associations as participants for this project (Appendix A). The Partnership generated a contact list that included email addresses and telephone numbers of Directors and sport association contacts; 22 municipal recreation and 58 sport association representatives were included on this list.

Municipal Recreation Participants

A total of 12 municipal recreation representatives from across the District completed the online survey.

A total of 6 municipal recreation representatives and 1 Brockville & Area YMCA representative participated in telephone interviews to understand accessibility and inclusion policies in municipal recreation facilities and programs. The types of recreation facilities considered during the interview included arenas, sports fields, walking trails, ski trails, cycling trails, outdoor rinks, pools, splash pads, beaches, gyms, workout facilities, and playgrounds.

Sport Association Participants

A total of 13 sport association representatives completed the online survey. The municipal locations associated with the participants included: Athens & Rear of Young & Escott, Beckwith Township, Brockville, Carleton Place, Drummond/North Elmsley, Edwardsburgh/Cardinal, Elizabethtown/Kitley, Font of Yonge, Gananoque, Lanark Highlands, Lanark County, Mississippi Mills, Merrickville/Wolford, Montague, North Grenville, Prescott,

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, and Smiths Falls. Of the 13 respondents, 4 sport associations' identified that they have service agreements to provide sport programming in the following municipalities: Beckwith Township, Brockville, Carleton Place, Drummond/North Elmsley, Front of Yonge, Lanark Highlands, Lanark County, Mississippi Mills, Montague, Town of Perth, and Smiths Falls.

All sport associations listed on the contact list were invited by email to participate in the online survey and telephone interview. There were 3 sport association representatives that participated in a telephone interview to understand accessibility and inclusion policies in sport associations'. The types of sports being considered during the interviews were football, hockey, and broomball.

Procedures

The Chair of the Partnership sent out an email (Appendix B) to recreation providers outlining the purpose of the project and inviting them to complete an online survey (Appendix C). Potential participants were also informed that they might be one of a small group of providers randomly selected to participate in a key informant telephone interview. Survey and key informant interview questions were informed by the Every One Plays: Access to Recreation for Low-Income Families in Ontario.¹⁷ An interview guide (Appendix D) was also created. Two reminder emails to invite potential participants to participate in both the survey and telephone interviews were sent out. Telephone follow-up was also initiated to recruit participants for the telephone interviews.

Limitations and Strengths of Methodology

As with all research, this project has limitations that need to be noted. Participating in surveys and interviews has high participant burden (i.e., time it takes to participate, motivation to log-on), which could account for the low response rate by sport association representatives. Participant bias may also be a factor as only those participants that were highly motivated or had time to contribute to this project, participated. Lastly, the results can not be generalized to other communities or recreation providers. Strengths that enhance the credibility of the results included the use of two different data collection methods (survey and interviews) and checking with those interviewed to clarify information.

¹⁷ David Redmond and Associates. 2007. Report of Survey Findings. www.prontario.org/index.php?ci_id=3354

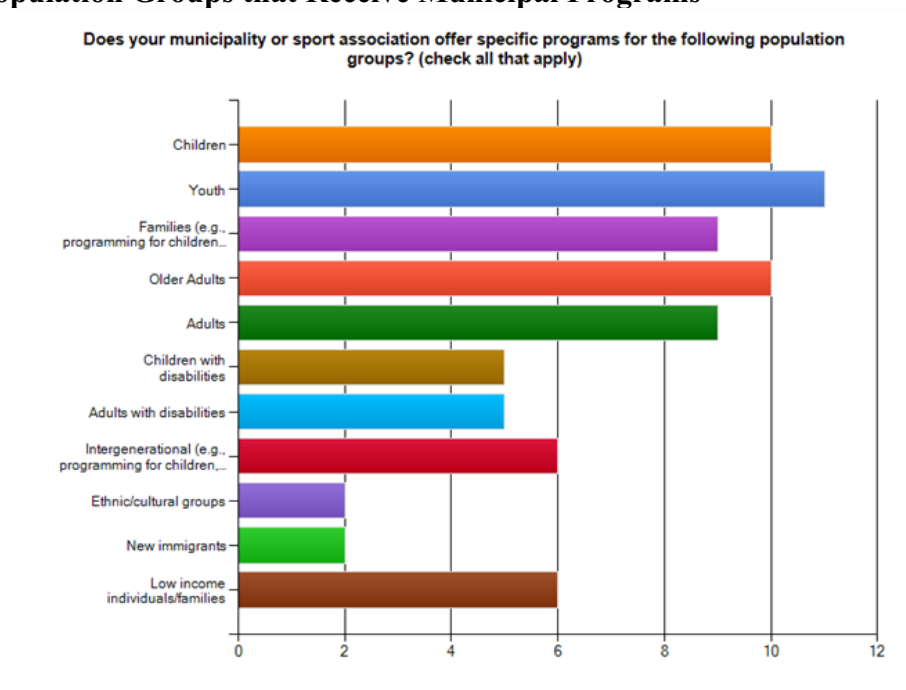
RESULTS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

Municipal Recreation: Online Survey

Population Groups Offered Sports Programming

Of the 11 respondents who answered a question about the types of population groups that are offered municipal programming, it was found that a variety of population groups are offered municipal recreation programming. The highest population served was youth, followed closely by children, older adults, families and adults. Intergenerational and low income individual/families are served by 6 of the 11 respondents. Children and adults with disabilities are served by 5 of the 11 respondents. Ethnic/cultural groups and new immigrants are served by 2 of the 11 respondents. Figure A outlines the population groups served.

Figure 1: Population Groups that Receive Municipal Programs

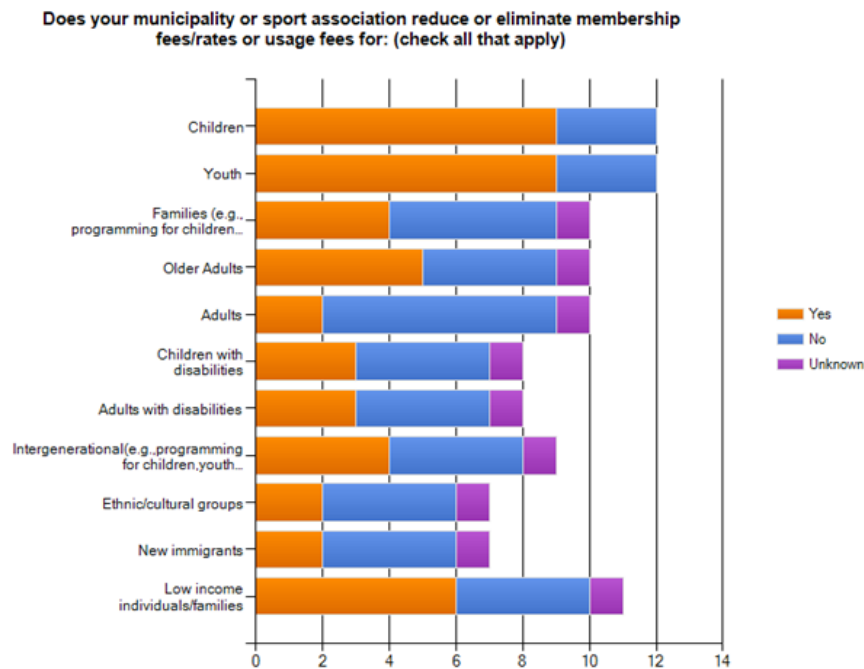


Reduction or Elimination of Membership Fees for Specific Population Groups

Municipal recreation providers are working hard to reduce or eliminate fees to access recreation opportunities and get this message out to residents. Reduced or eliminated membership fees or usage fees were identified for all population groups listed: children, youth, families, older adults, children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, intergenerational, ethnic/cultural groups, new immigrants and low income individuals/families (Figure B).

Children, youth and low income individuals/families were found to receive the largest number of reduced fees by those who participated in the survey, followed closely by families, older adults, and adults. One respondent wrote in the additional information section that “caregivers of persons with disabilities are never charged a fee.”

Figure 2: Population Groups that Receive Reduced or Eliminated Membership Fees/Rates or Usage Fees



* the horizontal line represents the number of survey respondents that provide a reduced or eliminated membership fees/rates for the specific populations listed vertically.

When asked if their municipality provided fee reductions for recreation programs, 9 responded “yes”, 2 responded “no” and 1 responded “unknown”. Of the 9 that responded “yes”, 8 answered a question about how their municipality communicates the availability of fee reduction for recreation programs. Multiple methods are used to communicate the availability of fee reductions for recreation programs with their municipal website being the highest, followed closely by notices included with program registration information, recreation program notices and brochures, notices from other agencies, newspaper advertisements, and notices posted at recreation facilities.

When asked if the recreation programming was fully accessible to all children/youth with disabilities, of the 12 respondents that answered, 6 responded “yes”, 4 responded “no”, and 2 responded “unknown”.

Working with Other Organizations to Provide Access to Recreation for Specific Population Groups

Municipal recreation providers are working with other organizations in the community to provide access to recreation for specific population groups (Figure C). Children, youth, and low income individuals/families were found to receive the greatest number of responses.

Figure 3: Population Groups that Work with Sport Associations and Other Organizations to Provide Access to Recreation



Programming for Sub-Groups of the Population

Most municipal representatives who participated in this survey do not provide programs for specific sub-groups of the population. For example, when asked if their municipality plans and provides programs for specific sub-groups of the population, 1 answered “yes”, 10 answered “no”, and 1 answered “unknown”. Additional information provided by a single respondent indicated that they organize a girls’ running group.

Assistance to Access Sports Equipment

Some municipal recreation representatives (4) answered “yes” that they provide assistance to increase access to sports equipment, whereas 8 answered “no”. When asked if their municipality hosts an equipment trade-in program, 4 answered “yes” and 8 answered “no”. Additional information provided by the respondents included:

- Used sport equipment exchange held every fall (3 respondents);
- Equipment is provided for recreation based programs;
- Volunteers raise money and give the public school funds for hockey helmets.

Assistance to Overcome Barriers

When asked if their municipality provided assistance to help overcome transportation barriers, 1 answered “yes” and 11 answered “no” and when asked if their municipality met with community members or specific population groups to learn about the barriers they face when accessing recreation opportunities, 4 answered “yes”, 6 responded “no”, and 2 responded “unknown”.

Arrangements to Provide Recreation Services

Table 1 outlines the number of participants that identified the types of arrangements made to provide recreation services. Additional information indicated that if a class reaches the minimum registration requirements based on cost recovery and there is still space for additional participants, low income persons are offered space in the class at no or very minimal cost.

Table 1: Arrangements to Provide Recreation Services

	Frequently	Sometimes	Very little	Not at all	Unknown
Contracts with other providers	1	2	4	4	0
Fee for service	9	0	0	2	0
Program/initiative grant (e.g., Trillium Foundation)	4	3	0	3	1
Other organizations’ programs (e.g., Jump Start)	2	5	2	1	1
Partnership with non-profit organizations	2	5	2	1	1
Partnership with schools/school boards	3	6	0	1	1
Free universal programs (e.g., drop-in swimming)	1	6	2	1	0

Shared Use Agreements

Respondents were asked if their municipality had shared use agreements and/or reduced fee agreements. Of the 7 who answered the question, 6 answered “yes” to shared use agreements and 2 answered “yes” to reduced fee agreements. Shared agreements and/or reduced fee agreements were identified with the school board and neighbouring municipalities (i.e., Town of

Gananoque, Carleton Place, Beckwith, Mississippi Mills). One respondent also identified that youth run programs pay lower ice fees.

Parks and/or Recreation Master Plans

Of the 9 respondents who answered a question asking if their municipality had a Parks and/or Recreation Master Plan, 2 answered “yes”, 6 answered “no”, and 1 answered “unknown”.

Attitudes

Several questions in the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement for statements related to accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities:

- 10 respondents strongly agreed and 2 agreed that recreation is for all to enjoy;
- 8 respondents strongly agreed and 4 agreed that fees for recreation should not be a barrier to participation;
- 7 strongly agreed and 4 agreed that their facilities are welcoming to everyone;
- 5 strongly agreed and 7 agreed that financial assistance should be available when needed.

Some recreation providers agreed that addressing transportation barriers was important to increase access to organized recreation opportunities; 1 strongly agreed, 4 agreed, 3 were unsure, and 4 disagreed that recreation providers had a role to address transportation barriers.

Respondents were asked their level of agreement to the statement “some people (e.g., living on low income, living with mental health problems) are unlikely to participate in community recreation or sport associations due to negative reactions by those around them. There was a mixed response from the 12 respondents who answered; 2 strongly agreed, 2 agreed, 3 were unsure, 4 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed.

All respondents stated that they were open to receiving information and resources on how to develop affordable access to recreation policies and the possibility of making their recreation programming more accessible to all members of the community over time.

Capital Expenditures for Recreation Infrastructure

Respondents were asked if their municipality is planning capital expenditures for recreation infrastructure to create more recreation opportunities for all community members. Of the 12 that answered this question, 9 answered “yes”, 1 answered “no”, and 2 answered “unknown”. Of the 9 that answered “yes”, 6 identified the types of capital expenditures for recreation infrastructure being considered (they check all that applied) were:

- Playground equipment and parks and open spaces (6 of the respondents);

- Playground equipment that is wheelchair accessible (5 respondents)
- Outdoor ice pads (4 respondents);
- Outdoor splash pads (2 respondents)
- Sidewalks (1 respondent).

Additional information provided by one respondent was that they are increasing pool access via a lift and accessible doors. Another respondent identified that they are partnering with local trails groups to offer trails in the township and another identified that they have developed and planned their recreation facility to be accessible and open to all.

Policies

Respondents were asked if their municipality had an approved policy to deal with access equity to recreation programming for all residents. Of the 12 respondents, 1 answered “yes” and identified that the policy was published (e.g., on the municipal website) or otherwise made readily available to the public, 7 answered “no”, and 4 answered “unknown”. Of the 10 who answered “no” or “unknown”, 8 answered a set of questions about barriers related to their sports association and the development and implementation of a policy to deal with equity of access to recreation. Respondents could check all that applied. The types of barriers identified were:

- other higher priorities (5)
- general policy is enough - a recreation specific policy is not needed (4).

None of the respondents chose:

- no support from Council/Board of Directors;
- concern about financial implications/costs; or
- lack of knowledge/expertise to develop a policy.

Additional information provided by one respondent was that their municipality is currently working on a policy for affordable, accessible recreation and another respondent identified that they are in the process of having a policy on affordable, accessible recreation produced for their Council’s approval with the anticipation that it will be approved in the spring. A third respondent identified that their municipality has a customer service standard in place for equal treatment of all; it is not recreation specific.

When asked if their municipality had policies that strengthen social interaction for individuals, families, and groups in their community by ensuring access to free space for

recreation and other activities, of the 11 respondents, 8 answered “no”, 2 answered “yes”, and 1 answered “unknown”.

When asked if their municipality had policies that all employees and volunteers were required to receive anti-stigma/discrimination training, of the 12 respondents, 8 answered “no”, 3 answered “yes”, and 1 answered “unknown”.

When asked if their sport association had anti-bullying policies in place, of the 12 respondents 5 answered “yes”, 5 answered “no”, and 1 answered “unknown”.

When respondents were asked if their municipality had anti-discrimination policies in place, of the 12 respondents, 7 answered “no”, 4 answered “yes”, and 1 answered “unknown”.

Municipal Recreation: Telephone Interviews

There were 6 municipal recreation representatives and 1 Brockville & Area YMCA representative that participated in a telephone interview. Those interviewed described accessible and inclusive recreation as:

- All participants are encouraged to join recreation programs.
- Provide assistance by altering programs to meet the needs of all participants’.
- Financial inclusion means providing subsidy programs so all youth can participate.
- Ensuring that all residents are aware of the types of recreation opportunities available throughout the municipality, including those that are free and ensuring that residents are aware of the assistance programs available for recreation programs that have a user fee.
- Open to all residents. People are not denied access or access is not withheld for financial, physical, mental, or age reasons.

Accessible and Inclusive Recreation Opportunities

Those interviewed described the following ways that their municipality was creating accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities:

- Offering free adult and parent/tot skating times once per week during the winter season;
- Offering free use of facilities (i.e., arena, pool) by local schools;
- Offering free use of sports fields to sport associations;
- Offering free programming to those who may not be able to afford the program once enough participants have registered for the program to enable cost recovery;

- Offering free admission for caregivers of small children and/or to service providers attending the recreation program with clients;
- Reduced rates for swimming lessons;
- Reduced rates for sports day camps;
- Reduced rates for families registering 3 or more children;
- Offering a variety of membership levels (i.e., yearly, monthly, day pass);
- Seeking financial donations from local businesses and service clubs so that local children, youth and families in need of financial assistance can attend programs;
- Providing a fee assistance program for those who are not financially able to pay the full rate on their own;
- Offering programs over the course of the day so that many residents, including working adults have access to use the facilities;
- Creating a walkable and bikable community that includes cycling paths, walking trails throughout the municipality;
- Securing recreation agreements with neighbouring municipalities for their residents to have access to recreation facilities not available within their own municipality without paying a surcharge;
- Retrofitting or renovating existing recreation infrastructure to make it more accessible to those who physical disabilities;
- Efforts are being made to create accessible playgrounds. This includes considering accessible playground equipment (e.g., accessible swings) and surfaces to make it easier for those with physical disabilities to utilize parks, playgrounds, and splash pads;
- Reaching out to residents in low-income neighbourhoods to promote recreation and assistance programs;
- Working in partnership with the municipalities' accessibility committees;
- Developing a partnership with a school board for free use of schools;
- Working in partnership with "Making Play Possible" program (NOTE: This program is only available to those who live in the counties of Leeds and Grenville);

When asked what type of information would need to be provided by those seeking financial assistance, the majority of those interviewed stated that it was based on an "honour" system and

that no financial information such as tax returns were needed to provide proof of need. However, those interviewed did share that they ask if those seeking assistance were on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Program in order to direct them to additional assistance they may be eligible for. Those seeking assistance were not asked any further questions related to Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Program.

The Brockville & Area YMCA representative shared that their facility has a financial assistance program. This process involves a person identifying that they need financial assistance and meeting privately with a YMCA representative to review the paperwork required to complete the membership. The person does need to bring in documentation (i.e., bills, income tax return) of their financial situation. Individuals or families seeking financial assistance are asked to make a contribution towards the membership and the % is based upon financial information shared.

The YMCA representative also shared that as an organization they are working hard to demystify the YMCA so that people do not have to learn about their services and programs, including the financial assistance program just by physically coming to the YMCA facility. Outreach is being done in specific neighbourhoods to overcome the barrier of residents having to come to the YMCA facility to ask for help. This outreach includes going to social housing areas and hosting meeting with residents to share the services and programs available. Those interested in a YMCA membership can meet privately with a YMCA representative for a membership after the meeting. No one is turned away. Additionally, membership is universal for all members; those receiving financial assistance are not identified differently. The organization has very strict confidentiality policies. The YMCA has developed a strong partnership with Making Play Possible program.

Barriers to Providing Accessible Recreation

Those interviewed described the following barriers to providing accessible recreation:

- Recreation infrastructure is not conducive for those with physical disabilities. For example, pool facilities are not accessible to those who are not able to walk into the pool;
- Lack of a youth summer program for youth older than 12. Youth who are turning 13 are not eligible to take part in summer day programs and this is a gap in programming for the age group 13 to 15 years of age;

- Overcoming the stigmatization that some may feel about asking for assistance; there is a need to break down the barriers so asking for help is not shame producing;
- Transportation to get to programs or facilities;
- Financial constraints; not able to accommodate everyone who comes forward and requests assistance;
- It is a slow process to make the type of physical changes need to be more accessible;
- Residents are not able to apply for assistance online, they must physically come in and meet with someone and this may be deter those who need the assistance most from seeking assistance;

Solutions to Overcome Barriers to Providing Accessible Recreation

Several ways to overcome barriers were suggested by those interviewed:

- **Engage all recreation providers** to dialogue about how to create and maintain accessible and inclusive recreation programs and facilities and to develop stronger cooperation and cohesiveness across communities.
- **Increase knowledge of what is offered in communities** in order to refer families to other agencies and organizations, thus helping to relieve the financial stress on families.
- **Better promotion** of the types of assistance available for all residents to participate in recreation programming and use of recreation facilities. A good marketing strategy was also suggested and the development of a comprehensive listing of activities and contacts available across the counties.
- **Build strong partnerships** with other community stakeholders such as local school boards, service clubs, local businesses, parents and children. One participant stated that without parental cooperation, the child may not get to the recreational opportunity and without developing a relationship with the child; the child may not enjoy the recreational experience.
- **Develop solutions to overcome transportation barriers**, particularly for rural areas.
- **Create more recreational opportunities in rural areas.**
- **Model diplomacy and understanding** as it is very difficult for people to ask for help
- **Create “non-structured play” and/or “family activities” throughout the counties in publicly available spaces** such as parks. Create spaces where supervision is provided, but where children can engage in unstructured/drop-in play and/or participate in a number

of different activities throughout the day during the summer. One participant described it as “where kids can be kids” and where there is no pressure to perform. Another idea presented was to introduce children and families to activities at free, accessible community recreation facilities/infrastructure (i.e., play in the park as a family program) that they can do on their own another time.

- **Case studies** that share successes, challenges and lessons learned about creating accessible and inclusive recreation programs and facilities;
- **Encourage political will** by sharing examples of accessible and inclusive recreation policies for municipal council to adopt.

Several of those interviewed commented on the role that “Making Play Possible” Program has to help create accessible and inclusive recreational opportunities for residents. Information provided below was taken from a presentation made to Joint Services Committee for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville on Wednesday February 22, 2012 (available electronically).

“Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville coordinates the “Making Play Possible” program. At the moment we are working towards making this program community owned. The program serves vulnerable children who may otherwise be unable to participate in social / recreational activities. *Making Play Possible* endeavours to give all children and youth in Leeds and Grenville the opportunity to play regardless of the barriers:

- Financial
- Geographic
- Physical Disability
- Mental health difficulties

The children targeted by *Making Play Possible* come from families experiencing financial difficulties, or from families who for physical or mental health reasons are unable to plan, support and implement social and recreational opportunities for their children. Referrals come from recreational facilities or organizations, schools, clinicians within Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville, community agencies, families and self. The program focuses on a number of different activities such as sports, dance, music and theatre arts.

A coordinator meets with the family to identify any unique challenges the child or family may be experiencing, negotiates fees and special needs provisions with recreational facilities, and links each child to a sustainable activity. The majority of the families make a contribution to their child's activity, such as financial, equipment or time, thus allowing for a sense of ownership and achievement.

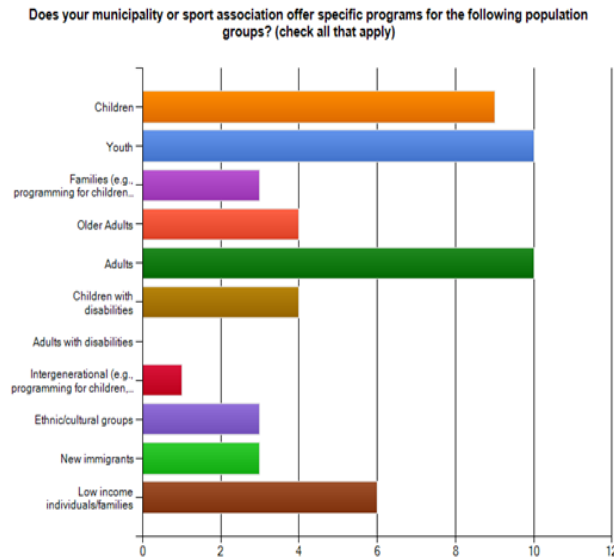
Making Play Possible is continually striving to make families aware of the program throughout Leeds and Grenville. *Making Play Possible* is moving towards becoming a community owned organization under the umbrella of Every Kid in Our Communities of Leeds and Grenville. They are looking towards a steering committee with representation from various communities and stakeholder groups, sustainability and more defined policies and procedures.”

Efforts are being made by municipal recreation representatives to create accessible and inclusive recreation. Of those interviewed, only one interviewee identified that their municipality was working on developing accessible recreation policies and that they were working with Parks and Recreation Ontario to develop accessible recreation policies. Overall, those interviewed expressed an openness to learn more about creating more accessible and inclusive recreation programs and facilities.

Sports Association: Online Survey

Population Groups Offered Sports Programming

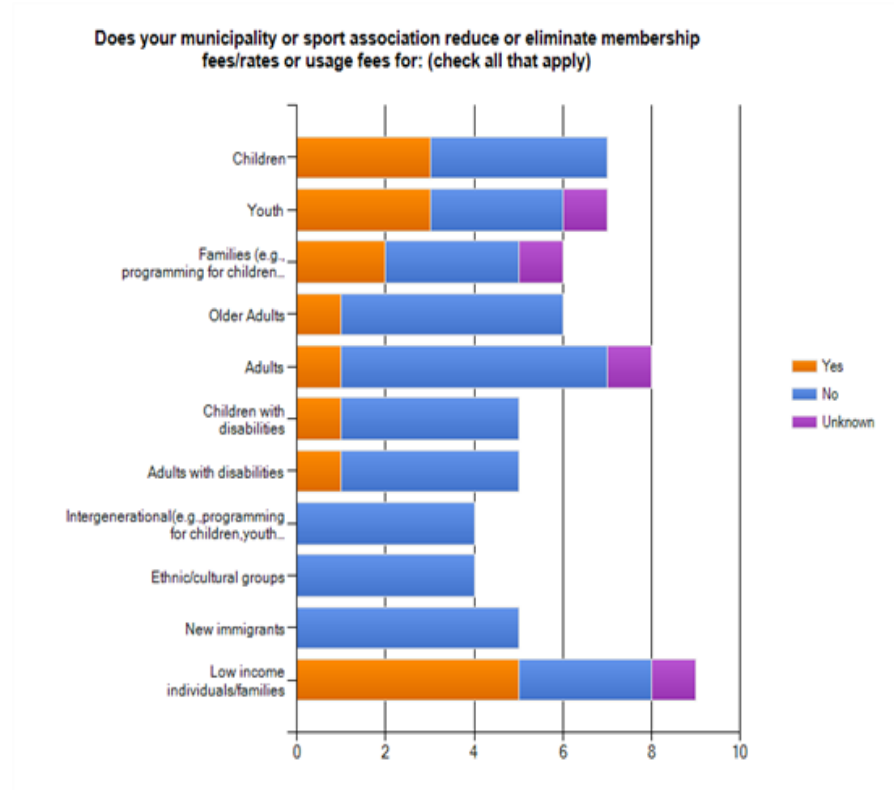
Sports programming serves a variety of population groups in the counties (Figure 4). The highest population served are youth and adults, followed closely by children. Older adults and children with disabilities are served by 4 of the 13 respondents and ethnic/cultural groups and new immigrants are served by 3 of the 13 respondents. Only one respondent reported that they provide intergenerational sport programming.

Figure 4: Population Groups that Receive Sport Programs

Reduction or Elimination of Membership Fees for Specific Population Groups

Reduced or eliminated membership fees/rates or usage fees are available for specific population groups (i.e., children, youth, children, youth, families, older adults, adults, children with disabilities, and low income individuals/families), however, intergenerational, ethnic/cultural groups and new immigrants were not identified as population groups that received reduced rates. Low income individuals/families were the most likely to have reduced fees by those sports organizations who participated in this survey, followed closely by children and youth (Figure 5). Two respondents provided additional information related to the reduction of membership fees; “families registering more than one child in the program and first time members received a “discount” and “direction to community services that provides funding is provided to those interested in registering, but cannot afford to pay the fee.”

Figure 5: Population Groups that Receive Reduced or Eliminated Membership Fees/Rates or Usage Fees



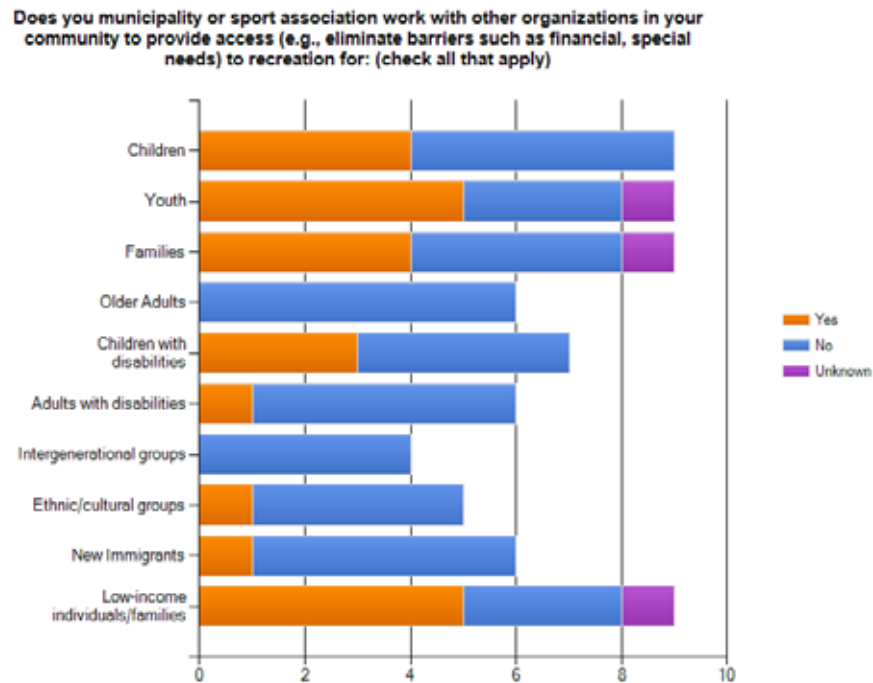
When asked if their sport association provided fee reductions for recreation programs, 5 responded “yes”, 5 responded “no”, and 3 responded “unknown”. Of the 5 that responded “yes”, 3 answered a question about how their sport associations communicated the availability of fee reduction for recreation programs. It was found that of the choices provided, three were chosen as methods used to communicate the availability of fee reductions for sports programming: through their sport association website, in recreation program notices and brochures, and in newspaper advertisements. Notices posted at recreation facilities, notices included with program registration information, and notices sent out by other agencies were not chosen as methods used.

Working with Other Organizations to Provide Access to Recreation for Specific Population Groups

Of the 13 respondents, 12 answered a question about working with other organizations in the community to provide access to recreation for specific population groups (Figure 6). Children, youth, families, children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, ethnic/cultural groups, new immigrants, and low income individuals/families were identified as specific

population groups that respondents target and collaborate with other organizations to provide access to recreation. Older adults and intergenerational groups were found not to be targeted.

Figure 6: Population Groups that Sport Associations Target and Collaborate with Other Organizations to Provide Access to Recreation



Programming for Sub-Groups of the Population

All respondents answered questions related to planning and providing programs for specific sub-groups of the population. Almost half of the respondents (6) answered that they provide programming for specific sub-groups, such as women's basketball, under half (5) answered "no", and 2 answered that they did not know if specific programming for sub-populations was offered.

Responses varied when asked if their sport association programming in the community was fully accessible to all children/youth with disabilities; of the 12 that answered the question, 3 responded "no", 6 responded "unknown", and 3 responded "yes".

Assistance to Access Sports Equipment

Responses varied when asked if their sports association provides assistance to increase access to sports equipment; 7 answered "yes", 5 answered "no", and 1 answered "unknown" and when asked if their sports association hosts an equipment trade-in program, 3 answered "yes", 9 answered "no", and 1 answered "unknown".

Assistance to Overcome Barriers

When asked if their sports association provided assistance to help overcome transportation barriers, 1 answered “yes”, 9 answered “no”, and 3 answered “unknown”. Additional information provided by one respondent was that free transportation for special events is provided for low income families.

When asked if their sport association met with community members or specific population groups to learn about the barriers they face when accessing recreation opportunities, 9 responded “no” and 4 responded “unknown”.

Arrangements to Provide Recreation Services

Respondents were asked to what extent their sport association used the other arrangements to provide recreation services. Table 2 outlines the number of participants that identified the types of arrangements made to provide recreation services.

Table 2: Arrangements to Provide Recreation Services

	Frequently	Sometimes	Very little	Not at all	Unknown
Contracts with other providers	3	1	3	4	1
Fee for service	5	0	1	4	2
Program/initiative grant (e.g., Trillium Foundation)	1	2	1	6	1
Other organizations' programs (e.g., Jump Start)	0	4	1	5	1
Partnership with non-profit organizations	0	2	4	3	1
Partnership with schools/school boards	2	3	4	2	1
Free universal programs (e.g., drop-in swimming)	3	0	1	6	1

Attitudes

Respondents were asked to think about the following statements and indicate their level of agreement for each statement. Table 3 outlines the level of agreement for each statement for all participants that answered.

All respondents strongly agreed that recreation is for all to enjoy, fees for recreation should not be a barrier to participation, and that their facilities are welcoming to everyone. There was also agreement that financial assistance should be available when needed.

Table 3: Outlines the Level of Agreement for Each Statement

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Recreation is for all to enjoy regardless of financial, physical and social barriers.	13				
Fees for recreation should not be a barrier.	11	2			
Financial assistance should be based on income.	7	5	1		
Transportation is a barrier to recreation that needs to be addressed by recreation providers.	2	5	2	2	1
Staff should be provided training and resources to support their ability to help residents overcome barriers they may face to use recreational facilities and programs.	5	5	2	1	
Marginalized populations (e.g., low income, those with mental health issues) are unlikely to participate in community recreation or sport associations due to stigmatization.	9	4			
Our facilities are welcoming to everyone.	7	5	1		
We are open to receiving information and resources on how to develop affordable access to recreation policies.	7	5	1		
Making our recreational programming more accessible will be hard.	5	4	3		

Policies

Some sports organizations had accessible and inclusive policies (i.e., equity of recreation for all residents, social interaction policies, anti-stigma/discrimination, anti-bullying). Respondents were asked if their sport association had an approved policy to deal with access equity of recreation for all residents, only one respondent checked yes; when asked if the policy was published (e.g., sports association website) or otherwise made readily available to the public, the response was “no”.

The types of barriers identified for the development of policies on equity of access to recreation were:

- other higher priorities (4);
- concern about financial implications/costs (3);
- lack of knowledge/expertise to develop a policy(2);
- general policy is enough - a recreation - specific policy is not needed(2).

None of the respondents chose “no support from Council/Board of Directors”.

When asked if their sport association had policies that strengthen social interaction for individuals, families, and groups in their community by ensuring access to free space for recreation and other activities, of the 12 respondents that answered the question, half (6) responded “no”, 4 responded “unknown”, and 2 responded “yes”.

When asked if their sport association had policies that all employees and volunteers were required to receive anti-stigma/discrimination training, of the 11 that answered this question, 6 responded “no”, 3 responded “unknown”, and 2 responded “yes”.

When asked if their sport association had anti-bullying policies in place, there was a mixed response with just under half of the 12 respondents that answered the question responded “no”, 3 responded “unknown” and 4 responded “yes”. Similar findings were found when respondents were asked if their sport association had anti-discrimination policies in place: just under half of the 11 respondents that answered the question responded “no”, 3 responded “unknown”, and 3 responded “yes”.

Sport Association: Telephone Interviews

There were 3 sport association representatives that participated in a telephone interview to understand accessibility and inclusion policies in sport associations'. The types of sports being considered during the interviews were football, hockey, and broomball. Those interviewed described accessible and inclusive recreation as:

- All residents are encouraged to participate in all recreation opportunities in their community at whatever level of participation is suitable to their ability and their choice of program.
- Recreation enhances the quality of life for all residents and anyone should have the opportunity to participate in recreation.
- Nobody is left behind.

- Affordable recreation that is open to an appropriate age or age range for all especially for people with disabilities.

Efforts are being made by sport associations to create accessible and inclusive sport opportunities. These efforts include:

- Increasing the skills of coaches to meet the diverse needs of players. For example, learning how to communicate to a hearing impaired player;
- Sponsorship to cover the costs of players who are not able to afford the fees associated with being part of a sport team;
- Sponsorship to cover additional costs related to playing elite sports such as cost of food and lodging for away games, bussing, equipment;
- Reduced rates for families registering 3 or more children;
- No equipment costs for children; all equipment is provided;
- Publishing that assistance is available for those who may not be able to afford to play.

Those interviewed described the following barriers to providing accessible recreation:

- Funding;
- Lack of a “one stop shop” for financial assistance for those who need it;
- Lack of knowledge where to send families for assistance if they are not able to afford the registration or equipment fees;
- Equipment costs;
- Transportation to sporting programs and events.

One interviewee shared that they felt that sport associations could do better in terms of affordability and that sport associations could be more gender inclusive (e.g., girls and boys leagues). Another interviewee shared how their sport association not only works to ensure that those who are skilled and willing to play at the elite level are not faced with a financial barrier of not being able to play, but that they have created a system where their players give back to the community through volunteering in the community by working with youth in the community. Recommendations to overcome these barriers were not made by those interviewed.

Overall Summary of Results

Overall, similar responses from municipal recreation and sport association representatives were found:

- There is agreement that recreation is for all to enjoy, fees for recreation should not be a barrier, recreation facilities are welcoming to everyone, and that financial assistance should be available when needed
- There are a variety of population groups offered opportunities by both municipal and sport programming;
- All respondents are working hard to reduce or eliminate fees to access recreation opportunities and create accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities.
- There is a lack of assistance by all respondents to overcome transportation barriers;
- All respondents identified transportation as a barrier;
- There is agreement that among all respondents that they are open to receiving information and resources on how to develop affordable access to recreation policies and making their recreational programming more accessible to all members of the community would be possible over time;
- There are a limited number of accessible and inclusive policies.

Differences were found related to programming for sub-groups of the populations, with municipal representatives identifying that they do not provide this type of programming and almost half of sport association respondents identifying that they do provide this type of programming. It stands to reason that these differences would occur, as sport associations tend to be organized around age, and gender (therefore, offer girl or boy only programming), whereas, municipal recreation programming tends to be more universal regarding gender. Differences were also found regarding whether or not assistance is provided to increase access to sports equipment; sport association respondents had a larger response number to providing this type of assistance than municipal recreation respondents.

There is a lack of municipal Parks and/or Recreation Master Plans, There are some upcoming capital expenditures for recreation infrastructure planned.

CONCLUSION

This report found that across the counties some efforts are being made to create accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities and there is recognition that accessibility for all is important for our community

Appendix A

Participant Recruitment: Municipalities and Sport Associations

Municipalities/Counties

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Athens & Rear of Yonge & Escott
Augusta
Edwardsburgh/Cardinal
Elizabethtown/Kitley
Front of Yonge
Leeds and Thousand Islands
Merrickville/Wolford
North Grenville
Rideau Lakes
Prescott
Gananoque

Brockville
Lanark County
Beckwith Township
Tay Valley Township
Carleton Place
Mississippi Mills
Town of Perth
Township of Drummond/North Elmsley
Township of Lanark Highlands
Township of Montague
Town of Smiths Falls

Sport Association's

1000 Islands Kayaking
1000 Island Martial Arts
Almonte Junior Hockey Association
Almonte Men's Hockey League
Almonte Pick-up Hockey
Almonte Skating Club
Almonte/Pakenham Minor Hockey Association
Athens Softball league
Athens Soccer Association
Beckwith Irish Minor Football League
BRO Touch Football League
Brockville & Area YMCA
Brockville Blast Lacrosse League
Brockville Figure Skating Club
Brockville Minor Soccer Association
Brockville Sports
Brockville Tikis Junior B Hockey Team
Brockville Braves Junior A Hockey Club
Brockville Bunnies
Brockville Men's Soccer League
Brockville Youth Football Association
Cardinal Recreation Skate Club
Carleton Place Figure/Power Skating
Carleton Place 35+ Hockey
Carleton Place Adult Volleyball Club
Carleton Place Girl's Hockey Association
Carleton Place Junior A Canadians Hockey
Carleton Place Senior Skating, Swimming,
Curling, Hockey
Carleton Place Sportsmen Hockey League
Elgin Recreation Youth Competitive Soccer

Elgin recreation Minor Ball
Gananoque Islanders Hockey
Gananoque Soccer Association
Kemptville District Soccer Club
Kemptville Figure Skating Club
Ladies Fastball
Ladies Hockey Carleton Place
Lanark County Municipal Trails Corporation
Lyn Softball Association
Mixed Competitive Slow Pitch
Mixed Recreational Slow Pitch
Naismith Minor Basketball Association
Old Ballers
Old Puckers Hockey
Ottawa Valley Titans
Portland & Area Recreation Committee Minor
Soccer
Portland Football/Soccer Club Portland
Portland Youth Softball
Prescott Figure Skating Club
Puck Men Hockey League
Soccer-Carleton Place Soccer Club
South Grenville Minor Hockey Association
St. Lawrence United Soccer Club
TEC-TAC Hockey School
Upper Canada Cyclones Midget & Bantam
AAA
Westport Junior B Hockey
Women's Basketball
Women's Broomball & Youth Broomball

Appendix B

Email Message

SUBJECT: You are the expert-tell us what you think

Dear <recreation provider or sport association representative>

The *Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership* invites you or someone else on staff to participate in an online survey to help us better understand accessibility and inclusion policies for your recreation program or facility.

The survey should take no more than 7 minutes to complete and is available until March 1, 2012. Visit <insert url link>

The survey is anonymous. All data will be stored in a secure computer file. You are free to stop the survey for whatever reason by exiting the survey before the end. We have hired Kim Bergeron and Susan MacIsaac, who are independent consultants, to conduct this survey.

We appreciate your participation in this survey! Your feedback will help the Partnership increase the body of knowledge we all need to make your community even healthier. As part of this project, the consultants will be conducting telephone interviews with a small group of randomly selected recreation providers. You may be contacted to participate.

If you have any questions about this project or require additional information, please contact Kim Bergeron <insert information>

Sincerely,

Dr. Paula Stewart, Medical Officer of Health Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit and Co-Chair, Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership

Appendix B

(opening screen to the online survey)

Accessibility and Inclusion Policies in Recreation Settings Survey

The *Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership* invites you or someone else on staff to participate in an online survey to help us better understand the types of programs offered to specific population groups (e.g., children, youth, families, older adults) and accessibility and inclusion policies for your recreation program or facility.

The survey should take no more than 7 minutes to complete.

The survey is anonymous. You will be asked to identify if you are answering the questions as an employee of a municipal recreation facility, bowling alley or curling club. You will also be asked to identify which municipality best represents your work location. All data will be stored in a secure computer file. The data will be accessible only by Kim Bergeron and Susan MacIsaac, independent consultants hired to conduct this survey. All responses will be compiled into a summary report. Once the report has been completed at the end of March 2012, the data collected will be destroyed.

You are free to stop the survey at any time by exiting the survey before the end. In cases of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed upon your request. You are not obliged to respond to any questions that you do not wish to answer.

We appreciate your participation in this survey! Your feedback will help the Partnership increase the body of knowledge we all need to make your community even healthier.

If you have any questions about this project or require additional information, please contact Kim Bergeron <insert information>

Interested in knowing more?

If you want to know more about the work of the *Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership*, please contact (name, position, telephone number, e-mail).

I have read the information provided and I consent to participate in this online survey

Yes

No

(If yes, proceed to questions; If no, they will exit the survey to the Partnership website)

(next screen)

Think about the municipality or sport association where you work or volunteer

Programming Assessment

Does your municipality or sport association offer specific programs for the following population groups? (check all that apply)

- Children
- Youth
- Families (e.g., programming for children and parents together)
- Older Adults
- Adults
- Children with disabilities
- Adults with disabilities
- Intergenerational (e.g., programming for children, youth & older adults together)
- Ethnic/cultural groups
- New immigrants
- Low income individuals/families

Does your municipality or sport association reduce or eliminate membership fees/rates or usage fees for: (check all that apply)

- Children
- Youth
- Families
- Older Adults
- Adults
- Children with disabilities
- Adults with disabilities
- Ethnic/cultural groups
- New immigrants
- Low income individuals/families

Does you municipality or sport association work with other organizations in your community to provide access (e.g., eliminate barriers such as financial, special needs) to recreation for: (check all that apply)

	Yes	No	Unknown
Children			
Youth			
Families			
Older Adults			
Children with disabilities			
Adults with disabilities			
Intergenerational groups			
Ethnic/cultural groups			
New Immigrants			
Low income individuals/families			

Does your municipality or sport association take into consideration inclusion of culturally specific and culturally sensitive planning and programming to build capacity of and participation by diverse populations (e.g., women’s only swim; sports from different cultures)?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, please describe.

Does your municipality or sport association provide assistance to increase access to sports equipment (e.g., skates, helmets)?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, please describe.

Does your municipality or sport association host an equipment trade-in program?

Yes

No

Unknown

Does your municipality or sport association provide assistance to help overcome transportation barriers?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, please describe.

Think about the following statements and indicate your level of agreement for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Recreation is for all to enjoy regardless of financial, physical and social barriers.					
Fees for recreation should not be a barrier.					
Financial assistance should be based on income.					
Transportation is a barrier to recreation that needs to be addressed by recreation providers.					
Staff should be provided training and resources to support their ability to help residents overcome barriers they may face to use recreational facilities and					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
programs.					
Marginalized populations (e.g., low income, those with mental health issues) are unlikely to participate in community recreation or sport associations due to stigmatization.					
Our facilities are welcoming to everyone.					
We are open to receiving information and resources on how to develop affordable access to recreation policies.					
Making our recreational programming more accessible will be hard.					

Practices for Improving Access to Recreation

Does your municipality or sport association have any of the following agreements: (check all that apply)

Shared use agreements

Reduced fee agreements

If so, what organizations are they with? Please list.

To what extent does your municipality or sport association use the following types of arrangements to provide access to recreation services? (Check all that apply)

	Frequently	Sometimes	Very little	Not at all	Unknown
Contracts with other providers					
Fee for service					
Referral protocol					
Program/initiative grant (e.g., Trillium Foundation)					
Other organizations' programs (e.g., Jump Start)					
Partnership with non-profit organizations					
Partnership with schools/school boards					
Free universal programs (e.g., drop-in swimming)					
Other arrangements					

If other arrangement, please specify:

MUNICIPAL RECREATION PROVIDERS ONLY: Does your municipality plan capital expenditures for recreation infrastructure to create more universal access to recreation opportunities?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, please identify the types of capital expenditures for recreation infrastructure considered:

Parks and open spaces

Sidewalks

Trails

Outdoor ice pads

Outdoor splash pads

Play ground equipment that is wheelchair accessible

Drop-in centres

Other (please specify)

Policy Assessment

MUNICIPAL RECREATION PROVIDERS ONLY

Does your municipality have a Parks and Recreation Master Plan?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, does it include direction to create accessible and inclusive recreation facilities and programs?

Yes

No

Unknown

Does your municipality or sports program have an approved policy dealing with equity of access to recreation for all residents?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, is the policy published (e.g., on the municipal or sport association website) or otherwise made readily available to the public?

Yes

No

Unknown

If no or unknown, what do you consider to be barriers for your municipality or sports program to develop and implement a policy to deal with equity of access to recreation? (check all that apply)

Concern about financial implications/costs

No support from Council/Board of Directors

- Lack of knowledge/expertise to develop a policy
- Other higher priorities
- General policy is enough- a recreation-specific policy is not needed
- Other

To learn more about policies, we would like to know the following:

	Yes	No	unknown
Does your municipality or sport association have policies that strengthen social interaction for individuals, families and groups in your communities by ensuring access to free space for recreation and other activities?			
Is there a municipal or sport association policy that all employees and volunteers are required to receive anti-stigma/discrimination training?			
Are there municipal or sport association anti-bullying policies in place?			
Are there municipal or sport association anti-discrimination policies in place?			
Are the municipally-run or sport association programs in your community fully accessible to all children/youth with disabilities?			

Communication

Does your municipality or sport association provide fee reductions for recreation programs?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

If yes, how does you municipality or sport association communicate the availability of fee reductions for recreation programs? (check all that apply)

- Recreation program notices and brochures
- Website
- Newspaper advertisement
- Notices posted at recreation facilities
- Notices included with program registration information
- Notices sent out by other agencies
- Other methods: Please list.

Does your municipality or sport association hold community consultations to learn from community members or specific population groups about the barriers they face when accessing recreation opportunities?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

Demographics

What best represents where you work or volunteer? (check only one)

Municipal recreation

Sport Association

Does the municipal or sport association that you work for have service agreements to provide recreation or sport programming in other municipalities?

Yes

No

Unknown

If yes, please list the municipalities that receive recreation or sport programming.

Which municipality best represents your work location or the sport programming that you were considering when answering the questions in this survey? (check all that apply)

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

Athens & Rear of Yonge & Escott

Augusta

Edwardsburgh/Cardinal

Elizabethtown/Kitley

Front of Yonge

Leeds and Thousand Islands

Merrickville/Wolford

North Grenville

Rideau Lakes

Prescott

Gananoque

Brockville

Lanark County

Beckwith Township

Tay Valley Township

Carleton Place

Mississippi Mills

Town of Perth

Township of Drummond/North Elmsley

Township of Lanark Highlands

Township of Montague

Town of Smiths Falls

Is there anything else we should have asked about access to recreation for all residents? Please list.

Thank you for completing our survey!

(exit to Partnership website)

Appendix D
Interview Guide for Accessibility and Inclusion Policies in Recreation Settings

Email Message to be sent by Kim or Susan

Dear <municipal recreation or sport association staff member>

The Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Community Partnership is comprised of organizations, networks and individuals working together to make the healthy choice the easy choice. We are interested in creating healthy communities where residents live, learn, work and play. You have been identified as someone who has important background and knowledge that will contribute to our understanding of policies related to accessibility and inclusion for recreation.

You are invited to participate in a 20-minute telephone interview between March 5, 2012 and March 16, 2012 with <Kim Bergeron or Susan MacIsaac> the consultants hired to help us with this project. The interview will focus on the successes and challenges your <municipality or sport association> has experienced related to accessibility and inclusion policies for the provision of physical activity opportunities in (name of municipality or sport association).

Your participation is both voluntary and confidential. Information collected will be kept anonymous: only Kim or Susan will have access to what was said. Data from all interviews will be analyzed in the aggregate (compiled together as themes) and presented in a summary report in March 2012.

If you are interested in participating in this telephone interview, please respond “I am interested” to this email and <Kim or Susan> will contact you to set up a convenient date and time.

If you are not interested in participating, please respond “I am not interested in participating” to this email.

If you have any questions, please contact me at <insert contact information>.

Thank you for your support in making your community even healthier.

Sincerely,
<Kim or Susan>

Interview Script

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this telephone interview to understand accessibility and inclusion policies in recreation settings. As you are aware, I am conducting this interview on behalf of the Lanark, Leeds & Granville Healthy Communities Partnership.

Do you have any questions about the purpose of this interview?
(answer questions if they have any)

This interview will take approximately 20 minutes. During the interview I will be taking notes to capture our discussion. Your participation is both voluntary and confidential. Information collected will be kept anonymous. Data from all interviews will be analyzed in the aggregate (compiled together as themes) and presented in a summary report in March 2012.

Do you agree to participate in this interview?

1. What does accessible and inclusive recreation look like to you?
2. Briefly describe ways that your <municipality or sport association> is creating or could create accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities?
4. What barriers has your <municipality or sport association> experienced or could experience when providing accessible and inclusive recreation?
5. What could be done or has been done to overcome these barriers?
6. That covers the things I wanted to ask, what should I have asked that I didn't think of?
7. What kind of support, if any, would your organization like to implement accessible and inclusion recreation policies?
8. If I have further questions or need to clarify something, would it be alright to contact you again?

Thank you for participating in this interview. The information you have provided will assist the Partnership in developing recommendations for municipal recreation providers like yourself to improve affordability and accessibility recreation in the Lanark, Leeds & Grenville District.