

Healthy Communities and Public Policy

Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour

March 2016 – March 2017

Area of Focus <i>(check all that apply)</i>	
Strategic Plan Direction/Goal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ontario Public Health Standard, 2008 (OPHS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Division: Community Health and Wellness



Summary of Strategic Plan Goal and Operational Plan Objective(s):

Strategic Direction:	Building Healthy Communities - We will work with communities to support the health and well-being of everyone.
Strategic Goal(s):	We will enhance our understanding of the local needs and priorities of the communities we serve and develop programs and services in response to those needs.
	We will promote healthy environments that support physical and mental health and well-being.
Program Operational Objective:	To create and support a community where children and youth are physically active every day.
Is this a new initiative or update of existing initiative?	Existing Initiative/Program Update

Summary of OPHS Program Requirement(s):

OPHS Program:	Chronic Disease Prevention	
Goal:	To reduce the burden of preventable chronic diseases of public health importance.	
	To enable all children to attain and sustain optimal health and developmental potential.	
	Public health practice responds effectively to current and evolving conditions, and contributes to the public's health and well-being.	
Strategy:	Research and Knowledge Exchange	
	Health Promotion and Policy Development	
	Disease Prevention	
Requirement(s):	<i>Chronic Disease Requirements 3, 4, 6, 7, 11 & 12</i>	
Accountability Indicator(s):	N/A	
Has a performance variance or discrepancy been identified?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Highlights:

The vision of the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) physical activity promotion and sedentary behavior strategy is to create and support a community where children and youth are physically active every day. Based on the literature and best practices, the focus of this comprehensive strategy will be on the following: (i) physical literacy, (ii) decreasing sedentary behaviours, (iii) increasing access and equity to physical activity and recreation opportunities and (iv) the built environment (e.g. community design that facilitates active transportation). WDGPH staff are collaborating with community partners and stakeholders to build knowledge, capacity, supportive environments and policies in the settings and spaces in which children and youth spend the majority of their time. These include early child care centres, schools, homes and recreation spaces. The following outlines the projects that have been active from March 2016 - March 2017.

Physical Literacy

Physical literacy is having the skills, confidence and motivation to enjoy a variety of sports and physical activities. Much like learning the alphabet and words are the foundations to reading, there are fundamental movement skills (balance, coordination, etc.) that need to be developed in order to feel confident and motivated to be active. As these fundamental skills develop and confidence in using them increases, so do participation and activity levels.

Early Child Care

Early child care educators and settings play an integral role in communities and are where many children aged 0-4 years old spend the majority of their day. WDGPH staff provided leadership to the In Motion Children and Youth Committee and supported the planning, implementation and facilitation of three health and wellbeing and physical literacy focused workshops in 2016-17. The workshops focused on increasing knowledge and awareness as well as building physical literacy programming capacity. Over 140 early child care staff participated in these workshops and over 95% of participants reported they were planning to take the knowledge and skills learned during the workshops back to their child care centres to share with colleagues.

Municipal Parks and Recreation & Community Groups

Summer camp staff are directly responsible for the development of programming at community summer day camps and they interact with hundreds of children each summer. Yet, many camp staff do not understand the concept and principles of physical literacy. WDGPH staff planned, implemented and co-facilitated four physical literacy workshops for municipal parks and recreation summer camp staff as well as other community-based children's summer camp providers (Guelph YMCA, Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition) in the spring of 2016. The workshops provided the summer camp staff an overview on physical literacy (what it is, why it is important) and practical activity examples and strategies for incorporating physical literacy principles into camp programming. In total, 110 summer camp staff participated in the workshops, with the 96% stating that they had a better understanding of physical literacy and its importance and that they felt more confident in their ability to plan activities that foster physical literacy as a result of the training. WDGPH staff plan to continue with the summer camp staff workshops for the summer of 2017.

Schools/School Boards

WDGPH and the local school boards share a common interest in increasing physical activity levels of children and youth in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG). This is especially true since the release of the 2015 Elementary Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum. As a result, WDGPH staff have partnered with health and physical education curriculum leads at both the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) and Wellington Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) to collaborate and support the implementation of this important policy document.

WDGPH conducted a formative evaluation in June 2016 by surveying 173 elementary level teachers to determine baseline knowledge and interest in physical literacy capacity building. The survey results highlighted that almost 40% of teachers were not confident they have the skills and knowledge to develop physical literacy with their students. Additionally, approximately 80% of teachers surveyed expressed interest in physical literacy and curriculum based support. WDGPH staff and school board partners are currently planning professional development workshop to take place in fall 2017.

Decreasing Sedentary Behaviours

Balanced Technology Management Committee

WDGPH staff have collaborated with the Upper Grand District School Board, Canadian Mental Health Association and Homewood to explore a community-based approach to technology overuse and sedentary behavior among children and youth in WDG communities. The committee is in the preliminary stages of building a framework and approach and will use the rest of the year to complete these steps.

WDGPH Staff Sedentary Behaviour Strategy

The internal Healthy Workplace Committee has identified sedentary behavior as a focus for 2016-2017 and are collaborating with staff across the health unit to develop a strategy to reduce prolonged sitting during the work day. In spring 2016, a staff survey was administered to understand behaviours and barriers to reducing prolonged sitting (75% response rate). The final report summarized key recommendations, which included exploring sit/stand workstations and endorsing standing and walking meeting guidelines. The Healthy Workplace Committee hopes to pilot these guidelines and then share the findings with other local workplaces.

Access and Equity

In Motion Guelph

In Motion Guelph is a community-based committee that supports efforts to increase access to recreation and remove barriers for those facing economic hardships; support the creation of policies and design guidelines that allow citizens to safely commute to and from work, school or play by active transportation; and find ways to consistently leverage and streamline the efforts of individual partners in order to create the largest impact on the above. A WDGPH staff is currently co-chairing this committee and has supported the collaborative on activities to identify and eliminate barriers to recreation in Guelph including updating the Guelph-Wellington Access to Recreation Guide (resource that highlights free or low cost recreation opportunities in the community) and working with municipalities to promote fee assistance programs.

DC MOVES & Town of Orangeville

The Dufferin County Managing Organizing Visualizing Engagement Strategy (DC MOVES) is an initiative with the objective of better connecting and aligning local community, health and social service providers in Dufferin County. As part of the initiative, poverty reduction and health and wellbeing (including food security, mental health, and recreation) have been highlighted as priority areas of focus. WDGPH staff will be collaborating with DC MOVES in 2017 to identify key activities. WDGPH staff have also had a preliminary meeting with Town of Orangeville Park and Recreation Department staff to discuss barriers to recreation (e.g. income, culture etc.).

Active Transportation & Built Environment

WDGPH staff currently participate on the Citizens of Headwaters Active Transportation (CHATT) committee. CHATT aims for all community members in the region to be engaged in active transportation on safe and connected routes, thus linking communities. CHATT is currently planning a Headwaters Trails Summit for May 2017 to bring together all interested citizens and agencies to build capacity and knowledge for local trails and connectivity, and to collaboratively identify future priorities in the region.

WDGPH staff also co-chairs the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Active and Safe Routes to School committee (WDG ASRTS). The committee works to increase the number of school-aged children actively traveling to and from school by promoting active travel and facilitating safety improvements around schools. Between 2014 and 2016, six WDG schools were involved in an Ontario-based feasibility study as an urban-suburban-rural geography to assess the implementation and the benefit-cost ratio of school travel planning.

Finally, WDGPH staff work with county and municipal planners to promote active transportation through community design. In 2016, WDGPH completed eleven planning document reviews to make policy recommendations. For more information about built environment initiatives, please refer to the Built Environment Program Report February 2017.

Provincial & Local Work

Ontario Society for Physical Activity Promoters in Public Health (OSPAPPH)

WDGPH staff is an active member of the Ontario Society for Physical Activity Promoters in Public Health (OSPAPPH), with a position on the executive committee. OSPAPPH's goal is to elevate physical activity as a public health priority through advocacy, capacity building, engagement, and collaboration. OSPAPPH has planned a provincial physical literacy and sedentary behavior workshop for June 2017 to help build capacity of public health staff across all 36 health units.

Energize Guelph – Healthy Kids Community Challenge

Energize Guelph is part of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Healthy Kids Community Challenge, which is an initiative designed to make it easier for children be active and eat healthier. Guelph is one of 45 communities across Ontario participating in the Healthy Kids Community Challenge that were successful in obtaining funding for activities until 2018. WDGPH staff support the initiative as a member of the steering committee and specifically supported the development of an evaluation strategy and tools.

Related Board or WDGPH Reports:

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. Healthy Communities and Public Policy program report: Built Environment – Health Promotion. [Internet]. 2017. Available from: https://www.wdgpulichealth.ca/sites/default/files/file-attachments/basic-page/built_environment_-_health_promotion_program-service_information_report_access.pdf