



Community Recreation Handbook

For Northern Saskatchewan

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hayorilaze sa tsi dihlise
ocīnāsa nanātohk kā otamiyohk masinahīkanis



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Community
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Full handbook available at:

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Written By

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for the Northern Sport, Culture and Recreation District

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About the Cover Page Artwork

Community recreation such as sports, culture, arts and other recreation events not only promotes a healthy lifestyle, but also indicates community pride, wellbeing and functioning. Well organized events and gatherings are a positive experience for everyone – organizers, participants, volunteers and other community members. The artwork on the cover depicts typical northern Saskatchewan community events from ski racing, dance groups and voyageur canoe paddling to cultural gatherings with traditional hand games. The activities are set on the background of the medicine wheel to emphasize year round community recreation as an important part of the holistic approach to wellbeing.

About the Artist

Miriam Körner is a writer, photographer and visual artist. Her fascination with the enchanting yet unforgiving North, its people and traditional life-styles is a common subject in her artwork. Miriam lives with her husband and 17 sled dogs near La Ronge, Saskatchewan.

About the Author

Flo Frank of Common Ground Consulting Inc. (Meacham, Saskatchewan) is the author of this handbook. She has worked and lived in northern Canada for most of her life (in part in Uranium City, Saskatchewan) and is respected internationally for her work in community development. One of her first jobs was Senior Recreation Director for The Department of Culture Youth and Recreation in Alberta, so she understands the sector very well. She has written over 30 community “How To” or self-help books, and she provides training and workshops on most of the topics in this handbook. Her love for the north, her respect for sport, culture and recreation and her down to earth - common sense approach is very evident in this handbook.

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“I think the handbook will be a very helpful guide for northern communities and especially new staff working in the recreation sector ... maybe it can even help with the high turnover. We need to have a more consistent structure and there are tools here to help us do that.”

Estelle Laliberte, Executive Director, Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre

“This handbook looks like a fantastic resource with a great deal of useful information. I will be sure to use it and promote it to the many clients and communities I serve through SaskCulture Inc. The content will certainly assist communities in developing and maintaining sport, culture and recreation activities at a local and provincial level.”

Damon Badger Heit, Coordinator of First Nations & Métis Initiatives, SaskCulture Inc.

“It has a lot of information and good examples and stories that people in the north can relate to.”

Robert Yew, Canoe Lake Recreation Director

Permission and Use of Handbook Content

This handbook was developed over several months in 2009 and 2010 and released in October, 2010. The tools in this handbook come from a variety of sources with their permission, and credit is given on each tool where possible. The tools are intended for community organization's day-to-day use, and they may not be sold, mass produced, used in workshops by a professional paid trainer or distributed for profit without the permission of NSCRD – see contact information at the back of the handbook.

Credits and Thanks

The NSCRD would like to thank all the people who contributed to the development of this handbook. Special thanks to our members – the communities of northern Saskatchewan – for your quotes, stories, examples, and input into the handbook to make it yours – unique to the north and practical. Thank you to Marc L'Heureux for allowing us to use his northern photographs in this handbook.

We would also like to recognize the NSCRD staff working group as well as our contractor Flo Frank and her assistant Ley Ward for their genuine commitment to this handbook. To the Administration Centre Printing Services for the design and layout work. Finally, thank you to the Community Initiatives Fund for their funding which made this handbook possible.

5. Youth Involvement and Leadership



Introduction

Sport, culture, and recreation offer numerous opportunities for youth involvement and leadership. Many of our political and community leaders built their confidence and gained experience in this sector and have continued over the years to value the principles and values of sport, culture, and recreation. It is a career choice for many and there are employment opportunities and training available that needs to be promoted.

Youth have said that they are ready and willing to get involved but want to do things that matter to them in a way that makes sense for them. While they appreciate the invitations to various meetings, it often appears to be adults talking about what youth need and want. “By youth for youth” is becoming a popular slogan and should be listened to and acted upon. Youth are saying that they are tired of being identified by the deficiencies or negative experiences (drugs, gangs, violence) which is the main message that makes the news. They want us to know that there are more healthy and strong young people than those who are not and it is important to recognize and build on this fact.

Key Messages

Youth networks and youth councils say that what you put out is what you get – and that we need to refocus our key messages. A good start would be to do the following:

- Shift from negative images of youth to positive examples and messages.
- Invite youth to be themselves and work together.
- Support youth and encourage them to be part of community, regional or north-wide networks.
- Inform people about the reduction of social issues through organized recreation.
- Encourage youth to volunteer and to explore careers in sport, culture, and recreation.
- Look for ways to have things done by youth for youth.

Developing Youth Leadership

The majority of sport, culture and recreation organizations have formal leadership courses and certification programs that ensure that young people develop leadership skills. Often young people start as participants, move to being helpers and then take on more formal training such as play leadership, coaching, dance or music instructors, etc.

As well, youth who reach an elite level in sport, culture and recreation may become role models that have a tremendously positive impact on other youth and instill community pride in everyone. The north has been blessed with many young role models and we know that there will be many more to come. One thing that northern youth say is that there is pressure on young leaders and that we need to be aware of “youth leadership burnout”. It is important to not put too much expectation on too few youth.

Other options for training in youth leadership come from having youth attend meetings and planning sessions with community leaders or taking specific youth leadership training from various sources as it is offered. Some of the most effective training in the north is done “by youth for youth” where young people get together and discuss their needs and share their experiences. Often it is a combination of formal training and experience that helps youth move forward.

The key is to not forget them and to make every opportunity available to include their voice in planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and services

How To Engage Youth

Most young people want to be part of good things going on in their communities. When asked across the north, over 80% of youth said that they are shy and not comfortable to present themselves as helpers or volunteers. They need to be encouraged and asked more than once. Engaging youth involves some very basic considerations. Do not ask youth to be involved in something just because a “youth” is needed – this is often tokenism and discourages real engagement.

Youth say that if you want them to be really and honestly involved, it is important to: really show them that you want them; meet them on their level and help them with their interests; provide structure and guidance but don't be too overbearing; keep things active and fun; give them lots of room and time to have their own voice; don't be afraid of the youth who are “different” and, finally, always have lots of food and flexibility at events and activities. Youth want to be involved and they want opportunities to learn, but often we forget that they know a great deal about things and should be encouraged to share what they know – that is real engagement.

Youth Strategies

We tend to involve youth in one of three ways: through programs and events geared to their interests (most often sport, culture, and recreation); as volunteers; or hit and miss through different events, training, or when we need a youth representative. To allow for more continuity, relevancy and ongoing relationship building youth strategies are useful tools.

Youth strategies are plans that outline when and how we are going to engage with or involve youth in all levels of our organization and its offerings. This can include: leadership positions on the board or in other structures; participation in programs and services; volunteer opportunities; training; career exposure, and in numerous other ways.

A key part of any strategy should be to maintain the momentum (keep connections alive and well) and communication using a wide variety of technologies and approaches. Combining ideas with resources, a youth strategy should include young people in the development and implementation of it and be flexible enough to be different and amazing – creative and timely.



The Northern Context

Northern Saskatchewan has a very young population and it's growing. The needs of our youth are at the heart and soul of our communities, so building leaders for the future is our top priority. We need to plan for and invest in youth leadership and do everything we can to develop healthy, happy young people.

In the north, we want to include youth in everything we do, but often costs becomes a barrier. Youth who are doing well are seen as role models and are on all sorts of committees and go to lots of events. Some even say they are burning out. Others, who are on a bad path, need more help to be included more – not put aside or forgotten. We all have a responsibility to youth and in the north we take this very seriously.

“I learned the importance of being a good listener, time, attitudes, performances, building up my self-esteem. I'm going to take what I learnt and use it in my home town.” – Youth participant, Northern Spirits Program

5. Youth Involvement and Leadership

What's Important to Know?

- ★ Youth are not the future – they are the today.
- ★ Their realities are different and this needs to be acknowledged and accommodated.
- ★ Honest communication is critical and requires a relationship to be in place.
- ★ Most youth have serious stress or concerns in their lives – staying active can help.
- ★ If we don't prepare youth right now, northerners won't be filling future jobs.
- ★ Leadership training is important but so is hands on experience – provide both.
- ★ Youth use all forms of technology as part of their everyday reality.
- ★ Not all youth are the same so don't expect everyone to be interested in everything.
- ★ Young people need role models, not critics.

Tips and Advice

1. Don't just encourage youth to get involved, let them take the lead.
2. Trust youth to do things their way even if it is different from your way.
3. Many teenagers leave their communities, so start young to recruit volunteers.
4. Don't tell youth what to do – listen to them and show by example.
5. Diversify the programs to allow for all types of interests (get beyond sports).
6. Don't push troubled youth away – offer understanding and acceptance.
7. Don't put up with too much nonsense either, boundaries need to be in place.



Story

Gordon Denny Community School in Air Ronge has a strong commitment to youth and developing youth leaders. They have a mentorship program at noon hours where the older students provide supervision and activities for the younger grades on the playground and inside. The youth are encouraged to volunteer in many ways in the school – helping with elder's teas and movie nights, for example. They hire youth workers in the summer and ensure they receive training through the S.P.R.A. Play Leadership Certification Program.

“If you have a youth conference, make sure you have young motivational speakers.” – Youth Conference Participant

“Our youth are our future and it's our responsibility to make sure they have every opportunity to succeed – having them join the Community and School Recreation Coordinator Steering Committee is a great start.” – Lily McKay Carriere, Cumberland House

Toolbox Connection

In the toolbox you will find the following tools related to this section:

- Youth Sport, Culture and Recreation Strategy Framework
- How To Do A Community Project With Youth
- The S.P.R.A. Play Leadership Program
- 40 Developmental Assets

5. Youth Involvement and Leadership

- Youth Sport, Culture and Recreation Strategy Framework
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- 40 Developmental Assets

Youth Sport, Culture and Recreation Strategy Framework

(Source: Sask Sport)

Youth Helping Youth

Introduction

There is an interest and need for young people to be actively involved in finding their own solutions to issues and to promote positive healthy, active lifestyles. Youth say that they are ready, willing and able to do this, but require some structure and support.

Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Sport Culture and Recreation Strategy Framework is to:

- Coordinate a youth voice and network to support youth in their SCR activities
- Increase youth participation in volunteering and in SCR activities and community projects
- Build youth skills and capacity for ongoing and future leadership
- Connect youth with each other to find solutions to youth and community issues
- Promote positive role models.

Possible Age Groups:

The youth framework can be designed to support:

Pre-teens – 8-12 years

Young Teens – 13-15 years

Older Teens – 16-19 years

Young Adults – 20-30 years

Toolbox - 5. Youth Involvement and Leadership

Proposed Actions Endorsed by Youth

The following was reviewed and refined by youth from twenty-three communities across Nunavut at the Regional Capacity Building Sessions held by HSS in March 2010.

Component	Purpose	Details	Comments
Youth Leadership Training	To develop interest and skills for leadership and community action	Types of Training: Basic Leadership Skills Presentations, Coaching, Community Projects	Training will help support momentum and the development of a youth network
Youth Network – 50 Voices	To build the skills of a group of 50 youth who will help everyone stay connected, share information, increase interest and motivation	Many youth are ready and willing to get started – this is a top priority to build youth interest and capacity	Will require dedicated resources to support and maintain it
Annual Youth SCR Summit	To provide a forum for youth to discuss opportunities in SCR and address issues unique to the north	Keep connected for learning and debate, celebration and recognition – to build our own successes and tell our own stories Elders could be involved and training is a key component	The framework and the Summit will require long-term commitment in order to have continuity over time
SCR Liaison and Projects	To create a role for youth to help with community projects and make youth connections	Assist SCR staff to create community linkages, undertake projects and make connections with local youth	SCR may identify project ideas and potentially initiate activities
Media – Website Magazine and Articles	To have a way for youth to tell their stories and get the word out in an interesting and relevant manner Youth website web cam and photo voice opportunities	Electronic and print formats will be used. Focus on youth interest and activities, success stories as well as questions and answers. There will be a theme for each issue. Newspaper articles will be developed on a regular basis	Rotating host for magazine (different communities over time) Needs technical support from communications person to initiate and sustain these activities
Projects and Partnerships	To develop specific youth projects for SCR and to work with existing groups and ensure a holistic approach	Possible project partnerships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Sports Associations • Health Committees • Youth Councils • Hip Hop Groups • Others 	Need to have specific activities to link into/focus youth activities and to be the basis for partnerships

Next Steps and Process

To advance the SCR Youth Strategy Framework the next steps are needed:

1. Continue to work with the youth involved – stay in contact.
2. Inventory of Youth Activities – create a list of youth projects and groups that currently exist.
3. Determine who would be interested in being part of the core group of leaders and the 50 Voices.
4. Develop a few projects to use as examples at the community level.
5. Build the network and implement the framework.
6. Prepare and deliver the training to the core group of youth.
7. Seek financial assistance.
8. Develop the website and communication tools.
9. Find and commit resources for the 2010/2011 Summit.
10. Create an evaluation framework to determine the impact of framework activities.

How To Do A Community Project With Youth

(Source: Flo Frank's Toolbox)

Introduction

Normally youth want to help their communities and be involved – they just are not always sure how to start, where to get help and how to get going. The following tips will help:

1. Youth can take part in existing programs or create their own projects.
2. If it is their own, ensure that projects are by youth and for youth – not adults having all the say.
3. Get a small group of interested youth to be the core group.
4. Ask for their ideas and thoughts about what could be done and how.
5. Create an action plan with very basic goals and next steps.
6. Ask them to discuss what might help support the project and what might get in the way.
7. Create a list of other interested youth and identify ways to get them involved.
8. Consider communication and information sharing – who needs to know what is going on.
9. List potential partners, sponsors or supporters for the project.
10. Develop a budget and resources and talk about where it will come from and who will ask for it.
11. Make a list of jobs to be done and assign them to those with the interest and skills needed.
12. Always work in pairs (two youth at a time not just one) to maintain momentum and confidence.
13. Start small and build on successes. Acknowledge struggles as well as progress.
14. Always start where the youth are at, not where they want to get to.
15. Keep the communication flowing and keep everyone connected between activities.
16. Have fun and make sure there is always food, safe transportation and a healthy approach being used.
17. If youth have issues, make sure there is someone they can talk to in confidence to get help.
18. Recognition and praise go a long way to keeping youth involved and active.
19. Make sure that there are enough supporters for the project and address those who don't in a good way.
20. If at first things don't succeed, keep trying or reassess the goals and start again.

The S.P.R.A. Play Leadership Program

(Source: S.P.R.A.)

Dedicated to providing Play Leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary to coordinate safe and quality play opportunities for children across Saskatchewan.

The goal of the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA) Play Leadership Program is to ensure high quality play opportunities are available throughout Saskatchewan via education, training, promotion and coordination of play resources. In order to provide Play Leaders with the most current trends in the play field, SPRA has developed a new Play Leadership Program and resources that reflect the latest research and theory of play.

Program Information

Objective of the new Play Leadership Program:

- To increase opportunities for Saskatchewan children to participate in play activities
- To improve the quality of play opportunities for children by providing Play Leaders with the latest knowledge and resources in the field
- To overcome the geographical barriers which prevent individuals from participating in the SPRA Play Leadership Program by providing an online training option in addition to the traditional workshop format of training

Overview of the Program

The SPRA Play Leadership Program is built on the Situated Activity Approach which states that learning happens best in real-life situations. In real-life settings, a Play Leader in Training will have the opportunity to develop the leadership skills and sensitivities required to lead play activities through first hand, practical experience. Play Leaders have the opportunity to learn the theory behind play and play leadership and apply this knowledge in a practical setting under the guidance of a Play Mentor.

The SPRA Play Leadership Program can be accessed on an individual level as well as by regions, communities and organizations. The SPRA Play Leadership Program gives the individual, organization, community or region the choice to participate in the training either online or by attending/hosting a workshop.

The SPRA Play Leadership Program relies upon the Play Leader in Training becoming involved in a community of practice. An online forum has been developed which will connect Play Leaders in Training to a community of practice that includes fellow Play Leaders in Training, Play Leaders, and Play Mentors. Through the forum, a Play Leader in Training will have the opportunity to share ideas and concerns with other play professionals and develop the skills and abilities necessary to become a successful play provider.

Toolbox - 5. Youth Involvement and Leadership

The SPRA Play Leadership Program consists of a minimum of 16 training hours which are evenly divided between theory and real-life experience. The program requires eight hours of workshop or home study, using the Play Leader's Guide as the main training resource. A Play Mentor will guide the Play Leader in Training through the program including mentorship, reflection and portfolio tasks.

The practical component of the program includes eight hours of "on the job" practical experience observing and applying appropriate play leadership techniques under the guidance of the Play Mentor.

The Play Mentor will evaluate the Play Leader in Training for completion of all components of the SPRA Play Leadership Program. If satisfied that the Play Leader in Training has completed all program requirements, the Play Mentor will recommend the Play Leader in Training for Play Leader status.

In order to remain a qualified Play Leader or Play Mentor, the individual must complete a Play Leadership Continuing Education Course every three years. SPRA will develop a database that will track qualified Play Leaders and Mentors. Communities, regions and organizations will be able to contact SPRA or consult the SPRA web site for a list of qualified Play Leaders to coordinate play events or a list of Play Mentors to facilitate workshops and online training.

Note: Individuals wishing to participate in the SPRA Play Leadership Program must be 14 years of age prior to commencing training.

Toolbox - 5. Youth Involvement and Leadership

40 Developmental Assets

(Source: Search InstituteSM)



Category	Asset Name and Definition	
External Assets	Support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family Support-Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive Family Communication-Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other Adult Relationships-Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring School Climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent Involvement in Schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. 	
	Empowerment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community Values Youth-Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others-Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. 	
	Boundaries & Expectations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family Boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood Boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult Role Models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive Peer Influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. 	
	Constructive Use of Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative Activities-Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs-Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home-Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week. 	
	Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School-Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
		Positive Values <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty-Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
		Social Competencies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and Decision Making-Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence-Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills-Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution-Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
		Positive Identity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal Power-Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-Esteem-Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose-Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future-Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

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