

Active Yukon Schools

Winter



Winter is here
and it is time to
get active!

Celebrating winter in the Yukon includes tobogganing, building snow forts, going for snowy walks, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing.

Here are some ideas for how schools can help keep kids active outside at recess while the snow piles up and the temperatures drop.

- Encourage active play at recess by shoveling snow into hills for sliding down.
- Build walls for forts from snow.
- Provide shovels, buckets/bins and crazy carpets for snow fun.
- Pack snow into cardboard boxes. Let set, and then carve into sculptures.

Physical activity helps children do better in school.

Look inside to find out about **free programs available for Yukon classrooms and schools**, how rural kids are getting active with cross country skiing, and to see if your school is an “Active, Healthy School.”



RPAY Programs for Active Yukon Schools



The Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon (RPAY) is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with Yukon groups, agencies, and individuals to promote and support healthy, active lifestyles in the Yukon.

Current programs that support increasing children's activity in schools include:

Pilot Action Grants for Active Kids

In December 2012, RPAY provided grants of up to \$2,000 for Yukon schools and communities to help kids get active during school and after school from 3 – 6 pm. Approximately half of available grant funding was for rural communities. Thanks to the Sport and Recreation Branch of the Yukon Territorial Government for funding this initiative!

RPAY has a [full library of teaching kits and resources](#) for the classroom on a number of active/healthy living and nutrition subjects that can be borrowed by schools and classrooms.

Coming Up: Sport and Recreation Summit February 14 – 16, 2013

"Leadership for Healthy Communities" Taking place in Whitehorse. Contact: Marie.Cairns@gov.yk.ca 1-800-661-0408 ext. 5924 867-667-5924

[On the Right Path](#) is a fun, motivational, walking program where participants will virtually walk the historic 526 km Overland Trail from Whitehorse to Dawson City. With this FREE program you can join as an individual or as a group/classroom. You can challenge other individuals or classes. Join the walking fun and walk to Dawson City with your class or school. www.ontherightpath.ca



For more information about RPAY's programs for schools, go to www.rpayschools.org

RPAY Menu of Healthy Living Workshops

[RPAY's Menu of Healthy Living Workshops](#) is a guide to show you some of the workshops RPAY can offer your community, school or workplace. The best thing about these workshops is they are fun, interactive and can be modified to suit your group's interests and budget!



Workshops for schools include:

Cross Country Skiing Programs for Whitehorse Kids/Youth. In

partnership with the Ski Base at Mount Mac's Whitehorse Nordic Centre, five free introductory sessions – including lessons, rentals, and day passes – are available for a limited number of after school groups. Access to this program is on the basis of first-come, first-serve and identifiable-need.

Contact rpayukon@gmail.com.

Cross Country Skiing for Rural

Yukon Kids/Youth. In partnership with Cross Country Yukon, a ski lending library and support to develop a skiing program tailored to individual communities is available. Contact jandowning@northwestel.net

Pedometer Loan-Out Program for Schools. Borrow a set for your classroom. Also available for loan is the "Steps Count" Kit filled with reference books, resources and ideas for using pedometers in the classroom.

Cycle Smart for all Yukon

Schools. This free program will get Yukon kids on bikes through playground bicycle safety workshops. Coming spring 2013.



For more information go to www.rpaymenu.org



Fact is, kids need at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Every day.
Visit www.participACTION.com to learn more.

It's Time to Bring Back Play

We can all agree that there are few things in life as elemental, and as essential to childhood, as play. In fact, play is so important that the UN has declared the right to play as a fundamental childhood right for all children, expressed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Ironically however, our modern-age kids are spending less and less time at play.

For most parents, the memories that we have of childhood involve lots of unstructured, active play. The running and hiding, jumping rope, and throwing balls that were part of classic childhood games, kept our bodies in motion, giving us needed physical activity without us even realizing that we were doing something “good” for ourselves. Not only that, but learning to lead, cooperate, and negotiate the risks and challenges of play, gave us a sense of self and a healthy dose of social skills.

But frankly, play just makes kids happy. That's why they do it. So why then, has play become an endangered activity? One of the biggest barriers to active play is the ever-present technology that now fills kids' leisure time.

The Active Healthy kids Canada Report Card on the Physical Activity of Children and Youth reveals that Canadian kids are

spending six hours a day in front of television, video game and computer screens - over the course of a week, that is as much time as their parents spend at work. Reducing children's screen time to the Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines recommended 2 hours or less per day is no easy feat for many parents, but one that also pays off in “finding time” for play.

Safety and security concerns, so omnipresent in our current society, are also to blame for curtailing childhood play time. Yet keeping kids indoors, away from potential risks, may actually be doing more harm than good.

By addressing the barriers to play that are keeping our kids indoors and unmoving, we can start to find strategies to replace screen-time with playtime, and find places and occasions where play can happen safely and freely. After all, active free play gets kids moving, allows kids to take risks, problem-solve, and enhances creativity - all skills that stand in good stead later in life.

Our kids are not getting enough physical activity. Could there be any easier way to get them to move more than by simply playing? Be part of the movement to Bring Back Play.

Adapted from: www.participation.com

Looking for ideas of active games to play with your class?

Check out the mobile app: www.bringbackplay.mobi/

Is your school physically active?

Criteria a school must meet to be an Active, Healthy School

- ☐ has daily physical activity
- ☐ has playground with additional play equipment (balls, jump ropes etc.) available
- ☐ offers intramural and before/after school activities
- ☐ doesn't keep children indoors due to weather (except for extreme circumstances)
- ☐ NEVER keeps children in from recess for sedentary class work
- ☐ NEVER takes away an opportunity for active play or physical education as punishment

Adapted from ParticipACTION's Blog "Is your school as healthy as it could be?"

www.participaction.com/blog



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Ways to get your school more physically active:

- ✓ Integrate physical activity with curriculum strands (cultural dances, active math, science walks, etc.)
- ✓ Initiate an 'Active Living' committee or team in your school
- ✓ Introduce a morning walking club for students, staff and parents
- ✓ Introduce a Pedometer Program to your school (Try RPAY's free "On the Right Path" program)
- ✓ Provide organized lunch-hour activities. Looking for ideas? Snowman-building contests, relay races, snow-fort building, snow soccer, snow Frisbee, tug-of war fun, and even games of who can make the largest snow pile are all possibilities.
- ✓ Have older school children serve as active living mentors
- ✓ Make sure your school provides active play equipment for children to make use of at recess and lunch. Soccer balls, Frisbees, jump ropes, basketballs, beach balls, hula hoops, bins to load snow into and push, etc.

Adapted from ParticipACTION's Blog "Is your school an active school?" April 18, 2012.

www.participaction.com/blog

Active Rural Kids

Winter Sport for Life: Supporting Cross Country Skiing for Rural Yukon Kids

There is no better place to cross country ski than the Yukon!! Through cross country skiing kids get the chance to *Rip the Roof off Winter*, get outside and learn the FUNdamentals of this Life Long Sport. In partnership with Cross Country Yukon (CCY), RPAY has extended opportunities for all Yukon communities to start and maintain cross country ski programs in the school, both during and after class.

Available are two key components of any program: equipment and leadership. Communities can borrow ski equipment from the RPAY Ski Lending Library free of charge for the season. Through the CCY/RPAY partnership, communities have access to the RHEAL Leader Program. This program provides funding for invaluable leaders who have the energy and ability to get kids excited about being outside, learning a new sport and/or give them another chance to hone their ski skills.

Haines Junction is just one example of a community who has done just that! St. Elias School has offered a full day ski program providing the

opportunity for each student to ski, building their skills throughout the season. This year they are continuing to develop their leaders by providing further coaching education to key leaders as well as offering Cross Country Canada's Introduction to Community Coach Course in the community for keen volunteers. The key leaders will continue the school program and provide ski leadership and mentoring to Champagne Aishihik First Nation Youth Programs. Tying it all together is the St. Elias Ski Club who has been working to build a solid volunteer base and trails, ensuring they are tracked and maintained for everyone to enjoy.

To start or further support your Cross Country Ski program contact Jan Downing at Cross Country Yukon. 867-633-2111 or jandowning@northwestel.net



Why it's important to support children's physical activity.

The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that children aged 5-11 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. According to the Physical Activity Report Card, only 7% of Canadian children and youth are meeting these guidelines.

Kids need to be active for:

- healthy growth and development
- developing cardiovascular fitness, strength and bone density
- increased health, well-being and quality of life
- helping to prevent chronic diseases like cancer, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease later in life



Establishing positive habits early in childhood and adolescence can last a lifetime. It gives children the opportunity to succeed and **live a happy, healthy, long life.**

We Want to Hear From You!

Do you have an idea for how RPAY can support your school community in increasing activity levels of children? Let us know at schools@rpay.org.

Rural Healthy Eating Active Living (RHEAL) Leaders Program

The RHEAL Leader program provides short-term contracts for rural leaders to deliver active living programs in their communities. Contracts are three months long and are based on \$20 per hour for up to 120 hours, with additional funds available for other program costs. RPAY reviews applications for funding several times per year. For more information, contact 867-668-2328 or active@rpay.org

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For more information contact RPAY:

Tel: 867-668-3010 Toll free: 1-866-961-WALK (9255)

Fax: 867-668-2455 Email: schools@rpay.org

Mail c/o 4061 4th Avenue, Whitehorse YT Y1A 1H1



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