

# Physical Activity Strategy

## BC on the move

SPRING 2009

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Photo of CBA Poster in Prince George is courtesy of BC Recreation & Parks Association.

### COMMUNITY BASED AWARENESS

## Use the Active Is Campaign to Get Your Community Moving!



Communities across BC are launching their own versions of the Community Based Awareness "Active is..." campaign.



A joint initiative of BC Recreation and Parks Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon.

For more information, contact Meredith Mundick, at [mmundick@bcrpa.bc.ca](mailto:mmundick@bcrpa.bc.ca) or at 604.629.0965 x 253

**ACTIVE IS... Trail Active:** On the Sunshine Coast, the Active Communities team is partnering with Sunshine Coast Regional District Parks and Recreation, to promote "My Favourite Trail". A recent survey on physical activity informed them that walking is the favorite form of physical activity for Sunshine Coasters. The teams are using CBA's campaign templates (a range of public service announcements and an action plan) so as to reinforce the benefits of walking, and also provide information on local trails, and other local active transportation options. Families who have been impacted by the economic downturn as well as tourists will be targeted to raise awareness of outdoor recreation options that can be accessed at little or no cost.

**ACTIVE IS... the Activity Ambassadors Campaign:** The City of Campbell River aims to enlist community champions who will provide peer support for adults making a transition to a more active lifestyle. Campbell River recently received funding from the Everybody Active initiative and conducted focus groups with less active 35-54 year olds on low incomes. The team discovered that their inactive lifestyles were a result of both real and perceived barriers, including feelings of intimidation, fear of the unknown, lack of familiarity with facilities and programs, and social isolation. Their recent award of CBA's public awareness grant will help launch an *Activity*

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## Community Based Awareness

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*Ambassadors* campaign. Using the *Active is* campaign tools and templates, they will work with local media and community agencies to reinforce the many benefits of physical activity, and address the barriers faced by some members of the community.

**ACTIVE IS... the BCRPA:** The BCRPA recently supported 36 communities with grants to assist them with implementation of a local campaign. The templates for the *Active is...* campaign, plus the Marketing Action Plan (M.A.P.) to assist with implementation, can be downloaded on our website in four languages. Use them as part of a campaign in your community.

Remember, **Active is...** what you make it! ●

### BUILT ENVIRONMENT & ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION (BEAT)

## Active Is... The B.E.A.T.'s Neighbourhood Assessment!



Have you ever gone on a walk or bike ride and noticed barriers to getting around – maybe a sidewalk is missing a sloping curb, or an intersection that could really do with a safe pedestrian-crossing?



A joint initiative of BC Recreation and Parks Association and the Union of BC Municipalities.

Photo above of roundtable discussion at Nanaimo Summit, April 2, 2009 is courtesy of BC Recreation & Parks Association.

For more information, contact Cara Fisher, BEAT Coordinator at [cfisher@bcprpa.bc.ca](mailto:cfisher@bcprpa.bc.ca) or at 604.629.0965 x 255

The B.E.A.T is helping communities assess existing infrastructure and recommend improvements that make for pleasant and safe walking and cycling environments.

The B.E.A.T. Summits usually incorporate a “community walkabout”. These mini “field trips” take participants out of their chairs for a walk outside to assess the surrounding landscape for examples of both good and bad planning. This is a great tool for examining design and infrastructure with an eye to determine how the built environment impacts walkability, bikeability, wheelability and the needs of a range of user groups (families with strollers, children, older adults/seniors, mobility restricted, and people with disabilities). If you would like to conduct a community walkabout, either formally or informally, download the BEAT's *Neighbourhood Assessment* on our website, and you are on your way!

The B.E.A.T.'s *Neighbourhood Assessment* provides guidelines for rating the health of the built environment in BC communities. The resulting score helps local governments, community organizations and citizens understand how the built environment impacts active transportation in their neighbourhood. The assessment

is a starting point to identify which elements of a healthy built environment have been implemented as well as areas for improvement, and is one of many tools that may be used to assist decision-makers in their deliberations around land use planning, infrastructure investment and programming.

A healthy built environment can achieve a range of positive health impacts:

- Increased levels of physical activity;
- Lower levels of air pollution and greenhouse gases;
- Improved pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety;
- Increased independence for a range of community members;
- More vibrant communities and engaged citizenship;
- Reduced reliance on car travel, by creating areas of mixed residential and commercial uses;
- Reductions in obesity and related illness/disease.

The B.E.A.T. encourages YOU to get out for a Neighbourhood Assessment and promote awareness of a healthy built environment using the “Active is” tools and templates. Check the website for more details! [www.PhysicalActivityStrategy.ca](http://www.PhysicalActivityStrategy.ca). ●

## Active Is... Inclusion!

Across the province, more than 40% of British Columbians aren't sufficiently active to achieve health benefits (the national average is 44%).



A joint initiative of BC Recreation and Parks Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon.

For more information, contact Donna Lee, Everybody Active coordinator, at [dlee@bcrpa.bc.ca](mailto:dlee@bcrpa.bc.ca) 604.629.0965 x 257

Photo above of Kick it Up, Kitimat! Workshop is courtesy of Monique Miller.

Affordability, time, awareness of opportunities and motivation are some of the common barriers when addressing access. When planning parks and recreation programs, it is natural to address these barriers in a general way, and then look at what other communities have done.

Communities often invest in creating a program and finding staff who are welcoming and friendly. The program may be low cost or even free, with babysitting and equipment included. The program starts and disappointment strikes when only one or two people attend. What went wrong?

It is important to understand that building a trusting relationship with groups that don't participate in mainstream community programming takes time. In order to embrace the principals of social inclusion, you will need to identify the groups who would benefit from your program, and to look to local community service organizations for assistance.

Social inclusion means more than creating a friendly environment; it also means inclusion in the creation of the programs. Creating opportunities for people, rather than with people, will likely result in the same people being left out. Drawing on Albert Einstein's wisdom, if we try to address an issue in the same way that we always have, we cannot expect different results.

Everybody Active has assembled a series of workshops that introduces and expands on the idea of social inclusion for physical activity:



- **Social Inclusion through Active Living** shows participants how social inclusion is both a process for and an outcome of involving people in active living.
- **Engaging the Hard to Reach** introduces a stretch exercise and inspires us to move one step closer to community-led program creation.
- **Making the Case** provides participants with a presentation kit to "make your case" and build local government support for inclusive practices.
- **Promising Practices in Recreation Access** encourages participants to explore some different ways communities can remove barriers to physical activity through policies, partnerships, programs and community engagement.

**Everybody Active Workshops:** A range of Everybody Active workshops are traveling across BC in 2009. Contact the Everybody Active coordinator to learn more about hosting workshops in your community. ●



BC on the move



WALK BC

# Active Is... Community Events!

Walk BC is working with communities to “step it up”.



A joint initiative of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon and the BC Recreation and Parks Association.

To register, or for more information, contact Lindsay Richardson, Walk BC coordinator, at lrichardson@bcrrpa.bc.ca or at 604.629.0965 x 256

Photo above of Walking Event, Campbell River is courtesy of BC Recreation & Parks Association.

Signing up to participate in an event with participants at a similar level of fitness is often the first step in committing to an active, healthier lifestyle.

In partnership with SportMed BC, Walk BC has been providing financial and organizational support to communities around the province to host a community walking event. One such community is School District #72 in Campbell River. As part of their support package, School District #72 implemented a “Walk this Way” 8-week training program to get the school district employees and their families more active. The “Walk this Way” program provides participants with safe, progressive walking programs with the goal of walking for 10 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, 40 minutes or 5km. Their training program was launched on February 2, and included a variety of individual and team incentives and challenges to get people motivated to be more active through walking. In total 120 people participated – what a success!

At the end of training, the school district hosted the “Step it Up a Notch” event on Friday, March 27. The event included 5km walk or run and 10km run options.

There was music, food, prizes and lots of celebration around the accomplishments of the participants!

Similar excitement and enthusiasm is building across the province. Twelve other communities are participating in the “Walk this Way” program leading up to their own community event. The majority of these will take place on June 21, 2009. For more information on these exciting events please visit the Walk BC website [www.walkbc.ca](http://www.walkbc.ca).

**Walk BC Grants:** Walk BC is offering grants designed to assist communities with the development, implementation and/or enhancement of introductory walking programs for inactive adults (aged 35-54). Grants will be offered once to a maximum of \$5,000. For more information visit [www.walkbc.ca](http://www.walkbc.ca).

**Walk BC Training:** Building on the training in 2008, walk organizers, programmers and leaders are provided with additional skills, tools and resources to engage less active adult populations in walking programs. Check [www.walkbc.ca](http://www.walkbc.ca) regularly for information on dates and locations or to register. ●



An initiative of these BC Healthy Living Alliance Members



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