

Everybody Active

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

Increasing Access Success Story

Red Fox Program



Why it started...

The Red Fox Program is an Active Outreach project targeting Aboriginal families in East Vancouver. Active Outreach is an Active Communities Vancouver initiative developed to increase the activity levels of different groups of Vancouver residents that have been identified as needing support to be active and lead healthy lifestyles.

Aboriginal families in Vancouver face barriers to being active. These include environmental barriers, such as living in an unsafe neighbourhood or lack of transportation choices, as well as social barriers such as low self-esteem or limited awareness of local resources. The Red Fox Program works to overcome these barriers and create new patterns of success and enjoyment for Aboriginal families. The intended outcome is to increase access to local resources and provide families with the tools to make healthy choices.

What it is...

The Red Fox Program introduced aboriginal families to fun ways to be physically active together in a safe environment.

Activity Passport Events: Free events were held in different Vancouver Park Board facilities where Aboriginal families were engaged in a wide variety of fun physical activities. A passport was used to encourage and track participation in the eleven events. Parents and children alike developed confidence, knowledge and skills to continue being physically active.

Prizes: Equipment that was introduced at the events were given out as prizes to encourage continued physical activity at home. The equipment was suitable for use outdoors, in small spaces, and without need for transportation or additional equipment. Some examples include skipping ropes, stilts, soccer balls and dance equipment.

Leadership Training: Parents and youth were also given the opportunity to participate in leadership training to become event volunteers and potentially paid program leaders. Hands-on training helped develop leadership skills, confidence and sport-specific abilities.

The program was well received with 338 children, youth and parents participating from February to April 2007.

Why this initiative is a promising practice...

The Red Fox Program recognized that Aboriginal families face unique barriers to participation. In a culturally sensitive way, families learned that physical activity can be fun and can be done anywhere. They also learned that they are welcome in Vancouver Park Board facilities and that perceived barriers can be overcome.

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The Red Fox leaders also used this opportunity for two way communication. Information was given on local, accessible health and physical activity resources available at community centres, parks, schools and community gardens with parents. Information was also collected about barriers faced by aboriginal families, which is used to inform program planning city-wide.

This initiative also strengthened relationships between Vancouver Parks Board and community organizations such as Helping Spirit Lodge Society, Vancouver School Board, MoreSports, and various community, health promotion and Aboriginal agencies.

Find out more...

Active Outreach is an Active Communities Vancouver initiative developed to increase the activity levels of different groups of Vancouver residents that have been identified as needing support to be active and lead healthy lifestyles. These initiatives are delivered in partnership with Helping Spirit Lodge Society, funded by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, and sponsored by the Vancouver Park Board. Other partners include the Vancouver School Board, MoreSports, and various community, health promotion, and Aboriginal agencies.

Visit vancouver.ca/parks/activecommunity/passport.htm for more information on the Red Fox Program and other Active Outreach initiatives.

To learn more about how you could offer a similar program in *your community*, check out the “How did they do it?” profile on the Everybody Active page @ www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca.