



AAARD

Advancing Affordable Access to Recreation in Durham

According to the 2006 Census data, in Durham 149,315 people were reported to be living below the Low Income Measure (LIM). In 2011, over 4,550 individuals accessed recreation fee subsidy programs in Durham. This equates to approximately 3% of individuals living below the LIM receiving funding for recreation programs. On average 20% of the population participates in registered recreation programs, indicating that there is a need to address affordable access to recreation in Durham.

Barriers that have been identified to accessing recreation are:

Program knowledge: There is a lack of awareness of the programs and services available to low income residents and especially how to access programs at a reduced and affordable rate.

Facilities: Transportation provides another barrier to low income residents as taking public transit adds cost and time to attend a program. There is a perceived lack of places for informal and structured programs.

Affordability: The cost of programs prohibits low income residents from trying to register while equipment and transportation costs add to the difficulty. There is also a stigma attached to applying for a subsidy as proof of income is often a requirement.

Capacity: Low income residents feel that they do not have a voice in order to change access policies and address affordability issues.

Accountability: There is no central coordinating body where residents can access recreation programs; there are many points of entry which leaves navigating an often complex system challenging.

AAARD is working towards:

- Understanding the barriers to participation in recreation and addressing them through policies, programs and our inclusive actions
- Educating residents as to the importance of participating in recreation and the benefits to the individual, families and communities
- Providing a balance of fee based and no cost/low cost opportunities that are accessible to all residents
- Subsidizing residents who are in need to assist them in participating in the activities of their choice
- Measuring our success and reporting out to the community and partners

After the Bell Project

The goal of *After the Bell*, a project funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), is to increase the capacity within the Durham Region for establishing and sustaining affordable, high quality after school programs in priority communities for children from 6 to 12 years of age.

The project partners are the Boys and Girls Club of Durham, the Durham District School Board, and the Town of Ajax. The partners are taking a leadership role to ensure equitable access to affordable, high-quality after school programs for all students (6 to 12 years old) within the Durham Region. The partnership will expand by year three to include representation (within the Durham Region) from other school boards, municipal governments and not-for-profit service providers.

One of the project objectives is to document the long-term impact of the four after school programs on the health and development of children from 6 to 12 years of age. The structure and design of the after school program will evolve over the three year funding period, based on the results of the project research and evaluation.

For more information on the After the Bell Project contact Lisa McNee Baker, Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Durham at lmcneebaker@bgcdurham.com.



Organizations who are involved with AAARD

- Abilities Centre
- Boys and Girls Club of Durham
- Brock Community Health Centre
- Brock Physical Activity Network
- Canadian Tire Jumpstart
- City of Oshawa
- City of Pickering
- Municipality of Clarington
- Community Development Council Durham
- Durham District School Board
- Girls Incorporated of Durham
- Grandview Children's Centre
- Region of Durham –Social Services
- Region of Durham- Health Department
- Region of Durham- Children's Services
- Their Opportunity
- Town of Ajax
- Town of Whitby
- Township of Uxbridge
- Township of Scugog
- Tucker Reid & Associates
- YMCA- Oshawa

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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