

Background

The Healthy Kids Community Challenge (HKCC) was a three year initiative funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), to bring communities together to promote children's health and to prevent childhood obesity. This initiative began January 1, 2016 and will be completed on September 30, 2018.

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) was one of 45 communities selected to receive funding to implement the HKCC. The City received \$375,000 per year to implement programs and activities related to children's healthy eating and physical activity.

The HKCC has been successful in bringing together over 66 community partners while implementing 33 new programs, initiatives and challenges that have served more than 20,000 children since 2016.

The MOHLTC selected a new theme each nine months which allowed the Healthy Kids Advisory Committee to focus their efforts on promoting a specific behaviour to improve children's health and well-being and help prevent childhood obesity. The following is a brief description of the results of each of the four themes.

Theme One: Run. Jump. Play. Every Day!

The first theme "Run. Jump. Play. Everyday" was implemented across the community from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2016, which encouraged physical activity through a mix of active play, sport, active transportation and structured activities. Fourteen programs and initiatives were delivered, serving over 2,800 children and their families.

Highlights

- 670 children participated in the Activate Your Recess Program which helped children use recess time to be physically active
- 285 children from grades 1-6 were provided free swimming lessons through their school
- 199 pairs of snowshoes were lent out by Library branches
- 100 children attended bike safety lessons and received safe cycling equipment.

Theme Two: Water Does Wonders!

The second theme "Water Does Wonders" was implemented from July 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 which encouraged children and families to choose water over

sugary beverages through a mix of infrastructure, programming and education initiatives.

The initiatives included a range of activities including the purchase and installation of water bottle filling stations and various education initiatives for children and families. Fourteen programs and initiatives were delivered, serving over 7,300 children and their families

Highlights

- 3,000 children had visits from Tap and Thirsty, our community-based water educators
- 1,509 children took the Lunchbox Challenge by signing and pledging to bring a refillable water bottle or white milk in their lunch
- 24 children's sports teams agreed to drink only tap water at games and practices and to have only fresh veggies and fruits as their after game snack
- 22 water fountains were installed where kids and their families meet and play

Theme Three: Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit

The third theme "Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit" was implemented from April 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017 and encouraged kids and families to reach for vegetables and fruits at every meal and snack through a mix of infrastructure, programming and education initiatives. The plan for the third theme contained eight new activities and several continuing programs and services, including community gardening initiatives, a mobile market, challenges and education initiatives. Thirteen programs and initiatives were delivered, serving over 10,376 children and their families.

Highlights

- 3,400 children had a visit from the Super Snackables and were able to try new vegetable and fruit snacks
- 1,912 children participated in the Cultivate Your Neighbourhood program learning to plant, nurture, harvest and cook veggies and fruits in their local community gardens
- 700 children's families shopped at the Pop-Up Markets and were able to purchase vegetables and fruits at cost
- 510 children participated in Healthy Kids Week at the Market where they received \$3 in Market Money to spend on veggies and fruit at local Farmer's Markets
- 42 educators and children's leaders received training to be able to deliver the Adventures in Cooking program for children

Theme Four: Power Off and Play

The fourth theme "Power Off and Play" is being implemented from January 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018 with the goal of encouraging children to be more active and to use screens less often. Activities promoting active outdoor play and supporting active transportation and screen-free family meal times will be offered. The plan for theme four includes six new activities and several continuing programs and services, such as community gardening initiatives, cooking classes, an Adventure Play pilot, and supportive skill building recreation programs.

Results from this theme will be available later in 2018.

Continuing the Work of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge

Over the three year term of the HKCC, the City received annual funding in the amount of \$375,000 per year. Community partners are interested in continuing to support children's health programming and partnerships with the City.

Throughout this period some of the programs and initiatives that were delivered were specific to each of the themes while training, development, water infrastructure and equipment purchases built capacity in the community and developed needed infrastructure that continues to be used.

However, some of the initiatives that were piloted or developed, such as community gardening, active transportation, adventure play and supporting recreation programming are not being funded by any other means and could benefit children and families with continued financial support.

An important component to the success of the HKCC which warrants consideration for continued support is the ongoing partnership with all children's service organizations to develop programming and maximize community efforts to promote children's health.

Ongoing funding of the HKCC program would create opportunities for families and organizations to support children in being more active, eating healthier and playing more. This aligns with the Population Health priorities of Resiliency, Families, Mental Health and Play Opportunities.

Next Steps

Approximately half of the HKCC programs created with the annual funding of \$375,000 are now self-sustaining throughout the community.

As a result a business case for ongoing sustainable funding for Healthy Kids programming for the 2019 Budget will be prepared in the amount of \$187,500 per year, representing one half of previous annual funding received.

References

Healthy Kids Community Challenge - Year One Update Report
Community Services Committee meeting – November 14, 2016

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&lang=en&id=1019&itemid=12181>

Healthy Kids Community Challenge - Year Two Update Report
Community Services Committee meeting – August 21, 2017

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&lang=en&id=1153&itemid=13235>

Healthy Kids Community Challenge - Year Three Update Report
Community Services Committee meeting – April 16, 2018

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=4&id=1261>

Health Kids Community Challenge – Theme Four Update Report
Community Services Committee meeting – January 15, 2018

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=6&id=1258>