

ADDRESSING THE AFTER-SCHOOL HOURS

An Environmental Scan of After-School Programming Outside
of Licensed Childcare for Children Aged 6 to 12 in BC





Table of Contents

3	Executive summary	18	Promising practices
5	About this report	18	Promising practices in service delivery models
5	The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA)	18	Community schools
5	Methodology	21	Middle Childhood Matters tables
6	Outline of the report	22	Boys and Girls Clubs
7	The need for an after-school strategy	24	Promising practices in after-school programming
7	Urgency: The impact of inactivity on children's health in Canada and BC	24	Physical activity or sport programs
8	Children 6 to 12: A time of growth, development and potential	24	Clubs
8	Children 6 to 12 & the critical hours	25	Recreation programming
9	Children & the after-school hours in BC	26	Perceived strengths in after-school programming in BC
10	After-school programs as an effective strategy to address children's needs	27	Gaps that need to be addressed
11	Active responses to the need for an after-school strategy	29	Recommendations for future action
12	Ontario	31	References
12	Northwest Territories	34	Appendices
13	Alberta	34	A: List of interviewees
13	Initiatives supporting children in the after-school hours in BC	36	B: Interview questions
13	United Way of the Lower Mainland's Middle Childhood Matters	36	C: Online survey questions
13	The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)	38	D: List of identified promising practices
14	Action Schools! BC		
15	Canada Gets Active		
15	BC Sport Participation Program		
15	Local Sports Program Development Fund		
16	Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train		
16	LEAP BC		
17	Strengths of after-school programming in BC		
17	Components of a good after-school program		



Executive summary

The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) was contracted by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to conduct an environmental scan of after-school programming outside of licensed childcare for children aged 6 to 12 in BC. This scan took place between January and March 2010.

The methodology used is comprised of 3 components; a literature review, an online survey and interviews. The information gathered was then analyzed and is presented in four sections; the need for an after-school strategy, strengths of after-school programming, gaps that need to be addressed and recommendations for future action.

The need for an after-school strategy explores the urgency for action. Research shows that due to declining children's physical activity levels and growing health issues, changing family structure, etc., children are in need of more physical activity opportunities to increase their health and better their quality of life. These opportunities could be found in the after-school hours. Furthering the urgency of the situation is the fact that currently there is no overarching strategy or systemic support for after-school programming in BC.

It is, however, apparent from the information gathered that there are commonly agreed upon key components to a good after-school program. The components were identified as:

- Safe
- Accessible
- Affordable
- Of high quality
- Developmentally-appropriate
- Intentional
- Appropriately structured
- Offer opportunities for skill-building and provide the opportunity for mastery
- Support positive peer relations
- Offer opportunities for physical activity
- Supported by caring, trained and qualified staff
- Provide a wide range of activities
- Encourage connection to community, including family and school

Promising practices that encompass many of the key components were also identified through the environmental scan. Three successful service delivery models are presented: community schools, Middle Childhood Matters tables and Boys and Girls Clubs. The common characteristics among these models are that they are all:

- Collaborative models located within communities,
- Dynamic and responsive to children's and community needs,
- Supported by a somewhat stable funding source and
- Reliant on evidence-based programming.

Many participants in the environmental scan put forth examples of promising practices for after-school programming. With 104 examples provided, the programs are categorized into three themes: physical activity or sport programs, activity or after-school clubs, and broad based recreation programming. Some of these program examples are highlighted in more detail.

In addition to providing examples of promising practices, the environmental scan helped to clarify the current strengths of after-school programming in BC. They were identified as diversity, caring staff, collaborative involvement of community partners and evidence-based programming. These strengths exist despite the lack of systematic support within BC.

Analysis of the findings further illustrated gaps in current after-school programming that needed to be addressed in BC. The gaps identified are:

- Funding
- Lack of a systemic approach to support children in the after-school hours
- Lack of developmentally-appropriate programming for children aged 10 to 12
- The need for enhanced accessibility to after-school programs
- The need for more formalized training of staff
- Affordability
- Consideration of out-of-school time vs. after-school time
- No consistency on what constitutes quality
- The need for greater understanding of recruitment strategies for after-school programs
- Limited consistency in evaluation



This environmental scan has prompted the following recommendations about further action in order to best support children aged 6 to 12 in BC during the after-school hours. The use of an 'after-school strategy' in the recommendations is meant to encompass any concerted organized effort to address the after-school hours, whether it be through a specific after-school program, specific projects or an over-arching framework.

Recommendations for future action include:

- That a provincial framework should be developed to support children aged 6 to 12 during the after-school hours.
- For any after-school strategy, broad language should be used in order to appeal to and solicit participation from a broad range of stakeholders.
- Any after-school strategy should support after-school programming that embodies the characteristics of a good after-school program, and ensures the accommodation of the two distinct cohorts within the middle childhood years (6 to 9 and 10 to 12) and their respective developmental needs.
- An after-school strategy and after-school programming should be targeted to all children.
- An after-school strategy should include rigorous evaluative measures to ensure monitoring of programming and indicators of success.
- An after-school strategy should be branded as promoting quality programs and necessary supports for children in the after-school hours.
 - Any future work in this area should add value to work already in progress by community partners at local, regional and provincial levels.
- Users and target audiences impacted by the implementation of an after-school strategy should be consulted and engaged during its creation, implementation and evaluation.
- Quality assurance mechanisms need to be implemented for after-school programs supported an after-school strategy.
- Further academic research is needed to adequately understand the range of vulnerabilities for children aged 6 to 12 across the province.
- Enhance physical activity through after-school programming.
- Dosage of after-school programs needs to be addressed.

Through the use of these recommendations, the strengths of quality after-school programming in BC can be enhanced and the gaps in supporting children in the after-school hours can be addressed. Through a collaborative, dynamic and comprehensive approach, we can enhance the lives of children aged 6 to 12 and their families and improve their quality of life.



About this report

The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA)

BCRPA is uniquely positioned to explore the issue of programming for after school hours for middle childhood because of its direct connection with communities and recreation professionals across British Columbia.

BCRPA has demonstrated commitment to providing quality assurance for programs for children aged 6 to 12 and to ensure access to these programs for all children. BCRPA is the delivery agent of HIGH FIVE®, a highly recognized quality assurance standard designed to help program leaders, organizations and parents ensure that recreation, sport and after-school programs are delivered in ways that support the healthy development of children and provide environments and relationships that foster child development. BCRPA also implements Everybody Gets to Play™, a national initiative focused on ensuring that economically disadvantaged children and families have access to quality leisure experiences.

BCRPA has been involved in the Middle Childhood Matters initiative at the United Way of the Lower Mainland since its inception in 2006. Through the Daily Physical Activity project with the BC Ministry of Education, BCRPA has explored the connection between secondary schools and recreation in order to promote physical activity amongst youth. BCRPA is engaged in the facilities where programming for children and youth takes place. BCRPA promotes the sale of healthy food and beverages within those buildings through our Stay Active, Eat Healthy program and the BC Healthy Living Alliance's Physical Activity and Healthy Eating Strategies. BCRPA's Active Communities Initiative directly supported 226 communities throughout BC to increase physical activity levels.

Methodology

This environmental scan is divided into 3 components: a literature review, an online survey and interviews. Each of these components is outlined below.

Literature review

The research component of this environmental scan concentrated on:

1. Promising practices of after-school programming
2. Critical hours issues for children aged 6 to 12
3. Funding possibilities for after-school programs for children aged 6 to 12
4. Other jurisdictions' after-school strategy models within Canada

In addition to a literature review of other jurisdictions' after-school strategies, BCRPA also attended a one-day forum on March 19, 2010 in Red Deer, AB, on the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA)'s proposed After-School Strategy for the province of Alberta.

Online survey

BCRPA created an online survey, entitled Addressing the After School Hours, that sought to identify local best practices in after-school programming across the province, strengths and gaps in after-school programming and recommendations for future action in this area at a provincial level. The intention of this survey was to solicit a broad response at the local level to identify the strengths and gaps in addressing the after-school hours and identify specific successful practices within communities.

The online survey was distributed electronically to 1671 BCRPA members, 481 contacts within child and youth organizations through the Spotlight on Youth communiqué and 65 HIGH FIVE® advisory committee members and trainers. The survey was also distributed by community organizations such as First Call, Middle Childhood Matters partners at the United Way of the Lower Mainland, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, Pacific Region, and the First Nations Health Council.



The online survey was open from March 2 – 17, 2010, and elicited 155 responses. The survey questions are attached as Appendix C to this report.

Some service providers were also consulted as follow-ups to this survey to glean more information about specific promising practices.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with key provincial stakeholders involved in after-school hours decision-making and program delivery. The intention of the interviews was to solicit information about strengths of after-school programming, identification of successful practices, gaps that need to be addressed and recommendations for future work at the provincial level.

Although some key stakeholders were initially identified, snowball sampling (Family Health International, 2010) was used as a specific methodology to ensure that BCRPA was reaching and connecting with all relevant stakeholders. 11 stakeholders were interviewed for this environmental scan. The list of interviewed stakeholders can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Interviews were conducted over the phone, recorded with consent of the interviewees and transcribed. Interview questions can be found in Appendix B of this report.

Outline of the report

This report is divided into 4 sections:

1. *The Need for an After-School Strategy*: Exploration of the urgency for a provincial after-school strategy for children ages 6 to 12 based on health indicators and their specific developmental needs. National and provincial imperatives are examined and the momentum and timeliness of this issue in BC is addressed.
2. *Strengths of After-School Programming*: Identification of the components of good after-school programming. Promising practices and the perceived strengths of current after-school programming in BC are outlined.
3. *Gaps that need to be addressed*: Exploration of the perceived gaps in after-school programming as it currently exists in BC.
4. *Recommendations for future action*



The need for an after-school strategy

Urgency: The impact of inactivity on children's health in Canada and BC

Children deserve the right to reach their full potential and live healthier, happier and more productive lives (Leitch, 2007). Many children in Canada and in BC, however, are facing declining levels of physical activity in childhood that have the potential to negatively impact their health throughout their life course.

Canada's standing when it comes to the health and wellness of its children is remarkably poor: Canada only ranked 12th out of 21 wealthy countries in the United Nations' rankings of child well-being (Leitch, 2007).

Children's well-being can be positively impacted by physical activity. Participation in physical activity can lead to increased academic performance, improvement in physical health and maintenance of healthy body weight, and increased mental health (Active Healthy Kids, 2009).

Many Canadian children are not participating in physical activity. Less than half of Canada's children meet the minimum daily physical activity requirements to support healthy growth and development (Active Healthy Kids, 2008). While the portion of children meeting daily physical activity requirements has gone up in recent years, 88% of Canadian children are still not meeting Canada's requirement of 90 minutes of daily physical activity (Active Healthy Kids, 2010) and 26% of Canada's children (aged 2 to 17) are over-weight or obese (Active Healthy Kids, 2009).

There are a number of factors and trends impacting children's ability to reach those daily physical activity requirements (Active Healthy Kids, 2009) including:

- Decline in active transportation: Fewer children are walking to and from school.
- Increase in screen time: With advances in technology, more children are spending more time engaging with technology, through internet usage, online social networking or video games. However, the evolution of games from sedentary to active may affect this trend over time.
- Growing disparities between those children who do participate in physical activity and those who are less active due to barriers such as gender and socio-economic status.

These trends have had a significant impact on the health and fitness of children in Canada over the last 30 years. The outcomes of the Canadian Health Measures Survey (Tremblay, Shields, Laviolette, Craig, Janssen & Gerber, 2010) describe the impact in detail. Between 1981 and 2009, the body composition of children aged 6 to 19 significantly deteriorated (including but not limited to a decrease in muscle mass and a decreased in grip strength), regardless of sex or age. Over this time period, fitness levels, strength and flexibility of children and youth have all declined significantly.

The physical activity levels of BC's children are incrementally higher than the national average (Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute, 2009): children and youth in BC and the Yukon take more daily steps than children in other provinces and territories. Children in BC and the Yukon are also more likely to meet the daily step requirement of 15,000 steps per day.





Overall in Canada, a greater proportion of those children who participate in organized physical activity programming or sports meet the daily requirements compared to those who do not participate (Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute, 2009). In 2008, the BC Ministry of Education enacted a new requirement for all students to participate in Daily Physical Activity (DPA) as part of their education program. Therefore schools are now required to provide 30 minutes of DPA for students up to Grade 9. This, however, still leaves most children short of the recommended 90 minutes a day.

Children 6 to 12: A time of growth, development and potential

Middle childhood comprises a time of significant growth and development for children. During these seven years, there is significant complex development of language and cognitive skills, as well as conceptual, self-awareness and reflective skills (Hanvey, 2006).

Family remains a major influence during middle childhood, with increasing influence from school, friends and community (Schonert-Reichl, 2007). It is during middle childhood that children make their first real sustained connections outside of the home as they spend less time socially with their parents and are increasingly influenced by other adults and their peers (Hanvey, 2006).

Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, in her study *Middle Childhood Inside and Out: the Psychological and Social World of Children 9 – 12* (2007), identifies 4 dimensions of middle childhood development:

- Social emotional competence
- School experiences
- Physical health and well-being
- Connectedness with parents, peers, school, and community (p. .5)

All of these dimensions are interdependent, and growth or decline in each of these areas has ramifications throughout the life course (Hertzman quoted in Hanvey, 2006).

Middle childhood is also described as a fragile period (Miller, 2003): one of fast-paced physical and emotional growth coupled with greater freedom, presenting young people with choices that can lead them down difficult paths. Children can be supported in handling these difficulties by helping them acquire the social and emotional skills in middle childhood.

Although many children are not reaching the minimum daily physical activity requirements, in terms of physical activity levels, research shows that younger children (i.e., those in middle childhood) are more active than older youth (Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute, 2009). An after-school strategy and accompanying after-school programs could help establish physical activity as a priority and an important part of daily life and give participants physical literacy skills before they transition to youth.

Children 6 to 12 & the critical hours

The critical hours are defined as those hours between the end of the school day and the end of the working day, typically between 3 and 6 PM. These hours are sometimes described as the “lost hours”, due to the fact that there is no system that is responsible for children during this time and parents are not yet finished work.

The research shows that the well-being of children in the middle years is significantly influenced by their families and by their experiences in school (Hanvey, 2006). But there is also increasing evidence that families and schools are strained. The majority of households have two working parents, but employment is not always full-time. There has been a growth in non-standard employment (e.g. more temporary work, contract work and seasonal jobs) that impacts the ability of families to provide for their children, especially in the mismatch of timing between the end of the school day and the end of the working day (Hanvey 2006). The increasing strain on working families can also be deduced from the increasing numbers of 6 to 12 year olds, particularly those between the ages of 10 and 12, participating in self-care during after-school hours.



Research shows that the way children spend their time outside of school – where they go, who they are with, what they do – significantly influences their developmental path (United Way of the Lower Mainland, 2009). The after-school hours combined with out-of-school hours, the time spent out of school including school breaks, professional development days, and the summer, constitute a significant amount of time: children in middle childhood have 67 hours of discretionary time a week, more time than they spend in school (Schonert-Riechl, 2007).

Research has shown that without after-school programming, and left on their own, children and youth will engage in more risky behaviours, including crime, socially isolating behaviours, higher use of technology including TV and the computer, and be at risk for drug and alcohol use (Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, 2009), leading to increased vulnerability (for more information about vulnerability, see sidebar). Proposed changes in the Youth Criminal Justice Act may also mean that previous brushes with the law that in the past may not have resulted in charges or conviction would now be permitted entry into a sentencing procedure, making intervention more important for the future success of Canada's children and youth (CBC News, 2010). California's successful after-school program is derived strictly from a crime prevention stance, "Fight Crime, Invest in Kids", and is related to explicit research demonstrating the occurrence of petty crimes during after-school hours (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California, 2009).

Children & the after-school hours in BC

As of 2005, there were nearly 400,000 school-age children in Kindergarten to Grade 7 in BC (Schonert-Reichl, 2007). Based on BC population projections, the population of school age children and youth (5 to 17 years) will decline over the next 15 years. However, increasing immigration to BC mitigates this decline and immigration will account for 63% of population gain in the next 15 years (BC STATS, 2004). The majority of growth will occur in the urban areas of the Lower Mainland and the Thompson-Okanagan valleys.

BC has the highest child poverty rate in Canada for the sixth year in a row in 2007. This means that an estimated 156,000 children (0 to 18 years) were living in poverty in BC in 2007 (First Call, 2009). 27,868 children in 2007 were in families on social assistance. Although the risk of poverty is increased for female lone-parent families, the majority of poor children live in two-parent families. There is a growing inequity between those families with high incomes and those families with lower incomes, that could negatively impact physical activity levels for those children of families in the lower income bracket.

A family's ability to earn a living wage is greatly affected by insufficient public investment in child development, including the middle years and after-school programs (Richards, Cohen, Klein & Littman, 2008). With increased economic insecurity, a decrease in affordable housing and little public investment in children, parents must work more hours to get by. It is now the societal norm in BC for families to have 2 parents working full-time.

Addressing Vulnerability

Vulnerability is a much-used term in middle childhood literature, and one that speaks to a multiplicity of circumstances that affect a child's ability to achieve their full potential. Although there is no standardized definition of vulnerability throughout the research, in many instances, vulnerability is determined by a child's socio-economic status, literacy levels, and is a reflection of these and other social determinants of health.

Vulnerability, however, is not a permanent state for the majority of Canadian children (Leitch, 2007). Research suggests that 87% of children may experience vulnerability, but that it is not permanent (Leitch, 2007). Research shows that 13% of Canadian children do continue to be vulnerable over the long term (Hanvey, 2006). This means that interventions and services can have a significant impact in the life of a child, but money must be invested in the right policies and programs (Leitch, 2007), such as after-school programs, cited as a key action by Dr. Leitch.



Although there is minimal research in Canada exploring children's activities in the after-school hours, BC benefits from the work of Kimberly Schonert-Reichl at UBC who studies the social and emotional health of children in the middle childhood years.

In 2007, Dr. Schonert-Reichl released *Middle Childhood Inside and Out: the Psychological and Social World of Children 9 – 12*, a study of 1,266 children drawn randomly from seven school districts in the Lower Mainland, the first study of its kind in Canada. This survey asked 3 key questions:

- What are children doing in the after-school hours?
- Who are they doing it with?
- What do they want to be doing?

The study discovered that 50% of children were engaged in structured after-school activities, and that overwhelmingly, children want to be doing physical activities (48.7%) in the after-school hours. Schonert-Reichl indicates that there was not a single study response that said they wanted to be watching more TV.

The majority of children from the study were spending the after-school hours with family members, supportive adults, and siblings, but 10% were spending the after-school hours alone, engaging in self-care. The social isolation and the lack of involvement in developmentally-appropriate activities, intrinsic to self-care, can have significant developmental impacts. Schonert-Reichl's key finding in this study was that children benefit significantly from participating in structured activities during after-school hours.

After-school programs as an effective strategy to address children's needs

In addition to the mismatch between the end of the school day and the end of the working day, there is also a mismatch between the public investment in children and children's need for support. Based on the 2005 Census numbers and the number of licensed childcare spaces available for those same children, it is estimated that there are licensed child care spaces for only 7% of school-aged children in BC (Buote, 2008). After-school programming is both an effective policy and programming measure to address this mismatch.

For a comprehensive after-school strategy to be effective, there must be a variety of options available to parents, including licensed childcare. Quality care is mandated and regulated by the provincial government. Similar to after-school hours, there is currently no federal role in school aged childcare (Canadian Childcare Federation, 2006). After-school programming, as explored in this environmental scan, which looked at programming outside of licensed childcare, is presented as a compliment and partner to licensed childcare. Both types of programming offer both an effective policy and programming measure to address the mismatch between the end of the school day and the end of the working day.

Research has shown that after-school programs can and do make a positive difference in the lives of young people (Hanvey, 2006). According to Beth Miller, in *After-School Programs and Educational Success* (2003), after-school programs can:

1. Increase engagement in learning
2. Increase educational equity
3. Build key skills (such as teamwork, problem-solving skills and communication skills) necessary for success in today's economy. (p.8)

Alongside these benefits, after-school programs keep young people safe and out of trouble, and help them develop interests and skills that stay with them throughout their lives (Miller 2003). United Way of the Lower Mainland (2009) attributes a long list of positive outcomes for children from after-school programs including:

- Developing social skills
- Building confidence
- Developing empathy
- Building sense of worth and self-esteem



- Increasing academic abilities and promoting greater interest in school
- Improving physical health
- Reducing and preventing juvenile delinquency and insulating children from violent victimization (including victimization through abuse, bullying, assault, robbery) (p. 4)

It is evident that structured community programs and opportunities for positive activities are critical for healthy development and provide benefits to children, youth and their communities. It is also evident that after-school programs are things that young people say that they want (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2010; Schonert-Reichl, 2007).



Active responses to the need for an After-School Strategy

A national imperative for addressing the after-school hours has been championed by Dr. Kelly Leitch, Canada's first appointed advisor on healthy children and youth in her 2007 report, *Reaching for the Top*. Spurred on by the high prevalence of childhood obesity and the fact that many life-long diseases begin in childhood, Dr. Leitch recommends promoting after-school programs as a key action that can be undertaken to prevent and address these issues (Leitch, 2007). She also recommends increasing physical activity as another accompanying key action, advocating for a 20% increase in the number of Canadian children who are physically active by 2015. Dr. Leitch acknowledges the need for greater collaboration among all sectors of society to effect these changes.

In light of the recommended key actions, she points specifically to increasing access to space for after-school programming through the establishment of joint-use agreements between municipalities, schools and recreation facilities, as well as the importance of supporting social marketing campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for children and of resources in their communities during the after-school hours. Dr. Leitch cites the Boys and Girls Clubs' public service announcement campaign with Corus Entertainment as an example.

In August of 2009, federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for sport, physical activity and recreation agreed to take specific key measures to increase physical activity levels for children and youth, with the understanding of the inactivity epidemic affecting Canada's children and partially in response to *Reaching for the Top* (2007).

One of the key measures committed to was

[To] endorse the after-school period as an opportunity for government policy and program efforts targeting children and youth physical activity in partnership with non-government stakeholders. ("Federal-provincial-territorial ministers take action", 2009)

Acting upon this commitment, provincial and territorial jurisdictions within Canada including the Government of Ontario, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Alberta and have created or are in the process of creating provincial and territorial after-school strategies to directly support after-school programming.



Ontario

In 2008, the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP) developed a “Child and Youth Health and Wellness After-School Strategy” to address child and youth health issues. The strategy focuses on supporting comprehensive after-school programming in specific priority neighbourhoods where school-age residents can benefit from new or enhanced programs focused on physical activity, healthy eating and nutrition, wellness and personal health education (Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, 2009).

In 2009-2010, the MHP is partnering with a variety of provincial and community organizations in priority neighbourhoods to deliver after-school programs and services. These programs and services include:

- healthy eating and nutrition education to help combat childhood obesity,
- physical activity to encourage active lifestyles,
- personal health and wellness education to promote self-esteem, and
- other activities to address specific priorities based on local community needs.

(“Ontario’s After-School Program”, 2010)

In determining eligibility for the grants, after school programs must be located in a priority neighbourhood identified by the MHP. The programs must be offered for at least three hours a day, three to five days a week. There are stipulations regarding safety and security and specific requirements that the program must achieve.



The programs need to be provided for children and youth from Grades 1 to 12. The priority for the programs should be for families in need, and have access policies to help those families participate. Registration is required for all eligible programs.

To help ensure consistency and sufficient time for participants to be exposed to key topics, there are requirements set by MHP for the percentage of program time that is to be dedicated to each topic over the period of a month. Eligible programs must include and offer, within each month, at least 30% of programming dedicated to physical activity, 20% healthy eating and nutrition education and 20% wellness and personal health.

More than 15,500 children and youth in over 270 sites across the province will benefit from Ontario’s After-School Program, with no given timeline for these achievements (“Ontario’s After-School Program”, 2010).

Northwest Territories

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) recently announced in February 2010, in partnership with the Northwest Territories Sport and Recreation Council, 18 new funded projects that are a part of the new Active After School Program (“GNWT Announces New Active After School Program”, 2010).

The Active After School Program is part of the GNWT’s Healthy Choices Framework, an inter-departmental initiative that involves the Departments of Health and Social Services; Education, Culture and Employment; Justice; Transportation and Municipal and Community Affairs. The Healthy Choices Framework aims to raise awareness of the direct link between good health, and positive lifestyle choices, through the collaboration and the integration of healthy choices programs across Government departments (McLeod, 2010).

In order to qualify for funding, projects had to engage inactive or less active youth and ensure that children and youth are active for 40 minutes out of every 60 minutes.

The activities supported through the 18 projects are wide-ranging and include cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, Nordic walking, hip-hop and floor hockey. Funding may also be used for healthy snacks and equipment to support physical activity.

These 18 projects are considered pilot programs that will be evaluated in terms of effectiveness and will help guide future investments in physical activity promotion (“GNWT Announces New Active After School Program”, 2010).



Alberta

The Government of Alberta has taken steps in recent years to support the creation of an after-school strategy through a partnership with the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA).

In 2008, the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks & Wildlife Association supported the development of a report entitled *AfterSchool Recreation Initiatives: Final Report*, completed in 2009. This report outlined the urgency of addressing the after-school hours, outlined the role of recreation in addressing the after-school hours, examined international and Canadian case studies and made recommendations as to how to move forward in creating a comprehensive AfterSchool Agenda in Alberta.

Since the release of that report, the ARPA has consulted with its members regarding support and recommendations for the construction of a provincial strategy. The Government of Alberta and its Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation have agreed to meet with ARPA to discuss future work in this area.

Initiatives supporting children in the after-school hours in BC

While there is no cohesive provincial movement to support children and their families in the after-school hours in BC, there are a number of programs that address the health issues of children and youth that could be used to inform future programming and work in the area of after-school in BC.

Some of these programs do relate directly to the after-school hours. These programs are mostly regional in scope.

United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM)'s Middle Childhood Matters

The United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM) has been a trailblazer in BC in addressing the specific needs of children aged 6 to 12, including those concerning the after-school hours. Through their Middle Childhood Matters portfolio instituted in 2006, UWLM has directed significant investment towards supporting children aged 6 to 12 in the Lower Mainland.



The range of support for children aged 6 to 12 offered through UWLM to date has included

- ground-breaking academic research on children in the after-school hours
- the development of the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI – see below), support for community collaboration through Middle Childhood Matters community tables in 9 municipalities,
- the implementation of a grant program directly supporting after-school programming,
- the development of an evaluation tool (CIMMS)
- hosting of forums disseminating the results and impact of their work, and
- awards supporting champions in the field of middle childhood.

Children, families, service providers and local governments have benefitted greatly from the dedicated support of UWLM.

The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

The Middle Years Development Instrument is a self-report survey completed by 4th grade students. It is designed to obtain children's perspectives on their social, emotional and physical well-being in the following 5 domains:

1. Social and emotional development
2. Connectedness



3. School experiences
4. Physical health and well-being
5. Constructive use of time during the after school hours.

(Schonert-Reichl, Hertzman & Hymel, 2010)

The MDI asks specifically about the after-school hours, and what children do in that time, including sport, lessons, and crafts. It inquires as to how often they participate in these structured activities and also asks about unstructured activities and their respective frequency. The MDI asks what children wish to be doing after-school, where they wish that activity to be, and what barriers they face in doing their desired after-school activity.

The MDI was conducted with 3,029 Grade 4 students in Vancouver, with 72 out of 82 schools participating. The MDI data will be linked with other student information (e.g. school achievement) and will be represented in a series of maps depicting the information throughout Vancouver.

The MDI is one of the first of its kind in Canada via a Community-School Board – University partnership. It is supported by the Vancouver School Board, the Human Early Learning Partnership, the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia and the United Way of the Lower Mainland.

Results of the MDI will be released in August or September, 2010 to school administrators and educators, program planners, community members, researchers and parents.

Action Schools! BC

Action Schools! BC is a best practices model designed to assist



schools in creating individualized action plans to promote healthy living.

Action Schools! BC supports a framework for action in six Action Zones to create a balanced portfolio of activities that promote healthy living within elementary schools. These six Action Zones are:

- School environment
- Scheduled physical education
- Classroom action
- Family and community
- Extra-curricular
- School spirit

(Action Schools! BC, "Framework for Action", 2010)

All schools that register as an Action School receive support and resources including:

- Workshops for staff and secondary school students around physical activity and the six Action Zones and healthy eating,
- Resources including planning guides for schools and resource inventories,
- Teacher physical activity / physical education resources,
- Teacher healthy eating resources, and
- Information sheets about physical activity and healthy eating.

(Action Schools! BC, "Support and Resources", 2010)

Action Schools! BC is part of ActNow BC, a provincial government initiative that seeks to increase the health of British Columbians. As of March 31, 2010, there were 1440 target schools registered with Action Schools! BC.

Of specific interest to the after-school hours are the programs identified in the Action Pages! compiled each year to highlight promising practices throughout Canada and BC. These promising practices may not be after-school programs but may present models or resources for engaging school-aged children in physical activity. Some programs may be adaptable to an after-school setting. Action Schools! BC could also be seen as a model of service delivery that could be applied in an after-school setting.



Canada Gets Active

Canada Gets Active is a program funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and offered through the Canadian Parks and Recreation Alliance (CPRA). This pilot program funded 5 communities to offer free recreation passes to all Grade 5 students in each community from August 2009 to March 2010.

Grade 5 is seen as an opportune time to engage pre-teens in this kind of program to enhance physical activity. Grade 5 children are old enough to do things on their own without the accompaniment of a parent. Grade 5 is also around the time when children begin the transition to youth and often start to become less active. The ideology behind the pass is to encourage physical activity at a time when they might be prone to becoming less active. A free recreation pass reduces barriers to participation for children and levels the playing field for all children to participate in recreational activities.

Canada Gets Active was based on Kingston Get Active and was implemented in:

- Whitehorse, YK,
- Burnaby, BC,
- Arnprior, ON,
- Okotoks, AB, and
- Annapolis County, NS.

The evaluation of Canada Gets Active is not yet complete.

Grade 5 recreation passes have been implemented in other municipalities in BC outside of the Canada Gets Active program including, but not limited to Delta, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Kitimat, Chilliwack and Victoria. Delta's Grade 5 pass was such a success, that it was expanded to include all Grade 6 students the following year (BC Recreation and Parks Association, 2007). Grade 5 students were also encouraged to bring a parent for free in the second year of implementation, encouraging and supporting families in being more active.

BC Sport Participation Program

The BC Sport Participation Program (BCSP Program), which ran between 2004 and 2010, increased participation in community-based sports and provided opportunities for youth, Aboriginal people, seniors and people with disabilities to lead active and healthy lifestyles (BC Sport Participation Program, 2010). The

BCSP Program was funded by Sport Canada and the Province of BC through 2010 Legacies Now.

Funding from the BCSP Program helped provincial and multi-sport organizations extend their community reach and improve the quality of sport and recreation delivery. The funding support was invested in resource development, training of coaches and leaders and attracting new participants.

The BCSP Program invested more than \$4 million, and was able to reach more than 200,000 new participants in over 110 communities throughout the province. Based on their success, some of the funded projects were expanded nationally.

Local Sports Program Development Fund

The Local Sport Program Development Fund (LSDF) made community sport more accessible to people of all abilities by providing funding support to sport programs initiated by municipalities, sport organizations and Aboriginal communities. The LSDF was supported by the Province of BC through the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and 2010 Legacies Now. The LSDF was launched in 2008 and supported 79 different community projects ("Local Sport Program Development Fund", 2010).

The Local Sport Program Development Fund supported community projects aimed at improving access to sport and recreation activities in all regions of BC. Sports funding through LSDF was directed to municipalities, sport organizations and Aboriginal communities to initiate new, or expand existing, sport programs in BC communities. These programs are delivered through community partnerships ("Local Sport Program Development Fund", 2010).





Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train

The Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train is a program supported by the BC Ministry of Education. The Walking School Bus initiative helps students reduce their carbon footprint and become more physically active (Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train, 2010).

Communities have responded positively to its implementation. At Ecole Cleveland Elementary in North Vancouver, students and families receive weekly newsletter submissions on the benefits of walking and the basics of pedestrian safety. The school promotes Walking Wednesdays, and measures the progress of their walking program via three annual counted walks to school. Between December 2007 and April 2009, the percentage of students walking to school increased from 26% to 61%. The school community also successfully lobbied the municipality to upgrade the crosswalk at a key intersection to improve the safety of pedestrians (Government of BC, 2010).



LEAP BC

LEAP BC is a set of resources for families, caregivers and early learning practitioners that focuses on the integration of Literacy, Education, Activity and Play (LEAP BC, 2010) for children aged 0 to 5. LEAP was supported by the Province of BC through 2010 Legacies Now.

LEAP BC resources include resource guides for language development, early literacy, healthy eating and physical movement. The physical movement resources, entitled Hop™, are available for families and early learning practitioners. These resources would be useful to build upon for children 6 to 12 in the after-school hours.

These province-wide initiatives in BC, alongside increasing local, regional, provincial, national and international interest and research on children aged 6 to 12 and the after-school hours, have helped to create a culture of readiness for action around children, physical activity and the after-school hours in BC. Communities, service providers, funders and families are eager for change and a betterment of children's lives in BC.



Strengths of after-school programming in BC

The strengths of specific after-school service delivery models and programs in BC are contingent upon programs encompassing the elements of a good after-school program.

Components of a good after-school program

It is apparent from the literature review, online surveys and interviews that there are key components to a good after school program. Good after-school programs are those that are:

- Safe
- Accessible
- Affordable
- Of high quality
- Developmentally-appropriate
- Intentional
- Appropriately structured
- Offer opportunities for skill-building and provide the opportunity for mastery
- Support positive peer relations
- Offer opportunities for physical activity
- Supported by caring, trained and qualified staff
- Provide a wide range of activities
- Encourage connection to community, including family and school

It is understood that these components do not exist in isolation from each other, and that they may overlap through various means of programming.

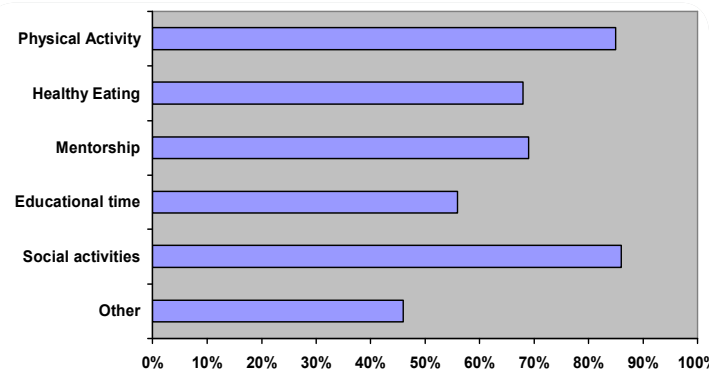
These components correlate with HIGH FIVE® healthy child development principles and design guidelines and the United Way of the Lower Mainland's CIMMS (Community Impact Measurement and Management) evaluation measures, used to analyze after-school programs funded by UWLM.

HIGH FIVE® Principles of Healthy Child Development and Design Guidelines	United Way of the Lower Mainland CIMMS measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A caring adult • Friends • Participation • Play • Mastery • Developmentally-appropriate • Safe • Welcoming of diversity and uniqueness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive social skills and competence • Healthy behaviour • Leadership skills • Academic achievement and school engagement • Family relations support

The online survey findings also reinforce the importance of these components. Within the online survey for this environmental scan, survey respondents were asked to identify components of identified promising practices in their communities. Respondents were asked "What opportunities does this program include?"; and were directed to choose all that applied from this list:

- Physical activity
- Healthy eating
- Mentorship
- Educational time
- Social activities
- Other (please specify)

Figure 1: Survey responses





Respondents indicated that 86% included opportunities for social activities and 85% of programs included physical activity opportunities (see Figure 1). Mentorship, healthy eating and educational time were ranked next in importance in descending order. Other opportunities available in after-school programming were identified as creative or artistic, community connection and involvement and skill development for leadership or life skills.

Survey respondents were also asked to indicate what it was about the identified promising practice that made it a good program. Respondents mentioned that these good after-school programs were low-cost and affordable, accessible by virtue of location, accountable, had quality staff and were collaborative in nature with community partners. These findings are all in agreement with the components of a good after-school program.

Promising practices

Components of good after-school programming can be found in the specific promising practices identified by survey respondents and interviewees. This environmental scan revealed 2 levels of promising practices in after-school programming outside of licensed childcare in BC: promising practices in service delivery models and promising practices in after-school programming.

Promising practices in service delivery models

While after-school programs were identified as specific promising practices, it was apparent that many of these promising practices relied on larger systemic approaches to service delivery and specific service delivery models for children aged 6 to 12. These service delivery models are promising practices for ensuring collaborative, organized and community-supported delivery of quality programming for school-aged children in the after-school hours.

These 3 identified service delivery models have 4 common characteristics. They are all:

- collaborative models located within communities,
- dynamic and responsive to children's and community needs,
- supported by a somewhat stable funding source, and
- reliant on evidence-based programming

Each service delivery model is presented with accompanying identified promising practices in programming as an example of how the service delivery model operates in specific community settings.

Community Schools

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone – all day, every day, evenings and weekends.

Community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities using public schools as hubs. Partners work to achieve these results:

- Children are ready to learn when they enter school and every day thereafter. All students learn and achieve to high standards.
- Young people are well prepared for adult roles in the workplace, as parents and as citizens.
- Families and neighborhoods are safe, supportive and engaged.
- Parents and community members are involved with the school and their own life-long learning. (Coalition for Community Schools, 2010)

The Community School model, as enacted in the Vancouver School Board / District, divides the 18 secondary schools and 74 elementary schools and their 17 related annexes into 12 families of schools or hubs. One of the secondary schools in that hub becomes the centre for the schools located in each hub. Each hub has a Community School Team (CST) that is a mobile team consisting of a coordinator, a teacher, and youth and family worker who serve all of the schools within that hub. These teams support in-school literacy and social development skills, and identify gaps in the support for children between 3 and 6 PM and develop programming to meet those needs.

Before 2004, 10 or 11 community schools existed within Vancouver, each acting individually with their own coordinators for their own schools. In 2004, the Vancouver School Board applied the community school model to all of its schools. 12 hubs were formed and each hub had approximately 7 schools assigned to it. The hubs were also selected in order to address specific vulnerabilities within Vancouver. One of the challenges when the new model was enacted was how to serve the increased number of children that each hub serves in the critical after-school hours through after-school programming.



While the 12 hubs may each approach after-school programming differently, according to community school coordinators, there are common ways that after-school programming is delivered within the community school model, reflecting similar core values.

- **Parks and Recreation model:** This is a more traditional model where the community centres within each hub offer out-of-school time programming at their facilities. This programming is promoted to children and their families by the community school teams and programmers affiliated with the community school teams.
- **Partnering with community agencies:** Some hubs have chosen to partner with different community agencies that offer programming near or at school sites. Hosting the programming on site at the schools serves to increase safety, as the children don't have to travel anywhere to receive services. It also increases the legitimacy of the programming by providing the programming with a silent endorsement from the school.
- **Mentorship programs:** There is limited staffing for the community school model, and therefore programs require a large volunteer base in order to deliver effective, safe and quality after-school programming. The model that many of the hubs use is a mentorship model whereby students in the high schools within the hub are trained as volunteers to offer after-school programs for the elementary school students. The integration of after-school programming with training for senior students allows for positive role-modelling and the development of community feel for secondary schools and their feeder schools. The implementation of a mentorship model also ensures that programs reflect what the community wants, but also what those high school students can offer.

Generally, after-school programming within the community schools model provides students with a safe productive opportunity to explore individual interests in sports, arts, academics, cooperative and social development areas. After-school programming within the community school model means that children are positively supported when parents or caregivers are not at home or are unable to provide options of activities. When integrated with training for senior students, after-school programming within the community school model, allows for positive role modelling and the development of a community feel for secondary schools and their feeder schools. After-school

programming within the community school model also satisfies the disparity between students who are able to access out-of-school time programs and those who are not.

Specific strengths of the community school model for after-school programming delivery include:

- ***Responsiveness and dynamism:*** Each hub reports to a governance table that meets 4 to 8 times a year. The governance table includes the principals of all of the schools within the hub and community partners. Some governance tables also include parents and occasionally, students. The governance table defines the work that the community school team does, looks at programming needs and where the programming should occur.

The governance tables are responsive to change and allow all partners to be aware of and respond in a dynamic way to current issues. New community partners are invited to join the governance tables throughout the school year. The governance tables and the corresponding CSTs also carry high levels of knowledge about their respective communities and hubs; knowledge that is important and informative for higher level stakeholders in shaping policy for the school board or district at large.

The Community School Teams also engage in research exploring the efficacy of their goals (such as promoting literacy, promoting social-emotional development and facilitating parent and community engagement). The Community School model as expressed in Vancouver is based on rigorous evidenced-based research (i.e., Promoting Literacy, Social Emotional Learning and Parent/Community Involvement in Inner City Schools: Combining Evidence-based Research and Experiential Knowledge, February 2009).

- ***Addresses equity issues within community within a safe, familiar environment:*** After-school programming within the community school model provides positive support for children when parents or caregivers are not at home or are unable to provide options for activities for their children during this time. Situating programs at a familiar community setting that all community members access (i.e., the school), satisfies the disparity between students who are able to access out-of-school time programs and those who are not. Some programs are also free, while others are low-cost. The financial need of families is also considered on a case-by-case basis for each program.

- **Cost-effective measures:** Staffing of the Community School model is very limited, employing approximately 42 staff to serve 94 schools. Staff within the Vancouver community school model have been able to use this collaborative system to maximize resource-sharing, support from community partners and create solutions to limited staffing, such as the mentorship model, in order to operate effectively.
- **Consideration of out-of-school time as well as after-school time:** Within the Vancouver Community School model, there is a recognition of the need, not only for after-school programming, but for out-of-school time programming. With the recent funding support of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), community school hubs have developed a relationship with the Vancouver Parks Board where hub schools are open on weekends for programming for the children and their families, addressing not only the needs of children aged 6 - 12, but the community at large. Community schools teams offer summer programming as well.
- **Teacher engagement:** The Vancouver Community School model has gained momentum and a certain longevity in its 6 years of implementation across the school district. Community school coordinators have noticed that over time, as the community school model has become embedded, teachers have begun to approach the community school coordinators with after-school programming ideas that they are able to offer to children.
- **Ability to engage diverse funding across all hubs:** Each community hub has the opportunity to engage different

partners and funders. While some funders recognize the specific vulnerabilities of inner-city schools, the knowledge within each hub allows them to seek funding for the specific support needed for their neighbourhoods. The community school model acknowledges the vulnerabilities of children across the entire city, and its model allows all of those vulnerabilities to be supported by a diverse array of community organizations and funders. (Vulnerability is determined by a child's socio-economic status, literacy levels, and is a reflection of these and other social determinants of health.)

MoreSports

Several of the online survey respondents identified the MoreSports program as a successful after-school program within different neighbourhoods in Vancouver. MoreSports is a low-cost participation-based sports program that is offered through 7 hubs of the Community School system in Vancouver. Organizing around hubs allows for greater MoreSports penetration into each neighbourhood and the building of supportive relationships with partners for more efficient delivery of MoreSports programs and events.

MoreSports participants experience sport through introductory programs before, during and after-school and as mini-sessions focused on physical activity and fun. The program also provides sport options in areas where programming from traditional providers, such as youth sport clubs and recreational programming, is less available than in more affluent areas of Vancouver. The MoreSports approach provides options to those who typically shy away from traditional recreation and provides multiple touchpoints for children to experience recreational sport in a positive and nurturing environment. The MoreSports program serves just under 7000 children annually.

MoreSports is evaluated by each community school hub and any increase in participation in the MoreSports programs. In 2009, there was a 62% increase in participation throughout the MoreSports delivery area from 2008.

YELL (Youth, Engage, Learn, Lead) & Y2

An evolution of the MoreSports program is the YELL and Y2 programs which train older children and youth in coaching skills. The programs provide leadership skills and mentoring experiences with younger children, and demonstrate a mentorship model available in the community schools. Officially





launched in June 2007, Yell was started because of the lack of available coaches to support the success of MoreSports and its childrens' sports initiatives. The training of older children and youth as MoreSports coaches fills the need for volunteers in order to keep supervision ratios below 1:10 or 1:8 to increase safety, and successfully build wide-ranging and effective after-school and noon-hour sport and physical activity programs for elementary school children. Acquired skills and certification of the youth are also applicable in a career setting.

This program is evaluated through evaluation surveys and focus groups with participants every year. Similar to MoreSports, the high demand for the YELL and Y2 programs is a strong indicator of a useful, successful and much-needed program.

Creative Kidz

Emily Carr University of Art and Design students offer an assortment of art programs (eco-art, design and paper, sculpture, industrial design using lego, performance art, etc.) to children in schools. This program serves approximately 300 children aged 6 to 11 in the Marpole hub, Kerrisdale and Oak corridor in Vancouver.

Kidz in the Kitchen

Children work with a UBC Dietetics student and high school youth leaders to prepare healthy snacks after-school while learning about food groups and serving sizes (according to Canada's Food Guide). The importance of using local seasonal ingredients and preparing food and eating together is stressed. Children also practice composting and use reusable containers to reduce waste. This program is also offered in the Marpole hub, Kerrisdale and Oak corridor in Vancouver.

Middle Childhood Matters tables

Middle Childhood Matters tables are one component of the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM)'s Middle Childhood Matters initiative. Middle Childhood Matters is a comprehensive strategy that engages partners in supporting children aged 6 to 12 throughout the Lower Mainland (see pg. X).

Middle Childhood Matters tables have been established in the Lower Mainland with the support of UWLM. In 2005, as part of its Middle Childhood Matters initiative, UWLM provided funding for four communities to participate in demonstration projects and form inter-sectoral community tables to support these projects.



Since 2005, five more community tables have developed. There are currently Middle Childhood Matters tables or coalitions in nine communities across the Lower Mainland: in Surrey, Vancouver, Langley, Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows, the Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody), Burnaby, New Westminster, the North Shore (West and North Vancouver) and Delta. These tables or coalitions include members from municipal parks and recreation departments and social planning departments, school districts, local service-providers like neighbourhood houses, Boys and Girls Clubs, other community service organizations and representatives from the private sector. The Middle Childhood Matters tables are funded through annual grants from UWLM.

While these tables focus on support, programming, research and advocacy for children aged 6 to 12 in their communities, the after-school hours are addressed either within the larger table itself or through sub-committees that focus specifically on after-school programming for this population.

These tables are promising practices for service delivery models due to their collaborative, capacity-enhancing characteristics. In the absence of much core sustainable funding for after-school programming, these collaborative tables have been able to

- increase the competencies of the service providers by sharing resources,
- increase the cost-effectiveness of after-school programming through collaboration, and
- Create multiple opportunities within their communities to support children in the critical after-school hours.



As one of the United Way Middle Childhood Matters facilitators expressed, these tables build a synergy and create multiplier effects from their collaborative efforts. Through their efforts and support, service providers are able to offer a variety of programs and different tiers of programming to address the needs of specific age groups within their communities.

While connected to each other through UWLM, the tables also retain a certain amount of autonomy in terms of crafting strategic directions specific to their communities. Many Middle Childhood Matters coalitions have invested in local research to better understand the needs of children aged 6 to 12 in their communities, ensuring a continuation of after-school programming from an evidence-based perspective and relevance of programming based on emerging trends or needs.

While the activity focus is on school-aged children, there is a connection to other age groups and an understanding of the continuum of care and development. 5 of the 9 Middle Childhood Matters coalition coordinators also serve as the coordinators for their community's Early Childhood tables. Youth issues are also discussed at the tables, but the focus of their action remains on the 6 to 12 cohort.

Each table meets once a month (one table meets once every two months). The coordinators of each table all meet approximately 4 times a year at the United Way. At these larger meetings, the coordinators are able to report on their successes and promising practices, and discuss any issues or problems they may be facing while also being able to coordinate their larger efforts across the Lower Mainland. Some of these tables also meet together independently of the United Way.

Finally, these Middle Childhood Matters tables are supported by a larger, over-arching platform and consortium of regional partners through UWLM. After-school programming in these communities is supported by UWLM's School's Out grant program, the programs are evaluated using the CIMMS (Community Impact Measurement and Management) tool, and legitimized by research undertaken by UBC in affiliation with UWLM.

Boys and Girls Clubs

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.



The Boys and Girls Clubs throughout BC provide after-school or out-of-school programming for children aged 0 to 25. They provide services to over 26,000 children throughout the province through 9 clubs in 84 different service locations in 36 communities.

Boys and Girls Clubs offer a safe, accessible environment to children after-school where they are supported to develop their full potential. The clubs are safe, supervised places that offer structured programming with trained, qualified staff. Programs through the Boys and Girls Clubs offer opportunities for: healthy eating through the provision of nutritious snacks, physical activity, social interaction with peers and with adult role models, as well as developing assets and connecting with the larger community through a multitude of activity opportunities. The programs offered are evidence-based, with the Boys and Girls Club conducting evaluation of their programs to ensure their efficacy. While not all Clubs offer the same programming, many Boys and Girls Clubs offer programming after-school 5 days a week, and also in the out-of-school hours including before school and during school breaks such as winter break, spring break and professional development days.

In 2009, the Boys and Girls Clubs in BC and Yukon published a position paper about the Middle Years (Boys and Girls Clubs in BC and Yukon, 2009). This paper outlines the specific ways in which the Boys and Girls Club model addresses the middle years (6 to 12). The key elements identified are:

- *Nurturing life-changing relationships*

The Boys and Girls Clubs focus on the impact of trained, qualified and caring adults who deliver their program and identify this trait as the hallmark of Boys and Girls Clubs. Consistent, regular adult leaders who are there for programming 5 days a week can create



a sense of belonging, guide and shape behaviour and promote a sense of competence and self-esteem in children and youth.

- **Promoting personal development**

Boys and Girls Clubs identify with the SAFE program attributes identified by Durlak et al.(2007); their programs are sequenced, active, focused and explicit. This type of programming allows young people to develop their talents and mature as people and as citizens.

- **Providing quality activities and learning opportunities**

Boys and Girls Clubs offer multiple opportunities and activities during the after-school hours. Clubs allow children to choose which activities they will participate in, while exposing them to a wide range of developmentally-appropriate opportunities. These activities include opportunities for physical activity, creative expression through arts and crafts, community connection opportunities through volunteering or field trips, as well as learning opportunities.

- **Ensuring inclusion and being responsive**

Boys and Girls Clubs are responsive to the needs of the local communities in which they are located. Each club develops culturally-appropriate programming depending on the demographics of their neighbourhoods. Clubs welcome children of all cultures, including Aboriginal, newcomer and immigrant in both urban and rural settings. Inclusion is also promoted through the Clubs by ensuring that their programs are both affordable and accessible. The Clubs are open for extended hours (depending on the availability of space and budget to support) during after-school time as well as out-of-school time, in some



cases staying open later to offer programming to older youth.

In the larger urban centres, Boys and Girls Clubs have positioned themselves within neighbourhoods where families are more vulnerable in order to increase accessibility of their programs to those families who would need it the most, and making it easy for children to access from their schools or homes.

- **Mobilizing community connections**

Boys and Girls Clubs work hard within their communities to make connections not only with the children they serve, but also with their families. Boys and Girls Clubs collaborate with local schools, businesses and community leaders to ensure there is a wider breadth of support for the children and families they serve.

Prime Time After School Program

This program serves 45 children aged 5 to 12 in Cranbrook and surrounding area. Kids are picked up from 8 different elementary schools in Cranbrook and transported by 15 passenger vans to Boys and Girls Club facilities. Community recreational programming is offered at the facilities.

Within the Boys and Girls Club programming, two other programs were identified as promising practices.

Cool Moves

This program is sponsored by Kraft and has two focuses: nutritious snacks and physical activity. Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, with the support of leading food and beverage manufacturer, Kraft Canada, developed Cool Moves, a national program aimed at motivating kids to respond to an alarming growth in obesity and inactivity among Canadian children and youth (Boys and Girls Club, 2010).

The program encourages children, ages 8 to 12, to “Play Cool” by building physical activity into their daily lives and “Eat Smart” by becoming more aware of the importance of making healthy choices about the food they eat. This program is offered at many Boys and Girls Clubs in BC.

Kiwanis Hour

This program is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club and focuses on physical activity, nutritious eating and academic development. The Kiwanis Hour provides local Kiwanis chapters with the opportunity to support local Boys and Girls Clubs to provide an hour a week of Kiwanis service by building and chartering a Kiwanis Service Leadership Program – K-Kids, Key Club, Builder’s Club, AKtion Club or simply volunteering (Boys and Girls Club, “Kiwanis Hour”, 2010).



Promising practices in after-school programming

The results of this environmental scan point to a diverse array of after-school opportunities throughout the province serving a diverse group of children in varying capacities.

Online survey respondents identified 104 after-school programs throughout BC. A full listing of identified promising practices and their locations can be found in Appendix D.

There were distinct themes within the identified programs: physical activity or sport programs, activity or after-school clubs, and broad-based recreation programming. All of these types of programming may overlap with each other.

Physical activity or sport programs focus on building the skill sets related to one type of activity (i.e., karate). Clubs as described in the examples from the scan are more casual settings focusing on bringing together children to participate in a certain type of activity, not necessarily physical activity. Broad-based recreation programming refers to any kind of program offered through community recreation and could relate to a wide range of activities, including physical activity, connecting to community, or healthy eating.



The programs identified by survey respondents were delivered by a variety of service providers: municipal recreation programmers, schools, high school volunteers, community service organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA, and private entities such as instructors and care providers.

Physical Activity or Sport Programs

The majority of programs identified as promising practices were related to physical activity and / or sport.

Westside Taekwondo After-School program

This program serves 45 children between the ages of 5 and 12 after-school in Westbank. The children are bussed from school to the training facility. They have time for snacks, reading, homework and participate in a formal taekwondo setting before parents pick them up between 5 and 5:30 pm. The taekwondo training can lead to certification in Olympic-style taekwondo.

Active Kids Club

This program serves 140 children from kindergarten to grade 7 after-school in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows. This program is run in partnership between School District 42 and Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services. The club offers active programming, healthy eating through healthy snacks, leadership opportunities and creative programming. The programs are evaluated internally and by participants.

EMJS bike club

This program is an 11 week program that serves approximately 80 children between the ages of 5 and 10 in the Fairfield area of Victoria. Children learn to ride bikes, using school fields, bmx tracks, mountain bike



trails and dirt jump parks.

Multi-sports or drop-in sports programs

These programs serve up to 24 children aged 6 to 10 in various communities throughout Coquitlam. This program is offered by the City of Coquitlam's Recreation Services and features a variety of games and sports, including basketball, hockey and soccer, in gyms at schools or municipal recreation facilities. Equipment is provided and the emphasis is on fun and teamwork.

Clubs

These group activities seemed to focus on a specific activity during the after-school hours.

Cooking Club

This program teaches 50+ children aged 6 – 12 in the Seymour area in North Vancouver food safe techniques, healthy eating and simple cooking techniques. They cook a new recipe each week and eat what they create, incorporating fun activity with life skill development.



Games Club

This program is offered from the Killarney hub in Vancouver and serves 20 children after-school. Children aged 6 to 12 meet after school to play board games. No electronic games are allowed. This program is inexpensive and run by high school volunteers.

Strathcona Elementary School Aboriginal Homework Club

This program supports 60 children aged 5 to 13 in the Strathcona and Downtown Eastside neighbourhoods in Vancouver. Aboriginal support workers in the school and volunteers provide food, homework support, advocacy and recreation activities to Aboriginal students and their families. The Strathcona Elementary School Aboriginal Homework Club hosts the Red Fox Feasting, an Aboriginal nutrition and recreation program twice a month. Other resources are brought in to support the success of the students. The program is based on a compassionate understanding of the complete needs of the Aboriginal families.

Recreation Programming

These programs provide broad-based after-school programs including a variety of activities through recreation facilities or community organizations.

Recreation Oak Bay Afterschool Program

This program serves 150 children aged 6 to 12 in Oak Bay, Victoria and Saanich. The Afterschool Program is held in 3 different locations in the community, with full and part time spaces available in each location. Because of the facilities available, children have many opportunities within the program. They can take lessons, participate in gym activities, cook, do crafts, go on out-trips on the departmental bus

or be entertained by special speakers or entertainers for the children. The program is delivered by well-trained staff.

Buddy Program

This program serves 40 children aged 8 to 12 in the Vancouver area, and is offered by South Vancouver Neighbourhood House. This program matches newcomer children, who have arrived in Canada in the last 3 years, with high school volunteers to help ease their transition into the community. Groups meet after-school once a week to play games, do arts and crafts, sports and field trips. Participating children get a wider social network, have fun and practice English in a supportive, informal setting.

Pemberton After-School Club

This program serves approximately 20 children from kindergarten to Grade 7 in the Pemberton area. The program offers a safe environment for children and activities encompass outdoor and indoor physical activity and play, healthy food, arts and crafts and reading.

Little Mountain Literacy Circle

This program serves 70 children aged 6 to 12 in the Little Mountain / Riley Park area of Vancouver. This program provides children with a literacy program in the libraries of 3 neighbourhood schools. The emphasis is on literacy as defined by UNESCO, which focuses on a wide range of essential skills that comprise literacy. These include problem solving, numeracy, oral communication and sensory awareness. The program incorporates activities such as cooking, science experiences and art-based activities, which enable participants to have fun and learn at the same time.



Perceived strengths in after-school programming in BC

Respondents and interviewees identified the following as current strengths of after-school programming in BC.

Diversity

It is evident from the array of responses to the survey question relating to the strengths of after-school programs in BC that there is a wide range of programs offered to many different groups of children across BC. Physical activity groups, clubs and recreation programming all address children’s needs in very different ways. Some of these programs are described in further detail on pp. 24-5.

Research shows that participating in a variety of activities, including physical activity, arts-based programming and academic programs, is associated with positive outcomes, and that the longer a young person participates in a variety of activities the better the outcomes (Raley 2006).

Caring staff

Overwhelmingly, survey respondents identified the importance of the caring staff that deliver after-school programming. The commitment and dedication of staff to their communities and specifically to the children



they serve was identified, as well as the importance of the consistency of the staff in truly supporting children in the after-school hours. Volunteers were not specifically mentioned.

Collaborative involvement of community partners

Collaboration between community stakeholders and partners was identified as an under-pinning of the success of after-school programming in BC. Community partners, such as schools and community organizations, share resources and support each other in the delivery of after-school programming and in meeting children’s needs in their communities.

Evidence-based programming

Many of the after-school programs offered in BC are rooted in evidence, and seek to improve the quality of their programs through in-depth commitment to analyzing and using the growing body of knowledge and research surrounding after-school program delivery. Many programs and service delivery agencies have specifically taken advantage of the growing body of research being done in BC by Kimberly Schonert-Reichl at UBC about middle childhood, including research on the psychological and social world of children in middle childhood and the soon-to-be-released work of the Middle Years Development Instrument (see pp. 13-14). Advocates supporting the Middle Childhood Years have also pointed to the work of Clyde Hertzman at HELP at UBC and the success of the Early Years Development Instrument (EDI) as an example of successful advocacy in establishing the early years as a focal point for support of children.



It should be noted that these current strengths were seen as existing despite a lack of systemic support, and outside of a cohesive and comprehensive movement towards support for children in the after-school hours. Most of the promising practices outlined in this section are localized, whether it be in specific communities or regions. Those with a larger mandate still operate within localized areas and respond to distinct community needs (i.e. Boys and Girls Clubs).

The after-school programming that does exist is offered by those who have deemed it important, and stated it as a priority for their organizations (i.e. the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Vancouver School Board). After-school programming in BC is seen as necessary but inconsistent due to a lack of systemic comprehension of the issues facing children in the after-school hours and the absence of a comprehensive strategy to address these issues.



Gaps that need to be addressed

Many gaps in service exist for children aged 6 to 12 during the after-school hours. Those gaps identified through the environmental scan were:

Funding

There is currently no dedicated funding at a provincial level to specifically support after-school programming. CommunityLINK grants are currently available provincially through the Ministry of Education to support school districts but are not specifically earmarked as after-school dollars, and those funds can be used at the school district's discretion. The United Way of the Lower Mainland offers "School's Out" grants to support after-school programming, but only in the Lower Mainland.

Without sustainable funding, community agencies and after-school hours service providers have limited capacity to deliver programming and to diversify and expand that programming to meet emerging community needs. Where possible, collaborative service delivery models have become the common delivery model used by communities in order to remain cost-effective, operate within the minimal funds they have, and share resources in order to increase capacity. It must be noted, however, that the majority of those that participate in collaborative service delivery models have financial support to make that participation and collaboration possible.

Lack of a systemic approach to support children in the after-school hours

A systemic approach is one that addresses an issue by looking at its totality, its complexity and dynamics. There is currently no systemic approach to support children during the after-school hours or after-school programming at a provincial level. After-school programming is characterized as "very spotty" and inconsistent. The lack of systemic approach leads to a lack of accountability and responsibility towards children and the after-school hours in general.

Because there is no over-arching strategy or approach to the after-school hours, there is also no formal recognition of after-school programs as differentiated from other recreational programming. In order for an after-school strategy to be successful and support the specific needs of children, after-school programming would have to be distinguished from other kinds of programming.

Lack of developmentally-appropriate programming for children aged 10 to 12

Many survey respondents and interviewees spoke to the limited amount of programming for 10 to 12 year olds in the after-school hours. Respondents spoke of programming provision seeming "easier" to program for the younger cohort of middle childhood, the 6 to 9 year olds, because of their specific developmental needs. Respondents also acknowledged the distinctive needs of the older cohort, the 10 to 12 year olds, and the need for programming to be developmentally appropriate for these children by including more choice and variety in activity and building specific skills into programming that will aid them in their transition to youth.

The need for enhanced accessibility to after-school programs

In order to increase accessibility to after-school programs, more space must be made available for after-school programming. This includes freeing up space in schools and recreation facilities as well as in community organizations. Joint-use agreements could be improved upon and specific recommendations made to increase access to affordable space for after-school programming.

Both children and their parents need after-school programs in locations that are accessible to them. When after-school programs are located in or near schools, safety is increased as it minimizes transportation time, and increases a sense of community.

Transportation is a key issue for the provision of after-school programming especially in rural or remote communities where transportation needs (e.g. bussing to and from school) could prevent or minimize the participation of children in these programs.

The need for more formalized training of staff

Unlike Early Childhood Development, survey respondents and interviewees discussed the limited professional training, both formal training and professional development, available for after-school programming staff. HIGH FIVE® offers professional development courses for service providers, however, not all after-school providers are obligated to complete these courses as a condition of employment. Expanding staff skills by offering training in child development, curriculum planning and group



management are most valuable for instructors (Raley, Grossman & Walker, 2006).

Affordability

After-school programs need to be affordable, due to the increasing strain on families, and in order to reach all children including those that are most vulnerable. Many programs are already low-cost, but more attention should be paid to access for vulnerable children and their families.

Consideration of out-of-school time vs. after-school time

After-school time is seen as the first piece of a larger discussion of out-of-school time, which moves beyond 3 – 6 PM, Monday to Friday, to an expanded vision of all time spent out of school. There is an acknowledgement that similar issues facing parents and families in the after-school hours are also faced during school breaks, including winter break, spring break, summer-time and weekends.

No consistency on what constitutes quality

There are no specific standards of quality after-school programming that are applied on a consistent basis to after-school programming across BC. Quality assurance tools, such as HIGH FIVE®, are applied in some settings and were mentioned often by survey respondents, but are not used regularly enough to constitute consistent application. Within her recommendations in *Reaching for the Top* (2007), Dr. Leitch cites HIGH FIVE® as a recommended “best practice in accreditation” (p. 106).

Outside of those gaps identified through consultation during the environmental scan, research also points to 2 other gaps that should be addressed in moving forward with an after-school strategy in BC.

Need a greater understanding of recruitment strategies for after-school programs

Particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring that after-school programs reach the children and youth. Research and strategizing needs to occur in order to appeal to all children

and their parents, including those in specific target populations, recruit them to participate in after-school programming and retain their participation within after-school programming throughout the school year (Raley et al., 2006).

Limited consistency in evaluation

While there are a few evaluative tools developed specifically for programming for children aged 6 to 12, including UWLM’s CIMMS and QUEST (part of the HIGH FIVE® system), there is no standardized evaluative tool and no consistent broad-based application of these tools for after-school programs across the province. Instead, these evaluation tools and systems are applied regionally (i.e. UWLM’s CIMMS tool) or as one-off evaluative strategies. Consistent evaluation could be used to attract funds and in-kind resources, better the exposure the outcomes of effective after-school programs in BC, and reveal weaknesses in programming that can be ameliorated over time.



Recommendations for future action

This environmental scan has prompted the following recommendations about further action in order to best support children aged 6 to 12 in BC during the after-school hours. The use of “an after-school strategy” in the recommendations is meant to encompass any concerted organized effort to address the after-school hours, whether it be through a specific after-school program, specific projects or an over-arching framework. In light of the information compiled in this environmental scan, please consider the following recommendations:

- That a **provincial framework should be developed** to support children aged 6 to 12 during the after-school hours.

This provincial framework should be multi-faceted in design

- To allow for a multiplicity of partners to direct the After-School strategy and deliver various parts of a complex support system for children aged 6 to 12 in the after-school hours. Suggested partners include representatives from all relevant Ministries within the Provincial government (i.e. Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Children and Family Development), representatives from recreation and sport at a provincial level such as BCRPA, representatives of school districts, the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC), health authorities, BC Teachers’ Federation, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), representatives from funding organizations, academia and community service providers and organizations (i.e. Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, faith-based organizations), and



- To compel support from a multiplicity of funders including strong foundational dollars from the Provincial government and support from the private sector.
- The framework should be provincial in scope, but allow for flexibility in implementation at the local level.
- For any after-school strategy, **broad language should be used** in order to appeal to and solicit participation from a broad range of stakeholders, such as government, funders, service organizations and the general public.
- Any after-school strategy should **support after-school programming that embodies the characteristics of a good after-school program** (see p. 17), and ensures the accommodation of the two distinct cohorts within the middle childhood years (6 to 9 and 10 to 12) and their respective developmental needs. Attention should be paid to redressing the amount of after-school programs available for 10 to 12 year olds to support a strong transition to youth.
- An after-school strategy and after-school programming should be **targeted to all children**. All children are vulnerable to the health and family issues that are present at the core of the critical hours. An after-school strategy should be flexible enough to support all children and have the ability to be tailored to specific target populations including Aboriginal children, children in rural and remote communities, immigrant children (especially important in growing BC urban centres), children from families with low-income and children with special needs.
- An after-school strategy should include **rigorous evaluative measures** to ensure monitoring of programming and indicators of success. There needs to be a strong focus on outcomes, as opposed to process, and evaluation should be efficient, effective and measure the identified outcomes (Leitch, 2007). Evaluation should ideally be done by an academic body or third party to ensure rigour and reduce administrative work for front-line service providers.
- An after-school strategy should be **branded as promoting quality programs** and necessary supports for children in the after-school hours. Any branding platform should be able to be used by local programs supported by an after-school strategy (i.e. Success by 6, Active Communities).



- Any future work in this area should **add value to work already in progress** by community partners at local, regional and provincial levels. Administrative bureaucracy for community organizations and front-line workers should be kept to a minimum, to continue to support the efficacy and efficiency of service providers.
- Users and target audiences impacted by the implementation of an after-school strategy should be **consulted and engaged** during its creation, implementation and evaluation. Families, children and front-line staff within community service organizations need to have direct input into an after-school strategy.
- **Quality assurance mechanisms** need to be implemented for after-school programs supported an after-school strategy. HIGH FIVE® can be considered as a model for Quality Assurance delivery for children aged 6 to 12. Staff training in quality assurance mechanisms and components of healthy child development should be promoted in order to ensure staff retention, consistency and quality supervision for children in after-school programming.
- **Further academic research** is needed to adequately understand the range of vulnerabilities for children aged 6 to 12 across the province. Application of research tools like the Middle Years Development Index could be applied across the province to assess where more programs could and should be offered in order to reach those neighbourhoods and communities where children and families are most in need in BC.
- **Enhance physical activity** through after-school programming. After-school programs have the potential to increase daily physical activity levels for children aged 6 to 12. A conscientious after-school strategy should mandate specific percentages of physical activity for programming (i.e., Ontario's After-School Strategy, where supported programs must incorporate 30% physical activity programming over the course of a month).
- **Dosage of after-school programs** needs to be addressed. BCRPA did not ask online survey respondents or interviewees about the frequency of programs. Research has proven that participants are more likely to reap the benefits of after-school programs when they attend them more frequently (Raley, Grossman & Walker, 2006; Durlak & Weissberg, 2007) . An after-school strategy should support after-school programs that are offered 3 to 5 times a week to increase the positive outcomes for participants.

Through the use of these recommendations, the strengths of quality after-school programming in BC can be enhanced and the gaps in supporting children in the after-school hours can be addressed. Through a collaborative, dynamic and comprehensive approach, we can enhance the lives of children aged 6 to 12 and their families and improve their quality of life.



References

- 2010 Legacies Now. (2010). "BC sport participation program". Retrieved April 9, 2010 from http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/bc_sport_participation/.
- Action Schools! BC. (2010). "Framework for action – six action zones". Retrieved on April 17, 2010 from <http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/Content/Info%20Centre/ASBC%20Model%20Six%20Action%20Zones.asp>
- Action Schools! BC. (2010). "Support and resources". Retrieved on April 17, 2010 from <http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/Content/Quick%20Links/ASBC%20Support%20and%20Resources.asp>
- Active Healthy Kids Canada. (2009). *Active healthy kids are fit to learn. The Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth 2009*. Toronto: Author. Retrieved from http://www.activehealthykids.ca/ecms.ashx/ReportCard2009/AHKC-Longform_WEB_FINAL.pdf
- Active Healthy Kids Canada. (2010). *Healthy habits start earlier than you think: The Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth*. Toronto: Author. Retrieved on April 27, 2010 from <http://www.activehealthykids.ca/ecms.ashx/2010ActiveHealthyKidsCanadaReportCard-longform.pdf>
- Active Healthy Kids Canada. (2008). *It's time to unplug our kids: Canada's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children & Youth 2008*. Toronto: Author.
- Alberta Parks and Recreation Association (2009). *AfterSchool recreation initiatives: final report*. Edmonton: Author.
- BC Recreation and Parks Association. (2010). *BCRPA 2010 membership survey*. Burnaby: Author.
- BC Recreation and Parks Association, (2007). "Delta recreation makes the grade". *Communities in Action for a Healthy BC. Issue 01, Fall 2007*. Pp.14 – 17. Retrieved April 26, 2010 from http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/recreation_parks/active_communities/documents/SuccessStories/Lower_Mainland/CommunitiesInActionFall07_%20Delta.pdf
- BC Recreation and Parks Association. (2010). "General recreation programs guidelines (for programs exempt from the child care licensing program)". Retrieved on March 7, 2010 from http://bcrpa.bc.ca/recreation_parks/recreation/industry_guidelines/default.htm
- BC STATS. (2004). "British Columbia population projections". Retrieved on March 3, 2010 from www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/Project/P29BCIntro.pdf
- Boys and Girls Clubs of BC and the Yukon. (2010). "Kiwanis Hour". Retrieved on April 29, 2010 from <http://www.boysandgirlsclubsbc.ca/assets/district%20emphasis%20-%20kiwanis%20hour%20-%20%20canada.pdf>
- Boys and Girls Clubs in BC and the Yukon. (2009). *Position Paper: Middle Years*. Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada and Boys & Girls Clubs of British Columbia.
- Brownrigg, M. (2006). *Recreation in middle childhood: an overview*. Ottawa: National Children's Alliance.
- Buote, D. (2008). *Licensed school-aged child care in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia: services, gaps, and future directions*. Revised August 31, 2008. Burnaby: United Way of the Lower Mainland and the YMCA of Greater Vancouver.
- Canadian Child Care Federation. (2006). *School-age child care: policy brief prepared for Middle Childhood Initiative of the National Children's Alliance*. Ottawa: National Children's Alliance.
- Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute. (2009). *Kids Can Play! Bulletin 1: Activity levels of Canadian children and youth*. Ottawa: Author.



- CBC News. (2010). "Youth sentencing changes proposed." Retrieved on March 16, 2010 from <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2010/03/16/justice-youth-act.html?ref=rss>
- Coalition for Community Schools. (2010). "What is a community school?". Retrieved April 19, 2010 from http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx.
- Durlak, J.A. & R.P. Weissberg. (2007). *The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills*. Chicago, IL: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL).
- Family Health International. *Qualitative research methods: a data collector's field guide. Module 1: qualitative research methods overview*. p. 5. Retrieved March 23, 2010 from <http://www.fhi.org/NR/rdonlyres/etl7vogszehu5s4stpzb3tyqlpp7rojv4waq37elpbyei3tgmc4ty6dunbccfzxtaj2rvbaubz4f/overview1.pdf>
- Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California. (2009). *California's after-school commitment: keeping kids on track and out of trouble*. San Francisco, CA: Author.
- First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition with the support of SPARC BC. (2009). *BC Campaign 2000: 2009 child poverty report card*. Vancouver, BC: Author.
- Government of BC. (2010) "Daily physical activity". Retrieved April 26, 2010 from <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/dpa/>
- Government of BC. (2010). "Walking school bus and bicycle train". Retrieved April 15, 2010 from http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/active_living/ww_school_bus.htm.
- Government of Canada. (2009). "Federal-Provincial-Territorial ministers take action to increase physical activity for children and youth". Retrieved on January 17, 2010 from <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-eng.do?m=/index&nid=47439>.
- Government of the Northwest Territories. (2010). "GNWT announces new active after school program". Retrieved on February 26, 2010 from http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/resources/newsroom/after_school_program.html
- Government of Ontario. (2009). "Ontario's after school program". Retrieved April 16, 2010 from <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/healthy-communities/afterschool/default.asp>.
- Hanvey, L. (2006). *Issues affecting the well-being of Canadian children in the middle years – 6 to 12: a discussion paper*. Ottawa: National Children's Alliance.
- Leitch, K.K. (2007). *Reaching for the top: A report by the Advisor on Healthy Children & Youth*. Ottawa: Health Canada.
- McLeod, R.C. (2010). "Active after school program". Retrieved on February 26, 2010 from http://www.exec.gov.nt.ca/currentnews/speechDetails.asp?varStatement_ID=934
- Miller, B.M. (2003). *Afterschool programs and educational success: critical hours executive summary*. Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation.
- Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion. (2009). "2009/10 After-school strategy guidelines". Retrieved on January 25, 2010 from <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/healthy-communities/afterschool/default.asp>
- Raley, R., J. Grossman and K.E. Walker. (2006). *Getting it right: strategies for after-school success*. Philadelphia: Public / Private Ventures.
- Richards, T., M. Cohen, S. Klein, and D. Littman. (2008). *Working for a living wage: making paid work meet basic family needs in Vancouver and Victoria*. Vancouver: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, and the Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria.
- Schonert-Reichl, K.A. (2007). *Middle childhood inside and out: the psychological and social world of children 9 – 12*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia & United Way of the Lower Mainland.



Schonert-Reichl, K.A., C. Hertzman, & S. Hymel. (2010). ``The Middle Years Development Instrument``. Retrieved on March 27, 2010 from http://www.councilecd.ca/files/PanCanadianEDI_Poster_MDI.pdf

Tremblay, M.S., M. Shields, M. Laviolette, C.L. Craig, I. Janssen & S.C. Gerber. (2010). *Fitness of Canadian children and youth: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Retrieved on March 29, 2010 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/10013/dq100113a-eng.html>.

United Way of the Lower Mainland. (2010). "Facts: helping children 6 to 12". Retrieved March 7, 2010. <http://uwlm.ca/our-impact/facts/helping-children-6-12>

United Way of the Lower Mainland. (2009). *Making a measurable difference for school-age children: 2008 outcome results for after-school programs supported by United Way of the Lower Mainland*. Burnaby: Author.



Appendix A: List of interviewees

Provincial Stakeholders

Name, Position & Organization	Interview Date
Jeff Calbick Program Director United Way of the Lower Mainland	March 10, 2010
Tanya Grand Former Manager, Cross Sector Strategic Initiatives Branch Ministry of Education Government of BC	March 10, 2010
Bryna Kopelow Program Developer Action Schools! BC	March 11, 2010
Sue McKinnon Former Manager of Healthy Living Initiative 2010 Legacies Now	March 11, 2010
Megan Wallace Senior Manager of Operations YMCA of Greater Vancouver	March 15, 2010
Carrie Wagner-Miller Director of the Pacific Region Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada	March 15, 2010
Sharon White Director, Sport Services Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport	March 17, 2010
Dana Greening Office of the Solicitor-General Government of BC	March 23, 2010
Drew Mitchell Manager, Sport Technical Programs 2010 Legacies Now	March 24, 2010
Kimberly Schonert-Reichl Associate Professor, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education University of British Columbia	March 25, 2010
Kathy Cassels Executive Director Directorate of Agencies for School Health	April 7, 2010



Promising Practice Interviews

Name, Position & Organization	Interview Date
Tracey Cooke Director of Operations Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Vancouver	March 11, 2010
Vancouver School Board Community Schools Teams Brenda Burroughs Ron Scott Colleen Dickie	March 17, 2010
Chinu Das Middle Childhood Matters United Way of the Lower Mainland	March 24, 2010



Appendix B: Interview questions

Profile Information

Name
Position
Organization

Questions

1. Describe your work and its relevance to the area of after-school hours for children 6 to 12 in BC.
2. What do you see as the current strengths of after-school hours programming for children aged 6 to 12 in the province?
3. Can you identify specific best practices, programs? What ages are served? What are the participation parameters and areas served, etc.?
4. How is the quality of these programs evaluated?
5. What about these best practices make them good after school programs? Do they contain opportunities for any or all of the following: physical activity, healthy eating, mentorship, educational time, social time?
6. What do you see as the gaps in service which need to be addressed in order to best serve children aged 6 to 12 during the after school hours in BC?
7. Are there specific target audiences that need to be served?
[e.g., Aboriginal children, rural and remote communities, children from families with low income, immigrant children]
8. What are your recommendations for moving forward an after-school hours agenda for children aged 6 to 12 years old at a provincial level?
9. Moving forward and envisioning a collaborative process, what partners need to come to the table to help create change for children aged 6 to 12 in the after school hours in BC?
10. Are there other people we need to be speaking to for this environmental scan?

Appendix C: Online survey questions

Introduction

The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) has been contracted by the Public Health Association of Canada (PHAC) to conduct an environmental scan of after-school programming for children aged 6 to 12 years old in British Columbia. We need your help to discern what is working in serving children in the after-school hours outside of licensed child care, what gaps need to be addressed, who should be included in future discussions of after-school issues and what future work in this area should entail. The critical after-school hours are defined as 3 - 6 PM.

Your answers will help inform our work as we make recommendations for a provincial framework for serving children aged 6 to 12 years old in the after-school hours throughout BC. Please note that you may be contacted by BCRPA for more information about your answers.

This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions, concerns, or thoughts that arise due to this survey, please contact Jessica Chant, Awareness Campaigns Coordinator, at jchant@bcrpa.bc.ca or 604-629-0965, ext. 224.

Thank you for your time.

Part I: Respondent profile

1. Name (optional; needed for follow-up):
Employer:
Job Title:
Email Address (optional, needed for follow-up):
2. Please select or highlight your region:
Cariboo
Kootenays
Lower Mainland
North Coast / Nechako
Okanagan
Peace River / Northern Rockies
Vancouver Island



Part II

1. What do you see as the current strengths of after-school programming for children aged 6 to 12 in your community?

2. Do you know of successful practices in after-school programming in your community? Yes No

If yes, go to questions under Successful Practices. If no, skip to Part III.

Successful practices

1. Please identify a best practice of after-school programming in your community.

Name of program:

Ages served:

Area served:

Approximate number of children served:

2. Please provide a brief description of this program.

3. What opportunities does this program include? Please select / highlight all that apply.

Physical activity

Healthy eating

Mentorship

Educational time

Social activities

Other (please specify)

4. In your opinion, what about this program makes it a good after-school program?

5. How is the quality of this program evaluated?

6. Do you know of other successful practices in after-school programming in your community? Yes No

If yes, go to Successful Practices, Part II. If no, skip to Part III.

Successful practices, Part II

1. Please identify a best practice of after-school programming in your community.

Name of program:

Ages served:

Area served:

Approximate number of children served

2. Please provide a brief description of this program.

3. What opportunities does this program include? Please select all that apply.

Physical activity

Healthy eating

Mentorship

Educational time

Social activities

Other (please specify)

4. In your opinion, what about this program makes it a good after-school program?

5. How is the quality of this program evaluated?

Part III

1. What do you see as current strengths of after-school hours programming and services for children aged 6 to 12 in BC?

2. What do you see as the gaps in service which need to be addressed in order to best serve children aged 6 to 12 years during the after-school hours in BC?

3. In your opinion, are there specific target audiences that need to be better served?

Aboriginal children

Children from families with low-income

Children in rural or remote communities

Other (please specify)

Part IV

1. What are your recommendations for moving forward an after-school hours agenda for children aged 6 to 12 years old at a provincial level?

2. Envisioning a collaborative process, what partners need to be at the table in future discussions serving children aged 6 to 12 in the after-school hours in BC?



Appendix D: Promising Practices

The following programs and service providers were identified by survey respondents as examples of promising practices for after-school programming across the province.

Location	Program name
Abbotsford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbotsford Youth Commission Hand in Hand Child Care Society KidzOwn
Alert Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert Bay Recreation Centre
Bowen Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karate
Burnaby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion City of Burnaby Community Services, Recreation & Cultural programming Crackers and Voyageurs Daycare Drama & Urban jazz Friendship Club MoreSports SHARE after-school programs Skill Building with Sport South Burnaby Neighbourhood House Spare Time Childcare
Burnaby, Chilliwack, Coquitlam, Langley, Richmond, Surrey, Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YMCA of Greater Vancouver
Burns Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Movin' on Up
Chemainus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Action Krew
Comox Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wild Spirit Francophone Society
Coquitlam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHARE after-school programs Kateslem After School program Multi-Sports of Drop-in sports programs Place Maillardville After School programs
Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Reach Out
Cranbrook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prime Time After-school program
Davis Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teddy Bear After School program
Dease Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stikine Minor Hockey
Delta and Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boys & Girls Club Community Services Delta / Richmond
District of West Kelowna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Westside Taekwondo After-school program Westside Youth Centre
Granisle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Babine Elementary and Secondary School, Tachet First Nations
Hazelton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teddy Bears and Diaries / Gitxsan Princess Club
Ladner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boys and Girls Club
Ladysmith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boys and Girls Club of Ladysmith



Location	Program name
Ladysmith (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ladysmith Parks and Recreation Commission (LPRC) after-school sports programs
Lake Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Okanagan Boys and Girls Club – Lake Country Drop Zone
Langley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taekwondo school pick-up
Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Kids Club
New Westminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fun Fridays Hoops HYPE
North Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afterschool Club Blueridge Buddies Canyon Heights Elementary School After-School Club Club Seven Cooking Club I CAN SWIM swim lessons Karate Larson Elementary School After-school Club Seymour Heights Elementary after-school activities Theatre and Drama Club
Okanagan Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs
Pemberton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pemberton After School Club
Port Coquitlam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beyond the Bell program Hyde Creek Recreation Centre After-school sports program PoCo Youth Services
Prince George	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunny Day The Exploration Place
Salmon Arm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Activity Centre
Sechelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little Scholars Child Care
Surrey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power Hour SHINE program UrbanPromise
Telkwa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norma’s Ark
Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boggie Boys & Glow Girls Boys & Girls Club Britannia Community Centre programs Britannia Community Schools After School program Buddy program Building Resiliency through Basketball Community Schools Team Community Youth Corps Leaders and Awesome Afterschools / Sunsational Summers



Location	Program name
Vancouver (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative Kidz• David Thompson Community School Team• Dunbar Kids Club• Games Club• Girls Club / Boys Club• HYPE program (Healthy Youth Program for Everyone)• KidSafe• Kidz in the Kitchen• Killarney Youth Mentorship Initiative (KYMI)• Kits Chef Training program• Kitsilano Kids Club Out-of-School Care• Little Mountain Fab Girlz Group• Little Mountain literacy circle and homework clubs• Little Mountain Out-of-School program• Look Who Can Cook• MoreSports• Newcomer youth program• Strathcona After School Adventures Out of School Care program• Strathcona Elementary Aboriginal Homework Club• Summer Reading Club (also province-wide through public libraries)• Trafalgar out of school care society• UrbanPromise• Windermere Community Programs• YELL & Y2
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Campus View Out of School care• Central school swim club• EMJS School Bike Club• Fairfield Out of School care• James Bay Community Centre
Victoria, Oak Bay and Saanich	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreation Oak Bay Afterschool Program
Williams Lake Indian Band	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sugar Cane After-School program• Williams Lake Indian Band Recreation Program



About BC Recreation and Parks Association

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) is a not for profit organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in our province. BCRPA and its extensive network of members in the parks, recreation, physical activity and culture sector support the development of healthy individuals and communities, and sustainable environments and economies.

Since 1958, the Association has provided leadership, training and support to help members meet provincial and local priorities. With more than 4,200 members, the BCRPA is a strong provincial voice for the parks, recreation, physical activity and culture sector. Members include local and regional governments, community leaders, parks and recreation practitioners, fitness professionals, affiliate organizations, businesses, students and volunteers.

Contact Information

BC Recreation and Parks Association

101 – 4664 Lougheed Hwy

Burnaby, BC

V5C 5T5

t. 604.629.0965

f. 604.629.2651

e. parksandrec@bcrpa.bc.ca

w. www.bcrpa.bc.ca