

International Toronto Charter for Physical Activity (TCPA) Toolkit:

TIPS, ACTION ITEMS, AND RESOURCES FOR PUTTING THE TCPA INTO ACTION



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A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TOOLKIT FOR MIDDLESEX-LONDON

Overwhelming evidence shows that physical activity levels are a key determinant of health and well-being, with inactivity contributing to higher incidents of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, type II diabetes, and some types of cancer. The level of physical activity among Canadians has been declining in recent decades, while obesity rates — including rates of childhood obesity — have been climbing as sedentary lifestyles become the norm. In Middlesex-London, for example, 47% of the population was inactive during their leisure time in 2009/10.¹ These negative health effects, in turn, contribute to higher overall health care costs and lower productivity rates in the workplace.

**HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
CAN CREATE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
— REGARDLESS OF
AGE, GENDER, INCOME,
OR ABILITY — TO LIVE
A PHYSICALLY ACTIVE
LIFESTYLE AND ENJOY ALL
OF ITS BENEFITS.**

Why a toolkit?

This toolkit provides tips, action items, and resources for putting the TCPA into action. Developed for the communities of London and Middlesex County, the goal of the toolkit is to provide specific ideas for members of key sector areas to increase opportunities and policies that support and encourage residents to become more physically active.

Who is the toolkit for?

Leaders and decision-makers in the sectors of:

- Transportation (page 5)
- Urban planning and design (page 7)
- Schools and other educational settings (page 11)
- Parks and recreation (page 13)
- Workplaces (page 17)
- Health care and health promotion (page 19)

What is the Toronto Charter for Physical Activity (TCPA)?

The TCPA is an international charter that was developed by 55 countries and launched out of the City of Toronto in 2010. It is an influential guiding document that **“is a call for action and an advocacy tool to create sustainable opportunities for physically active lifestyles for all.”**

The Charter was designed to help organizations and individuals work with decision-makers across a variety of sectors to promote physical activity in their communities. There are nine guiding principles:

1. Adopt evidence-based strategies.
2. Embrace an equity approach.
3. Address the environmental, social, and individual determinants of physical inactivity.
4. Implement sustainable actions in partnership.
5. Build capacity in research, practice, policy, evaluation, and surveillance.
6. Use a life-course approach that addresses the needs of children, families, adults, and older adults.
7. Advocate to decision-makers to increase political commitment.
8. Ensure cultural sensitivity.
9. Make physical activity the easy choice.*

The Charter also outlines a framework for action:

1. Implement a national policy and action plan;
2. Introduce local policies that support physical activity;
3. Reorient services and funding to prioritize physical activity; and
4. Develop partnerships for action.

You can download the TCPA at: <http://www.interamericanheart.org/images/PHYSICALACTIVITY/TorontoCharterPhysicalActivityENG.pdf>

*Derived from the World Health Organization's 2008 Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the 2004 Action Plan on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

¹ Middlesex-London Community Health Unit, “Middlesex London Community Health Status Resource, Physical Activity,” <http://communityhealthstats.healthunit.com/indicator/lifestyle-behaviours/physical-activity>; accessed March 6, 2015.

The TCPA: A Strategic Step Toward Policy Development

By endorsing the Charter, organizations and political entities demonstrate their commitment to making physical activity and healthy living a priority for all citizens. You can show your support for the Charter by visiting the Global Advocacy Council for Physical Activity website (www.globalpa.org.uk) and the Middlesex-London Health Unit website (www.healthunit.com/physical-activity).

Healthy Communities Partnership Middlesex-London (HCP-ML)

HCP-ML is committed to fostering a healthy community in London-Middlesex by influencing policy to support enhanced opportunities for active living across the lifespan.

Endorsement of the Toronto Charter for Physical Activity was identified as a strategic step toward policy development following a series of community stakeholder consultations in fall 2010/spring 2011, in which physical activity was identified as a community priority for moving healthy public policy forward. Organizations and political entities demonstrate their commitment to making healthy active living a reality for all citizens by endorsing the Charter.

At the time of this toolkit's creation, the City of London and seven of the eight Middlesex County municipalities had endorsed the TCPA.

This toolkit is a central outcome of the consultation and endorsement process. Its goal is to assist these communities in making key improvements to their community.





**SHARE
THE
ROAD**



TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation includes any form of human-powered, non-motorized transportation — from walking, cycling, and jogging, to skating and skateboarding. We use active transportation to get from one place to another (such as from home to school, work, or to reach public transit), to run errands, or to meet friends and neighbours in our communities. Active transportation brings many benefits to individuals and their communities, from better physical health to increased public safety, greater community/social connectedness, and improved air quality. The economic benefits of active transportation include reduced infrastructure costs, reduced time lost to traffic congestion, and support for local economies, as cyclists and pedestrians tend to shop closer to home.¹

Only 12% of Canadians walk or cycle when travelling from home to work, school, or when running errands.² Municipal decision-makers can encourage the use of active transportation amongst citizens through the creation of supportive policies and infrastructure.

The TCPA calls on decision-makers and the transportation sector to enact sustainable policies and create spaces that prioritize active transportation.

Policy- and decision-makers in Middlesex-London can play a key role in building the capacity for active transportation in their communities by:

Advocating for active transportation

- Create “complete streets” policies for Middlesex-London, to ensure that all road users can travel comfortably and conveniently.
- Adopt policies within local Master Plans (e.g., Cycling, Trails, or Recreation Plans) that promote safe, accessible cycling routes for people of all ages and abilities.
- Include and incorporate Pedestrian Master Plans with Cycling and/or Transportation Master Plans, so that the needs of all road users are accommodated.
- Amend policies that regulate right-of-way and road standards so that pedestrians and cyclists take priority over motorized vehicles.

Educating policy-makers and citizens

- Partner with local organizations that promote active transportation (e.g., road safety committees, cycling advocates, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, etc.) to hold community meetings or events where information about the benefits of active transportation, as well as the safe and proper use and necessary skills for using updated infrastructure, can be disseminated.
- Work with other organizations that support active transportation by monitoring online resources for up-to-date information, or by actively engaging in educational initiatives such as webinars or community-partnership programs.

Creating environments that support active transportation

- Use the guidelines and best practices outlined in the *Ontario Traffic Manual, Book 18: Cycling Facilities* and *Book 15, Pedestrian Crossing Facilities* to guide the creation of infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation’s 20-year plan to promote cycling in the province, *#Cycle On: Ontario’s Cycling Strategy*, is also a key document for those interested in making their communities more bicycle-friendly.
- Implement accessibility design guidelines recommended through the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.
- Connect neighbourhoods and destinations/points of interest through new or improved infrastructure and design elements that encourage active transportation (e.g., separated bike lanes, paved shoulders, “Share the Road” signs, pedestrian walkways and bridges, widened sidewalks, etc.).

² Transport Canada, *Active Transportation in Canada, A Resource and Planning Guide*, <http://www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/programs/atge.pdf>, 13–16, accessed March 6, 2015.

³ *Ibid.*, 8.

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Find out more:

Middlesex-London

City of London Bicycle Master Plan:

<https://www.london.ca/business/Resources/Guideline-Documents/Documents/reference-docs/Bicycle-Master-Plan-March-2005.pdf>

City of London Cycling Advisory Committee (CAC):

<https://www.london.ca/city-hall/committees/advisory-committees/Pages/Cycling-Advisory-Committee.aspx>

City of London Traffic Calming Policy:

<https://www.london.ca/residents/Roads-Transportation/traffic-management/Documents/FINAL%20TC%20Policy.pdf>

Middlesex-London Health Unit, Active Transportation (city resources):

<https://www.healthunit.com/active-transportation>

Thames Region Ecological Association (TREA), Active Transportation Working Group (bicycle festival):

<http://www.trea.ca/services/active-transportation/>

Transportation Choices in London (city resources):

<https://www.london.ca/residents/Roads-Transportation/Transportation-Choices/Pages/default.aspx>

Toolkits and Resources

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA):

www.aoda.ca

City of Toronto, Complete Streets Guidelines for Toronto (handbook):

<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=4339e30dfc638410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

Ecology Action Centre, Active Transportation 101: Bringing AT to your community and developing an AT plan:

https://www.ecologyaction.ca/files/images-documents/AT101-2013_WEB.pdf

Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Ontario's #CycleON: Ontario's Cycling Strategy:

<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/pdfs/ontario-cycle-strategy.pdf>

Ontario Professional Planners Institute: Healthy Communities and Planning for Active Transportation (call to action):

<http://ontarioplanners.ca/PDF/Healthy-Communities/2012/Planning-and-Implementing-Active-Transportation-in.aspx>

Ontario Traffic Manual – Book 15 – Pedestrian Crossing Facilities, and Book 18 – Cycling Facilities:

<http://www.otc.org/research/download-manuals>

Transport Canada, Active Transportation in Canada, A Resource and Planning Guide:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/programs/atge.pdf>

Organizations

Toronto Centre for Active Transportation:

<http://www.torontocat.ca>

WalkFriendly Ontario:

<http://www.walkfriendly.ca>

URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN

The physical design of cities and rural communities — both the built (buildings, streets, and public spaces) and natural (parks and open spaces) environments — can profoundly affect residents' overall health and their ability to engage in physical activity. Research shows that the physical layout of communities can encourage (or discourage) active transportation, such as walking to and from school or work: People living in neighbourhoods where streets are well connected and who have greater access to public transit are more likely to walk or cycle in their neighbourhoods.

Compact neighbourhoods, more inviting streetscapes, improved lighting, and increased access to public spaces are all examples of urban design that encourage physical activity and contribute to healthier communities.

The TCPA encourages urban planning and design that reduce communities' dependence on vehicles and create opportunities for physical activity.

Urban planners and designers in Middlesex-London can play a key role in promoting physical activity and healthy communities by:

Advocating for built and natural environments that promote physical activity

- Recommend the adoption of design policies within local Official Plans that encourage the development and connectivity between safe, compact neighbourhoods and natural areas.
- Encourage municipal leaders to fund capital improvement projects that prioritize walking, cycling, transit-supportive layouts, and human-scale development.
- Promote land-use policies to encourage the creation of community-gathering places (e.g., community centres, schools, churches, etc.) that are easily accessible.

Educating and partnering with policy-makers and citizens

- Collaborate with community groups, elected officials, municipal staff, not-for-profit organizations, local health units, and other community groups to promote environments that support physical activity.
- Share with and learn from successful healthy community planning initiatives in other jurisdictions across the province, Canada, and around the world.

Creating environments that support physical activity and healthy communities

- Encourage and work with developers to produce land-use applications that promote walkability and easy access to transit, employment, schools, shopping, recreation, and other community services.
- Encourage and work with developers to produce land-use applications that support compact growth, housing variety and affordability, and aesthetically appealing streetscapes.
- Design neighbourhoods that incorporate safe, multi-modal transportation connections and amenities such as sidewalks, extensive lighting, and easily accessible trails in natural areas.
- Work with community stakeholders to plan jointly for healthier built and natural environments in Middlesex-London that promote physical activity.
- Create active transportation opportunities for rural residents through building bike lanes, connected walking trails, and paved, wider shoulders on rural roads and smaller highways.



Find out more:

Middlesex-London

Middlesex-London Health Unit, Linking Health and the Built Environment in Rural Settings: Evidence and Recommendations for Planning Healthy Communities in Middlesex County (report):

http://www.middlesex.ca/council/2013/october/8/5%20a%20-%20CC%20-%20Oct%208%20-%20MLHU_Rural%20Report_PRINT.pdf

Reports and Manuals

City of Toronto, Toronto Pedestrian Charter:

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/transportation_services/walking/files/pdf/charter.pdf

City of Toronto, Toronto Walking Strategy:

<http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20of%20Toronto/Transportation%20Services/Walking/Files/pdf/walking-strategy-highres.pdf>

Healthy Canada by Design/CLASP, Active Living, Children & Youth (fact sheets):

<http://cip-icu.ca/Files/Resources/FACTSHEETS-ChildrenYouth-FINALenglish.aspx>

Heart and Stroke Foundation, Shaping Active, Healthy Communities (toolkit):

http://www.heartandstroke.com/atf/cf/%7B99452D8B-E7F1-4BD6-A57D-B136CE6C95BF%7D/BETK_HSF_Built_Environments_ENG.pdf

Improving Health By Design in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area (report):

<http://www.peelregion.ca/health/resources/healthbydesign/pdf/highlights-report.pdf>

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Planning By Design: a healthy communities handbook (2009):

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page6737.aspx>

New York City Departments of Design and Construction, Health and Mental Hygiene, Transportation, City Planning, and Office of Management and Budget, Active Design Guidelines: Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Design (manual):

<http://centerforactivedesign.org/guidelines/>

Ontario Professional Planner Institute, Healthy Communities • Sustainable Communities (reports):

<http://ontarioplanners.ca/Policy/Healthy-Communities-bull-Sustainable-Communities>

Toronto Public Health, Active City: Designing for Health (report):

<http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20of%20Toronto/Toronto%20Public%20Health/Healthy%20Public%20Policy/Built%20Environment/Files/pdf/ActiveCityReportMay292014.pdf>

Toronto Public Health, Healthy Toronto by Design (report):

https://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/toronto_public_health/healthy_public_policy/hphe/files/pdf/healthytoronto_oct04_11.pdf

Toronto Public Health: Road to Health, Improving Walking and Cycling in Toronto (report):

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/toronto_public_health/healthy_public_policy/hphe/files/pdf/roadtohealth.pdf

Toronto Public Health, The Walkable City (report):

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/toronto_public_health/healthy_public_policy/hphe/files/pdf/walkable_city.pdf



SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Schools are core institutions in our communities, and, as such, have an important role to play in promoting physical activity for students, their families, and neighbourhoods. Over the past few decades, the rates of physical activity among young people have declined significantly: Almost 9 in 10 Canadian children and youth don't get the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity, and more than 30% are overweight or obese.⁴ Rates of participation in organized sports are declining, nearly 50% fewer Canadian children walk to school than 20 years ago, and sedentary behaviours are on the rise.⁵

We know that healthier, more active students have lower levels of obesity and chronic disease and are healthier and better learners, with lower levels of behavioural problems and longer attention spans. Opportunities for physical activity can be created both within and outside of educational settings, on playgrounds and with sports teams, by walking to and from school, and through innovative activity-based programs in the classroom.

The TCPA calls on educators and decision-makers to create opportunities for high-quality physical education both within and outside of educational settings.

Educators in Middlesex-London can play a key role in facilitating increased physical activity for students in their communities by:

Advocating for increased opportunities for physical activity

- Support and recommend physical environments in your school zone (e.g., traffic calming, sidewalk plowing, better street lighting, enforcement of speed limits in school zones, shaded playgrounds, green sports fields, etc.) that facilitate everyday physical activity; write letters to municipal councilors or attend municipal meetings.
- Support sport programs at your school by supervising or coaching sports leagues and teams, applying for grants to help create and sustain programs, or writing a profile on a sport program at your school for the school newsletter, to emphasize the value of existing programs and plans to create more.
- Encourage and support students to become school leaders who help plan and implement physical activity programs and activities.
- Review and revise policies to encourage making your school a hub for your community, a place where everyone can access playgrounds, open spaces, and gymnasiums.

Educating students and parents

- Provide age-appropriate literature in the classroom that celebrates and promotes improved health and physical activity literacy by incorporating physical activity facts into your curriculum while helping children learn about healthy lifestyles.
- Provide parents with information about the importance of regular physical activity and ideas for tying it into their lifestyle through newsletters, parent-teacher interviews, etc.

Creating environments that support increasing physical activity levels of children

- Create and regularly update a School Travel Plan that prioritizes active transportation to and from school and that includes designated safe walking routes and Walking School Bus programs.
- Join or initiate a Healthy School Committee at your school.
- Volunteer as a School Travel Plan Advisor or lead a Walking School Bus.
- Provide a range of physical activities that reflect the interests and cultures of the students at your school.
- Incorporate physical activity into your school's daily routines by, for example, having students stand when they ask or answer a question, or through incorporating dance or other kinds of movement into class presentations.
- Incorporate the Ontario Ministry of Education's new guidelines on daily physical activity into your curriculum.

⁴ Physical and Health Education Canada, "Time to Move!": http://www.phecana.ca/sites/default/files/advocacy_tools/TimeToMoveEnglish_crop.pdf, accessed March 6, 2015.

⁵ Ron N. Buliung, Raktim Mitra, and Guy Faulkner, Active school transportation in the Greater Toronto Area, Canada: An exploration of trends in space and time (1986–2006), *Preventive Medicine* 48 (2009), 507–12.

Find out more:

Middlesex-London

Healthy Living Champions Award; Middlesex-London Health Unit:

<https://www.healthunit.com/healthy-living-champions-award>

Healthy Schools Toolkit; Middlesex-London Health Unit:

<https://www.healthunit.com/healthy-schools-toolkit>

Middlesex-London *in motion*TM (community physical activity challenge):

<http://inmotion4life.ca>

Programs and Resources

Active & Safe Routes to School, Walking School Bus or Bicycle Train (program):

<http://activesaferoutes.ca/programs/walking-school-bus-or-bicycle-train>

Active & Safe Routes to School, What is School Travel Planning (STP)? (webpage and resources):

<http://activesaferoutes.ca/school-travel-plans>

Evergreen Brick Works, School Ground Greening (program and resources):

<http://www.evergreen.ca/get-involved/resources/school-ground-greening>

The Learning Grounds Guide for Schools (road map):

<http://www.evergreen.ca/downloads/pdfs/Guide-for-Schools.pdf>

Ontario Ministry of Education, Daily Physical Activity in Schools:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/dpa.html>

Ophea, Physical Activity Resource Centre:

<http://parc.ophea.net>

Organizations

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology:

<http://www.csep.ca>

Canadian Sport for Life:

<http://canadiansportforlife.ca>

Coaching Association of Canada:

<http://www.coach.ca>

Ever Active Schools:

www.everactive.org

International School Health Network:

<http://internationalschoolhealth.org>

Joint Consortium for School Health:

<http://www.jcsh-cces.ca>

Ophea:

<https://www.ophea.net>

Physical and Health Education Canada:

<http://www.phecanada.ca>

PARKS AND RECREATION

The ability to access community parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, and recreational programs is a fundamental human need, and is essential to the physical and mental well-being of all community members. Accessible and affordable parks and recreational programming and opportunities are some of the best ways to increase everyone's physical activity levels, whether they live within urban centres or in suburban or rural areas.

Recreational opportunities are also a vital part of community building and environmental sustainability: Investment in parks and recreation can have positive economic, social, and environmental impacts. People of diverse abilities, ages, and cultures can play together in municipal recreation spaces, and neighbourhood residents can find common cause as they invest time and effort in protecting their natural environment.

The TCPA calls on decision-makers to create funding systems that prioritize recreational opportunities for all community members.

Policy- and decision-makers in Middlesex-London can play a key role in developing strong parks and recreation opportunities in their communities by:

Advocating for affordable and accessible parks and recreation opportunities

- Recommend funding recreational infrastructure and programs at the neighbourhood level (e.g., parkettes).
- Increase accessibility to recreation opportunities and consider all citizens — regardless of age, ability, culture, income level, gender, religion, or sexual orientation — in recreation planning; talk to potential users and ensure that their needs are being met.
- Encourage the integration of sports and recreation policies into other municipal plans and policies, for a “whole-community” approach to physical activity.
- Advocate for accessible and reliable public transit to recreational facilities.
- Provide incentives for revitalizing brownfields into open, green spaces with natural and man-made features that allow for structured or unstructured activity.

Educating policy-makers, stakeholders, and citizens

- Provide information about recreational opportunities in your community using multiple modes (e.g., websites, mailings, posters, social media, etc.).
- Create a trails, active transportation, and/or recreation map to show where community members can access outdoor activities (e.g., hiking trails, bike routes, tennis courts, basketball hoops, open fields, etc.).

Creating ways to support parks and recreation

- Partner with local businesses to offer reduced-cost or free recreational programming.
- Build and maintain outdoor recreation spaces with non-prescriptive play equipment and natural features that facilitate children's creativity.
- Connect parks and green spaces to neighbourhoods using accessible walking trails and paths.
- Provide ample space through parks and trails that allows for more affordable access and use by community members.



Find out more:

Middlesex-London

City of London Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan 2009:

<https://www.london.ca/city-hall/master-plans-reports/master-plans/Documents/London-Parks-Recreation-Master-Plan.pdf>

Municipality of Middlesex Centre, Trails Master Plan:

http://www.middlesexcentre.on.ca/Public/Page/Files/37_Middlesex%20Centre%20Trails%20Master%20Plan%20Final%20Document%20April%202014.pdf

Toolkits and Resources

Active Ontario, Community Recreation Toolkit:

<http://lin.ca/resources/community-recreation-toolkit-resources-recreation-professionals>

A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing:

http://www.cpra.ca/UserFiles/File/EN/sitePdfs/initiatives/National%20Framework/Framework%20For%20Recreation%20In%20Canada_4.pdf

Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Physical Activity Environment Self-Assessment and Planning Toolkit, for childcare settings:

http://www.eohu.ca/_files/resources/resource1633.pdf

Organizations

High Five — a national quality standard for children's recreation and sport:

<http://www.highfive.org/what-high-five>

Parks and Recreation Ontario:

<http://www.prontario.org>

Play Works: The Ontario Partnership for Active and Engaged Youth:

<http://www.playworkspartnership.ca/play-works>

Provincial Consortium on Youth in Recreation:

<http://youthinrecreation.org>



IN THE WORKPLACE

Physical inactivity is a leading cause of chronic diseases and rising rates of obesity in Canada — in Middlesex-London, for example, just over half of adults were overweight or obese in 2009–10.⁶ Unhealthy weights contribute to higher levels of heart disease, high blood pressure, and type II diabetes.

Many Canadians spend a significant portion of their waking hours on the job, and many workers spend long hours sitting at desks or standing still — on average, almost eight hours a day, with few periods of activity to break up sessions of sitting. Employers are therefore key partners in helping employees increase their levels of physical activity. Healthy, active workers are more productive, have lower injury rates, are less likely to call in sick, have lower rates of stress, and are better contributors to the bottom line as on-the-job commitment and satisfaction increase. Better health within a workplace also lowers employers' health care costs and turnover rates, and contributes to better work-life balance for everyone.

The TCPA calls on employers to support physical activity programs and infrastructure in workplaces, and active transportation to and from work.

Employers and employees in Middlesex-London can play a key role in promoting physical activity in their workplaces by:

Advocating for opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after work

- Employees can ask their employers to provide active transportation options and supports (e.g., bike storage, showers, etc.), and employers can encourage active transportation by supplying these amenities.
- Negotiate reduced rates for employees who purchase bus passes and/or gym memberships.
- Engage with the local public health unit to gain information on how to start a Workplace Wellness Program and to access resources.

Educating employees about the importance of daily physical activity

- Assign the role of Health and Wellness Coordinator, to identify and reduce employees' barriers and increase opportunities to be physically active.
- Host an on-site health fair to educate employees on the importance of physical activity to health, well-being, and work performance.
- Install and maintain a health and wellness bulletin board, with resources to support physical activity and health, including local opportunities to be physically active (e.g., municipal parks and recreation programming).
- Create and distribute a wellness newsletter to all employees, and encourage them to contribute articles.
- Place posters encouraging the use of stairs by stair entrance-ways and at elevators.

Creating workplace environments that support physical activity among employees

- Provide amenities such as lockers, showers, and safe bike storage to support active transportation.
- Install a workplace physical activity room with strength-training, cardio, and flexibility equipment.
- Organize a workplace physical activity challenge, lunchtime group exercise classes, company-wide sport tournament, or wellness challenges.
- Encourage regular movement within the workplace through such things as walking meetings, stretching areas, and easily accessible stairways.
- Develop a company wellness policy that promotes physical activity as an essential part of the workplace culture.

⁶ Middlesex-London Community Health Unit, "Middlesex-London Community Health Status Resource, Healthy Weights," <http://communityhealthstats.healthunit.com/indicator/lifestyle-behaviours/healthy-weights>; accessed March 6, 2015.

Find out more:

Middlesex-London

Creating Physical Activity in the Workplace (toolkit); Middlesex London Health Unit:

<https://www.healthunit.com/physical-activity-toolkit>

Middlesex-London *in motion*TM (community physical activity challenge):

<http://inmotion4life.ca>

Physical Activity (website and resources); Middlesex London Health Unit:

<https://www.healthunit.com/physical-activity>

Workplace Health (webpage and resources); Middlesex-London Health Unit:

<https://www.healthunit.com/workplace-health>

Toolkits and Resources

Activity Bursts Everywhere for Fitness (exercise videos):

<http://abeforfitness.com/index.html>

Alberta Centre for Active Living, Physical Activity @ Work (toolkit):

<https://www.ualberta.ca/~active/workplace/beforestart/benefits-bottom-line.html>

Canadian Council for Health and Active Living at Work, Making it Work with Active Living in the Workplace:

http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/active_living.html

Eat Smart, Move More NC, Move More Workbook:

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHealthSmartTikt/MoveMoreWrkBk.html>

Hamilton Public Health Services, Investing in Physical Activity Through the Workplace: A Toolkit for Policy Development:

<http://www.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/7C1B3EDD-A6C2-4716-BFF9-91356F85770F/0/PhysicalActivityToolkit.pdf>

Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit, Physical Activity Toolkit:

<http://www.healthunit.org/workplace/Toolkits/Physical%20Activity/Physical%20Activity%20Toolkit.pdf>

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Healthy Steps @ Work Toolkit:

<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/JFY/EmployersWorkplaces/HealthyStepsatworktoolkit.aspx>

HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH PROMOTION

Every day in Ontario, health care professionals and health educators see the toll that physical inactivity takes on their patients/clients, the community, and the wider health care system. Physical inactivity is a leading cause of chronic diseases such as diabetes, stroke, and some cancers. It is a key contributor to rising levels of obesity in Canada and around the world in both children and adults, and currently costs Ontario's health care system almost \$7 billion a year in both direct and indirect costs.⁷

Health care professionals and health educators have an important role to play in helping their patients/clients become more physically active, including educating about the benefits of a physically active lifestyle, adopting best practices in health promotion, advocating for change at the system level, and being a role model.

The TCPA calls on health professionals and health educators to adopt evidence-based strategies to help individuals increase their level of physical activity.

Health professionals and health educators in Middlesex-London can play a key role in promoting the importance of physical activity in their communities by:

Advocating for change

- Encourage workplaces, educational settings, and governments to include a “Health in all Policies” approach to health and health equity.
- Provide recommendations/comments to political conversations and planning decisions that affect opportunities for community members to engage in physical activity. For example, show support for cycling- and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure during the creation and revisions of Transportation Master Plans or Official Plans.

Educating patients/clients, community members, and other health care professionals about the importance of physical activity

- Share physical activity materials and resources with patients, clients, colleagues, community partners, and other health care professionals.
- Supply patients/clients with resources to help them be more physically active, including worksheets, toolkits, and information on community challenges.
- Consult with patients/clients to come up with ways to reduce barriers they face to being physically active.
- Partner with local organizations that have a vested interest in physical activity to create public-awareness campaigns.

Creating effective ways to help change individual behaviour

- Regularly screen patients for their physical activity levels, in addition to other chronic disease risk factors.
- Keep up to date on the latest literature around the benefits of physical activity, and pass that knowledge on to your patients/clients and colleagues.
- Be a good example: Live a healthy, physically active life.

⁷ Public Health Agency of Canada/Canadian Institute for Health Information, *Obesity in Canada*, https://secure.cihi.ca/free_products/Obesity_in_canada_2011_en.pdf, 29; accessed March 6, 2015.



Find out more:

Toolkits and Resources

Alberta Centre for Active Living, Physical Activity Counselling Toolkit:

<https://www.centre4activeliving.ca/our-work/physical-activity-counselling-toolkit>

Canadian Cancer Society, Towards Evidence-Informed Practice (overview):

<http://www.healthincommon.ca/wp-content/uploads/Towards-Evidence-Informed-Practise.pdf>

Health Canada, Eat Well and Be Active Educational Toolkit:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/educ-comm/toolkit-trousse/index-eng.php>

Middlesex-London *in motion*TM (community physical activity challenge):

<http://inmotion4life.ca>

Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, Make Ontario the Healthiest Province, Advocacy Toolkit:

http://www.ocdpa.ca/sites/default/files/publications/OCDPA_2014ToolkitFINAL_15MY14.pdf

Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition (OHCC), Collaboration and Partnerships for Healthy Communities (online course):

<http://www.ohcc-ccso.ca/en/courses/collaboration-and-partnerships-for-healthy-communities>

Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, Ontario's Action Plan for Healthy Eating and Active Living:

<http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/heal/actionplan-EN.pdf>

ParticipACTION, The Partnership Protocol: Principles and Approach for Successful Private/Not-for-Profit Partnerships in Physical Activity and Sport:

http://www.participaction.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/partnershipprotocol_english_final.pdf

Physical Activity Resource Centre (PARC), Webinars for physical activity promoters:

<http://parc.ophea.net/services/training-workshops/webinar-library>

Public Health Agency of Canada, Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/ipchls-spimmvs-eng.php>

Public Health Ontario (PHO), Planning a health promotion program (overview):

http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Six_steps_planning_health_promotion_programs_2015.pdf

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London, Ontario: Author.

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For further information please visit:

Global Advocacy Council for Physical Activity website (www.globalpa.org.uk)
Middlesex-London Health Unit website (www.healthunit.com/physical-activity)



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