



Creating Connections

Final Report - Section III

Cape Breton Region



Cape Breton Region Working Group



Participants: Not recorded

Comments prior to discussing questions:

- Rejuvenating the importance of Recreation... exciting. And the timing is right to have these conversations.
- Are there other programs that could be more suitable that we could be offering and are we not offering them?

Question 1: What are the possibilities?

Increase networking and explore/strengthen new partnerships

- A lot of new learning within the region of services (e.g., Connections Clubhouse: three hundred members, forty to fifty people a day; They have a work component & recreation).
 - Work on connections within the group and learning each other's strengths.
 - Need to develop the marketing expertise to be able to make sure that everyone is aware of the programs.
 - People want to have all the contacts of people and description of their programs.
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- Increase knowledge and awareness of needs of diverse populations.
 - This discussion needs to happen more so that we are part of the strategy.
 - Having a better representation of the Acadian and first nations and aboriginal people.
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- Proper planning in municipal levels.

Question 2: What are the priorities for next steps in the Cape Breton region?

Recreation not being part of the overall strategy:

- Realizing how many gaps and disconnect.
- There needs to be more provincial level priority/coordination.

Collaboration and Partnerships:

- Let's make these links provincially better and realizing that right now they are not there and that they need to be in place.
- The fascinating work done by both recreation therapists and community recreation groups etc., these people are on the ground and they don't talk to each other.

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- We have so many resources and are both positioned to provide support and services but we don't know each other:
 - Need to focus on people transitioning from acute care to community.

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- Services currently in Silos.
 - Within this Health Authority things exist that are creating barriers.
 - Giving each other credit for what is available.

Fun is essential to mental well-being across the life course:

- However in some settings removal of opportunities to play/participate is used as punishment (e.g., in schools; e.g. If a child does something wrong he/she is not playing on the basketball team).

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- Need to increase awareness of value of healthy fun/recreation to child development and family well-being.
 - Fun has come to be viewed as a frill and external (e.g., driven by consumerism): "we have complicated fun".

Promote and educate about the value/benefits of recreation for physical/mental health

- More works needs to be done with GPs/doctors need to prescribe recreation and exercise...Including recreation in the entire person.
- Everything is associated with food with recreation.

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- Emphasize importance of "participation with a purpose" for health/wellbeing.
 - Recreation takes time, it needs to be meaningful.

Promote and educate...

- Good example of this with the Park Bench Players giving their stories.
 - What made them happy when they were young. To find out within themselves what it is that is important to them and then provide it to them and see how that changes their lives.
 - “That was the best part of this weekend”.
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- We need better promotion.

Question 3: What are the possible collaboration/partnerships and action steps for moving forward?

Mental health and addictions in this group are going to get together.

- Want to create something like ‘The Spot,’ to use more music and art for formal services and help making a better transition.
- Free to be you program: Addictions services coming in to provide collaboration.
- They have recreation sampling.

Strengthen Partnerships

- School boards in Cape Breton.
 - Making a great effort to be able to provide times in the day to provide programs.
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- Example where programs/partnerships can happen:
 - Crossroads, Community center.
 - The addictions and detox members here have been making great connections to possibly refer to caper base and to connections.
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- Need to figure out “who’s who”.
 - In order to collaborate, we need to have a partnership. We then need to have a relationship.
 - Need a regional gathering in Cape Breton to figure out who is who.
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- We need to look at the big system.
 - We need provincial people in the room listening so that we can have support from the provincial people.

Next Steps:

- Setting a date for this talk? - First week of September!
- People who should be invited:
 - Wayne Mackey
 - The YMCA
 - Youth health centers
 - Access 808
 - Rec depts. and their coordinators
 - Mental health councilors in the hospitals.
 - Police officers
 - GP and psychologist
 - Doctors Nova Scotia
 - Public health
 - Community centers coordinators
 - Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design in Sydney
 - School board members
 - Schools plus
 - Seniors