

Building Welcoming and Inclusive spaces in Recreation



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ISANS acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded past and present territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people.

At ISANS, as we help settle newcomers to Nova Scotia, we also teach them about the history and rights of Indigenous Peoples in Mi'kma'ki. We honour the enduring presence and contributions of the Mi'kmaq people, and we are dedicated to fostering meaningful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN AFFIRMATION

We also acknowledge that people of African descent have been in Nova Scotia for over 400 years, and we honour and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent who came before us to this land.

AGENDA

- Overview of the Community Connections Recreation Program
- Barriers to participation
- Program planning checklist
- Addressing barriers to create welcoming programs
- Examples of community partnerships



Community Connections Recreation program



- Three staff that work with over 500 families
- Majority of the families are GAR and PSR's
- General stats- where people are arriving from and number of arrivals
- Referral process to our program and support we provide to clients
- Support we provide to organizations

Barriers to Participation

- Lack of information- knowing what sports are available, when the sport is played and when registration happens
- Unfamiliarity with sport
- Online registration process
- Financial barriers- program registration/ equipment fees, tournament fee's/travel, accessing funding applications
- Language and computer literacy- staff/ volunteers, signage, scheduling apps
- Transportation and location of program
- Scheduling conflicts- family size, settlement challenges/priorities
- Cultural considerations
- Racism



Program Planning Checklist

Program Design & Planning

- ☐ Does the program include a wide range of age groups?
- ☐ Can the program be split into smaller age-based groups or run back-to-back for families with multiple children?
- ☐ Are there women-only or girls-only options?
- ☐ Are women-only programs offered in private, secure settings (e.g., windows covered, doors secured)?
- ☐ Are female staff involved in program delivery?
- ☐ Is free childcare or a concurrent children's program offered during women-only sessions?
- ☐ Have you created a “try-it” program for newcomers?
- ☐ Have interpreter needs been considered and budgeted for?
- ☐ Is the program scheduled at times convenient for families using public transit?
- ☐ Have religious and cultural holidays (e.g., Ramadan) been taken into account?
- ☐ Do any staff or volunteers speak languages other than English?
- ☐ Does the program run on a consistent schedule (e.g., same day of the week, same time, etc.)?

Promotion & Community Outreach

Have you promoted the program through:

- ☐ Newcomer-serving agencies (e.g., ISANS, YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs, etc)
- ☐ Places of worship
- ☐ Libraries
- ☐ Cultural associations
- ☐ Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) websites or newsletters





Financial Accessibility

- ☐ Is the program free?
- ☐ If not, can participants apply for funding (e.g., KidSport)?
- ☐ Is there support available to help with financial aid applications?
- ☐ Are payment plans offered?
- ☐ Can parents or youth volunteer in exchange for reduced or free registration?
- ☐ Have you applied for grants (e.g., Jumpstart Community Development Grant, Sport NS, grants through your national sport association, etc.)
- ☐ Do you provide equipment or an equipment loan program?



Location & Transportation

- ☐ Is the program venue accessible by public transportation?
- ☐ Is it located near newcomer communities?
- ☐ Can bus tickets or transit passes be provided for participants?
- ☐ Does your club offer carpool options when driving is needed?



Registration Process

- ☐ Is in-person registration available?
- ☐ Are registration forms written in plain language?
- ☐ Is staff support available (in person or by phone) for registration?
- ☐ If registration is online, are translation or language support options offered?
- ☐ Is your online registration system set up to select KidSport as a payment option?

Staffing & Volunteer Considerations

☐ Do you have a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) hiring strategy?

☐ Do staff and volunteers receive ongoing EDIA training (internally or through partners like ISANS)?

☐ Do your staff and volunteers represent the population you hope to serve?



Addressing the Barriers to Create a Welcoming Program

Step One: Take stock of what you've got! (staff/volunteers, equipment, funding, location, etc)

Step Two: What kind of program are you looking to run and why? (one time event or multi week program)

Step Three: Partner with an organization that serves the community your trying to attract (ISANS, YMCA Centre for Immigrant Program, cultural associations, etc)





Step Four: Ensure that staff/ volunteers have participated in EDIA training (ISANS provides free workshops and there is a workshop tailored specifically to the recreation sector)

Step Five: Create a plan of how to support players after the try it program has ended (assigning staff/ volunteers to follow up with players to assist with the registration, KidSport application, etc)

Step Six: Evaluate how the program went and can it be run again.

Examples of Community Partnerships

- NS Parks Department -Learn to Camp
- Swim Space
- Surfing Association of NS
- Artistic Swimming Nova Scotia
- Ecology Action Centre- Welcoming Wheels
- Nova Scotia Sea School
- Ignite Soccer
- Hockey NS
- Canada Games Centre
- Atlantic Field Hockey Club
- Lacrosse NS
- NUMA Judo
- Speedy Kids Oval Program Society
- Tennis Nova Scotia
- And many, many more!



New to Hockey Program

- Children and youth 6-13
- Two groups of 25 players- group one runs from October-December and group two runs from January- March
- Ice time is covered by Hockey NS and is purchased through Halifax Metro West Force
- All equipment is loaned to the players and was purchased through Canadian Tire Jumpstart Community Development Grant, Sport NS EDIA funding, Sidney Crosby Foundations, and Hockey NS

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laiQoNyBrPw>





NUMA Judo and JFIT

- Children between the ages of 5-13
- Consistent and multiple try it programs that have run over many years
- Each program runs for 6-8 weeks
- Funded through the Judo4All and Sport NS

Questions?





Thank You!

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