

Funding Strategies to Support Leisure and Physical Activities for Children and Youth with Disabilities: A Rapid Review

November 2018

Summary

It is important that policy makers address barriers families of children with disabilities and organizations face in accessing and providing services related to leisure and physical activities.

The five included studies show several funding types for different programs (see reverse side for more details). However, the **lack of details on funding strategies does not allow us to draw conclusions** regarding the identification of successful conditions for funding strategies.

Implications

The results of this review will be conveyed to organizations and policymakers involved in developing and implementing resources and initiatives related to provincial policies and regulations that are inclusive of youth with disabilities.

Given the nature of results obtained and the limitations associated with rapid review methods, **more studies are needed** to identify successful funding strategies leading to an increased participation of youth with disabilities in physical and leisure activities.

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What is the current situation?

- Youth with disabilities are at risk for lower participation in leisure and physical activities despite demonstrated health benefits.
- In order to develop programs and policies that support health through participation in physical and leisure activities, decision makers need to know the existing evidence supporting changes in practices and policies.

What is the objective?

- To inform decision makers on **evidence-based funding strategies** supporting participation in physical and leisure activities for youth with disabilities.

How was the review conducted?

- A protocol was developed according to the rapid review methods proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- A comprehensive, peer-reviewed literature search was conducted in electronic databases from 2008 until 2018. Time constraints and selected criteria led to exclusion of gray literature.
- Any type of study referring to a funding strategy supporting participation in leisure or physical activities was included.
- Study selection, data extraction, and quality appraisal were conducted by pairs of two reviewers independently. Discrepancies were resolved by discussion or a third reviewer.
- Knowledge users were involved throughout the process.

What did the review find?

- The search yield 1814 citations with 5 articles identified as relevant.
- **Included studies failed to report the funding strategies of their program.**
- The **lack of details the strategies used does not allow us to draw conclusions on outcomes of interest** (ie, economic impact, sustainability, or participation rates).
- Funding types included government, association, or community-based involvement and targeted actions such as access to adapted facilities, tax credit for families, low-cost access to sport clubs, and community-based activities. See reverse side for more details.

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Youth Unified Sports Programme of Special Olympics

 Europe
 [2012]

Program Description: A program for the participation of youth with an intellectual disability in a sports team with other youth with or without disabilities.

Funding Mechanisms: Mixed, community-based.

Funding Details: Program supported by the parent organization (Special Olympics) with national and international contributions (no other data available).

Highlights: Offers young people the opportunity to participate in sports competitions and to develop an interest in sport. Develops a sense of social inclusion.

Challenges: Families must cover some expenses (e.g. sports equipment). The increase in the number of teams seems unlikely despite the sustainability of funding.

Community support programs

Autism Ontario

 Canada
 [2012]

Description du programme: Community support program for parents of children with autism spectrum disorders.

Funding Mechanisms: Gouvernement (provincial).

Funding Details: The program is financially supported by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services (no financial data available).

Highlights: Activities take place in a safe environment, with youth who share lived experiences (peer support). An increase in program requests supports the needs of family for this type of programs.

Challenges: No information is available as to the program's ability to respond to this increased demand.

Public policy from Canada

 Canada
 [2015]

Program Description : Canadian Government policies that promote the participation of children with disabilities in recreational activities.

Funding Mechanisms: Gouvernement (federal and provincial).

Funding Details: Financial allowances, family tax credits, infrastructure accessibility programs, funding for sports programs, equipment and specialized transportation.

Highlights: Flexibility in the management of allowances and credits for families.

Challenges: Some allowances are not aimed at participation in leisure activities. Programs mainly target adults. Few programs are evidence-based. There is a lack of coordination between levels and sectors.

Personal assistance program

 Sweden
 [2017]

Program Description: Government-based program of personal assistance for persons with disabilities to participate fully in society.

Funding Mechanisms: Government (federal and municipal).

Funding Mechanisms: The first 20 hours of assistance are funded by the municipality and overtime by the government (no other financial data available).

Highlights : Free access for disabled people of all ages.

Challenges: Some services are turning to caregiving instead of the original goal of the program (to promote full participation in society).