



Canadian Association for the
Advancement of Women
and Sport and Physical Activity

Association canadienne pour
l'avancement des femmes
du sport et de l'activité physique

**Supporting Settlement Through Healthy
Living Programs for Newcomer Girls and
Women**

Focus Group Results

caaws.ca



Canadian Association for the
Advancement of Women
and Sport and Physical Activity

Association canadienne pour
l'avancement des femmes
du sport et de l'activité physique

Focus group – Girls - Activities

Top 10

Soccer

Self-defense/boxing

Swimming (some need lessons)

Skating (some need lessons)

Basketball

Volleyball

Dancing (zumba, swing, salsa, zuck, belly, Bollywood, etc.)

Running (learn to run)

Gymnastics

At home fitness (yoga, aerobics, dancing)

Other Activities

- Walking
- Biking
- Tennis
- Badminton
- Skiing- cross country and downhill
- Gym- weights, fitness
- Lacrosse
- Field hockey
- Football- tackle and tag
- Fencing
- Rugby
- Ping Pong
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Bowling
- Floor hockey
- Football
- Hockey
- Curling

Focus group – Girls- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Lack of girls only/co-ed environments/boys are intimidating	Girls only programs with female instructors in a private space with no cameras
Lack of skills	Skill building opportunities and try-its
Time/competing priorities- homework, chores, looking after siblings etc.	Combine homework with activities; Plan for it and put into your schedule; offer programs for the whole family
Cost- membership, equipment, clothing, do not want to ask parents for \$	Free or low cost; hold fundraisers to help with costs; provide equipment to try things or exchanges to offer them for free or low cost
Parents permission: do not value sport for girls- consider it a distraction; not what girls do	Engage parents: Plan an open house for parents to help educate them on the importance of activity for girls, meet coaches and instructors; show the connections between extracurricular activities; Canadian universities do not only look at academics- educate parents

Focus group – Girls- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Transportation- especially on weekends (buses)	Communicate how long it takes to walk/bike somewhere- not just drive; talk to parents about carpooling
Awareness- what is available	Provide information on what is available, location, cost; run a sports day where you can sign-up for activities
Culture- attire- must cover up	Help develop/coordinate awareness training for recreation/program staff – i.e. need to cover up in the pool; Give girls a chance to try new clothing- i.e. Nike hijab, burkini to see if they like it before buying
Not having a buddy/team	Allow girls to register as individuals or as a small group for teams; offer bring a friend days; set up social activities as part of your programming to create friendships

Focus group – Girls- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Language- especially for registration	Offer translation/interpretation
Motivation	Help girls set goals to stay motivated
Safety- especially at night	Encourage girls to travel as a group to activities- this might make parents more comfortable about them going out at night- adopt a safe walk program
Scheduling- things are not offered at a time I can do it	Ask girls what time works best for them

Focus group – Girls- Communication

- Word of Mouth (parents, friends, siblings, teachers)
- Social Media- Facebook, Instagram, You Tube, Snapchat
- What's App?
- Google
- School announcements, bulletin boards, teachers send things home
- Recreation guide
- Flyers
- Email
- Text

Focus group – Women - Activities

Top 10

- Dancing
- Zumba
- Yoga
- Walking
- Swimming- lessons
- Badminton
- General fitness- gym
- Cycling- outside
- Skating lessons
- Volleyball

Other Activities

- Pilates
- Running
- Soccer
- Basketball2
- Ping pong
- Gardening
- Snowshoeing
- Tai chi
- Hiking, camping, canoeing
- Skiing
- Hockey
- Curling
- Pickle Ball
- Tennis
- Bowling
- Bocce Ball
- Fishing
- Squash
- Dodgeball
- Rollerblading
- Singing
- Golf
- Baseball
- Pool
- Aerobics

Focus group – Women- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Child Care/lack of consistent family support	Offer child care at an affordable rate; cooperate as women take turns minding children; doing things with children/grandchildren; offer things on weekends when they can get help with child care
Time – English class, family/home responsibilities	Parallel programming- children doing activities at the same time in a different room; offer workshops on the importance of physical activity for health to have women value it and make it a priority
Lack of women’s only/co-ed environments	Offer women’s only in private environments with female instructors
Awareness of what is available, where to go	Provide information- create an app or a place on-line to find everything; create an email network to inform women of what is coming up/available; offer a city tour of all the recreation facilities, parks, etc. to familiarize newcomers; teach people how to register for activities

Focus group – Women- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Cost- memberships transportation, clothing, equipment, child care	Provide affordable/free options, offer discounts, loan equipment, provide warm clothing for outdoor activities; Offer activities outside- trails, parks, etc. to reduce costs and get outside
Transportation	Offer things centrally with good transportation routes; help with car pooling- use facebook to connect for rides, a walk, etc.
Lack of skills	Offer skills building and try-it opportunities: offer a chance to come early to get some lessons and learn rules; offer coaching for women throughout programs so they can improve: feel programs are for children not them
Culture	Offer culture/sensitivity training for staff to encourage flexibility (time of day during Ramadan, clothing, etc.); train newcomer women to lead programs/as instructors; let women know where to buy clothing- Nike hijab, burkini, etc.

Focus group – Women- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Language	Translation/interpretation- but also use English so women can learn and practice
Isolation, adjusting to a new country, meeting people	Create a network of women to find buddies to do things with- activities where women can come together and talk- do things together- develop a women's group; offer bring a friend days; invite women- they like to be invited
Motivation	Women are motivated by seeing results but do not focus on weight- talk about health, feeling good, learning and speaking English; plan for it and put into your schedule- make it a priority; make sure it is FUN! to keep women coming back; add food and socialization elements; encourage women bring foods and teach activities from their own countries
Health- age, injuries, depression	Offer adapted programs to help with health issues and be sure to have knowledgeable instructors

Focus group – Women- Barriers/Solutions

Barriers	Solutions
Safety	Night can be scary- poor lighting - would be fine doing things together- develop night walks- participate as a group for safety
Availability- scheduling	Ask them about what timing works best
Moving	If someone is moving let them know where they can go for similar programs in their new community

Focus group – Communication

- Word of Mouth (neighbours, friends, family, English teachers, children's school)
- Facebook
- Women's email network- create a network of women through email/text – most have emails and others agreed to contact those that do not
- Bulletin boards- Farmers Market, Walmart, Sobeys, Pharmacies, Library, church, mosque
- Google
- ESL Teachers
- Work with the school, community centre and settlement workers to encourage women to be active, inform them of activities
- Local community newspaper/cultural newspapers
- Recreation guides
- Media- TV, radio
- Children let them know about things- things sent home from school
- Doctors /health care providers could help communicate