



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

From: Ellen Stewart, Youth Recreationist

Meeting Date: October 22, 2015

Subject: Report APRAC15-035
Pilot Program - Amalgamating the Get REAL Youth Program
with the Downtown Youth Space Program

Purpose

A report to inform of a pilot program, which amalgamates the Get R.E.A.L. program (Recreation, Exercise, Activities and Leisure) with the Downtown Youth Space program.

Recommendations

That the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee approve the recommendations outlined in Report APRAC15-035 dated October 22, 2015, of the Youth Recreationist, as follows:

That report APRAC15-035 be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

There is no budget or financial implication resulting from the approval of the recommendations of report APRAC15-035.

Background

Introduction of the Get R.E.A.L. Program

Vision 2010, A 10-year Strategic Plan for Recreation, Parks and Culture identified youth as a priority sector for recreational development. Specifically, downtown youth aged 13 to 18 years were seen as a group that had very few accessible recreational opportunities in our community. Access was defined in terms of affordability and transportation. The Vision 2010 integrated action plan recommended that the City's Recreation Division take a leadership role to facilitate new program development in response to this 'gap' in service delivery.

In 2002, the Recreation Division developed recreational opportunities and activities for youth ages 13 to 18 years, through the Get R.E.A.L. program, which offered decentralized neighbourhood recreation centres in various neighbourhoods during the school year.

Introduction of the Downtown Youth Space

In 2007, the City's Recreation Division and Peterborough Youth Council identified the lack of barrier free places and opportunities for youth in the downtown core as a concern. In 2009, the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (APRAC) approved the recommendations of Report APRAC09-008, demonstrating its support for a designated Downtown Youth Space (DYS). As part of the 2010 budget deliberations, Council approved a 17-hour per week, year-round operation of a DHS, which opened in July of 2010.

City Staff secured a suitable location for DHS through the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPRDSB), at Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational School (PCVS). This location provides a designated youth space available to all youth.

Get R.E.A.L. Program Participation

Both youth programs have co-existed for over 5 years. While participation numbers at the DHS program have steadily increased the participation numbers for the Get R.E.A.L. program have seen a slow decline, to the point where only 1 or 2 individuals are attending at the individual sites. This decline appears to be a result of several factors:

- Transient families in the identified neighbourhoods
- Lack of designated youth space as space is shared with other community partners
- No available physical activity space at most locations
- The introduction of a Downtown Youth Space with extended hours of operation

Pilot Program

The low participation numbers indicate that the Get R.E.A.L. program may no longer be viable, in its present model. However, Staff believes it would be detrimental to completely cut off all resources to the youth residing in the neighbourhoods where Get R.E.A.L. has been operating.

Therefore, City Staff have introduced a pilot program, beginning in September 2015 where the neighbourhood level youth are given the opportunity to participate in the DYS program, on the evenings Get R.E.A.L. would have normally operated in their individual neighbourhoods. This is accomplished by providing a free shuttle service between the DYS and the designated pick-up/drop-off locations within the various Get R.E.A.L. neighbourhoods.

With the new program model being promoted in each of the Get R.E.A.L. neighbourhoods during the summer months, the response has been positive. As well, youth can find out about the shuttle by visiting Facebook and the youth website at: www.ptboyouth.com.

In the spring of 2016, a full evaluation of the pilot program will be undertaken.

Submitted by,

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Youth Recreationist

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