



Building Community Recreation Skills: Why It's Important to Get Your Child with Autism Involved, and Where to Start

Thursday, October 22, 2020

Web Streamed from Vancouver, BC

Presented by

Stephanie Jull, PhD

Co-Sponsored by:

Canucks Autism Network (CAN)

&

**Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related
Disorders (POPARD)**

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Acknowledgements

ACT – Autism Community Training offers our special thanks to Stephanie Jull and the Canucks Autism Network (CAN) for agreeing to present the first entry in our Fall 2020 Free Web Stream Series. As we all struggle to keep our communities healthy, we appreciate that ACT can offer this workshop while maintaining the safety of attendees, staff, and our presenter. Many thanks to the Sheraton Wall Centre and the always practical support of Sean Antonson, Director of Sales, for providing us a base to continue our work. And to Justin Ritchie of XE Live for supporting the web stream!

This event has been made possible thanks to the generous support of our sponsors. CAN and the Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD), as well as of the Government of Canada's Emergency Support Fund and the Vancouver Foundation and our individual donors. We are very grateful for this collaboration, which has allowed us to web stream this presentation for free to families in British Columbia, across Canada and internationally.

Those who have attended ACT events over the years know that we depend on community collaboration and support to sustain our work. ACT deeply appreciates the many parents and professionals across British Columbia who volunteer their time, donate funds, and help spread the word - especially during these challenging times.

Free Resources from ACT

ACT's Coronavirus (COVID-19): Resources for the Autism Community - ACT has gathered resources specific to those who are neurodiverse and useful general resources to provide support to families throughout the pandemic. www.actcommunity.ca/covid-19-resources

Autism Videos @ ACT (AVA) – Over 60 quality online videos available free – without a log-in, thanks to our sponsors. www.actcommunity.ca/videos

ACT's Autism Information Database (the AID) – Like Google for Autism but better! Keyword search nearly 1,500 curated AID records for evidence-informed, practical information resources useful to families and community professionals. www.actcommunity.ca/aid

ACT's BC Community Resources Database – Search by your postal code for professionals and service providers throughout BC. www.actcommunity.ca/aid-search/community

ACT's Autism Manual for B.C - 13 chapters! www.actcommunity.ca/autism-manual-for-bc -

ACT's Monthly News Round-Up & Event Alerts - Sign-up to keep in touch with developments affecting the special needs community. www.actcommunity.ca/updates

ACT's Facebook - ACT carefully sources interesting, insightful stories to inform our 8,000 plus followers. www.facebook.com/autismcommunitytraining

Building Community Recreation Skills



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Shape of the Day

9:30-10:30

- Intro to Me and CAN
- Where to Start: Assessing Interests

10:45-11:45


- Choosing a Community-Based Activity
- Advocating for Support

12:30-1:30

- Virtual Recreation Options
- Building Rec Skills at Home


1:45-2:45: Next Steps: Engagement and Growth

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Canucks Autism Network

- Founded in 2008
- Offers in-person programs for children, families, youth and adults in Greater Vancouver, Nanaimo, Kelowna, Kamloops and Victoria
- Extensive training programs for a range of community organizations
- Major growth in area of adult programming




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We believe that every child with autism has the right to play sports.

Me

- VP Programs, Training & Community Engagement at CAN
- Mom
- Sport/Recreation Enthusiast
- Advocate for Inclusive Communities




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Our Work at CAN

- Partners such as BCRPA, viaSport, Coaching Association of Canada, Special Olympics Canada
- Provided training to hundreds of community recreation staff, sport coaches
- Built 2 online modules to support sport and recreation providers

BY THE NUMBERS	
5,804 members with autism	7,677 programs sports tried
482 volunteers	494 programs offered
8,747 volunteer hours	456 program staff members
131 training workshops delivered	105 community partners




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Community agreement

What do we agree upon as a group?


- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Ask questions
- Be conscious that some of us in the room may have lived experiences



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Purpose for Today

- Benefits of participation
- Types of recreation
- Ideas for getting started
- Nov 5: Strategies for engagement



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Getting the most out of virtual training

i.e., How to help yourself stay awake ☺

- Close other tabs to reduce distractions
- Put phone on silent
- The handout!
- Mentimeter





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MentiMetre!


AKA: are you still awake?

- Menti.com: CODE
- Your role
- What you are hoping to learn



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Questions? (Please use the chat box)




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What is Community Recreation?

A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015)

A Renewed Definition of Recreation
Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.



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What am I including?

	Municipal Recreation	Sports	Other Community Activities	Family Recreation
WHAT?	Stuff you find in a leisure guide (e.g., swimming lessons)	Sports you sign up for via an organization's website (e.g., North Vancouver Football Club)	Other stuff you sign up for via organization website (e.g., Scouts)	You pick and organize (e.g., Swimming, skating, canoeing, hiking, etc.)
WHO?	Municipalities e.g., North Van Rec	Local, provincial and national sport organizations	Varies	You

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Your Experiences with Community Recreation



How often?
Which types do you do the most?
What is your comfort level with each type?



Today's Focus: Physical Activity



- **Health Link BC**
Any movement of your body that results in an increased use of energy. This can include leisure activities as well as work. Physical activity is sometimes just called exercise.



Questions? (Please use the chat box)



Shape of the Day

- Intro to Me and CAN
 - **Benefits of Physical Activity**
 - Where to Start: Assessing Interests
 - Choosing a Community-Based Activity
 - Advocating for Support
 - Virtual Recreation Options
 - Building Rec Skills at Home
- Next Steps: Engagement and Growth

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What are the benefits of participating physical activity and other types of community recreation?



- Name as many as you can



Benefits of Participation



2018 ParticipAction Report Card

- For children and youth with ADHD or ASD, **even a single bout** of physical activity can **improve attention and focus**.
- Children and youth who have ASD experience the greatest **benefits in executive function** as a result of physical activity.



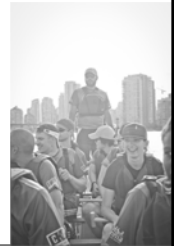
Social Connection

- Builds skills to better **communicate, socialize, increase self-control and maintain focus**—leading to a **healthier, higher quality of life.**



Mental Health

- Opportunities to enhance their interaction and communication skills = improved daily functions, health-related outcomes and quality of life.
- Decreased feelings of **anxiety**
- Higher **self-esteem**, increased **self-concept and self-worth**



CANADIAN 24-HOUR MOVEMENT GUIDELINES

Physical Activity Recommendations

Under 1 Year
Being physically active several times daily in a variety of ways, particularly through interactive floor-based play—more is better. For those not yet mobile, this includes at least 30 minutes of tummy time spread throughout the day while awake.

1–2 Years
At least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities at any intensity, including energetic play, spread throughout the day—more is better.

3–4 Years
At least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities spread throughout the day, of which at least 60 minutes is energetic play—more is better.

5–17 Years
An accumulation of at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity involving a variety of aerobic activities, and muscle- and bone-strengthening activities, should each be incorporated at least 3 days per week.

csepguidelines.ca
BuildYourBestDay.com

FOR THE EARLY YEARS - 0 – 4 YEARS

Guidelines:

For healthy growth and development:

- Infants (aged less than 1 year) should be physically active several times daily – particularly through interactive floor-based play.
- Toddlers (aged 1–2 years) and preschoolers (aged 3–4 years) should accumulate at least 180 minutes of physical activity at any intensity spread throughout the day, including:
 - A variety of activities in different environments;
 - Activities that develop movement skills;
 - Progression toward at least 60 minutes of energetic play by 5 years of age.
- More daily physical activity provides greater benefits.

csepguidelines.ca

FOR CHILDREN - 5 – 11 YEARS

Guidelines

- For health benefits, children aged 5-11 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. This should include:
 - Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week.
 - Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week.
 - More daily physical activity provides greater health benefits.

csepguidelines.ca

Let's Talk Intensity!

Moderate-intensity physical activities will cause children to sweat a little and to breathe harder. Activities like:

- Bike riding
- Playground activities

Vigorous-intensity physical activities will cause children to sweat and be 'out of breath'. Activities like:

- Running
- Swimming

Being active for at least 60 minutes daily can help children:

- Improve their health
- Do better in school
- Improve their fitness
- Grow stronger
- Have fun playing with friends
- Feel happier
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Improve their self-confidence
- Learn new skills

csepguidelines.ca

FOR YOUTH - 12 – 17 YEARS

Guidelines

- For health benefits, youth aged 12-17 years should accumulate at least **60 minutes** of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. This should include:
 - Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week.
 - Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week.
 - More daily physical activity provides greater health benefits.

csepguidelines.ca

Let's Talk Intensity!

Moderate-intensity physical activities will cause teens to sweat a little and to breathe harder. Activities like:

- Skating
- Bike riding

Vigorous-intensity physical activities will cause teens to sweat and be 'out of breath'. Activities like:

- Running
- Rollerblading

Being active for at least 60 minutes daily can help teens:

- Improve their health
- Do better in school
- Improve their fitness
- Grow stronger
- Have fun playing with friends
- Feel happier
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Improve their self-confidence
- Learn new skills

csepguidelines.ca

FOR ADULTS - 18 – 64 YEARS

Guidelines

- To achieve health benefits, adults aged 18-64 years should accumulate at least **150 minutes** of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more.
- It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week.
- More physical activity provides greater health benefits.

csepguidelines.ca

Let's Talk Intensity!

Moderate-intensity physical activities will cause adults to sweat a little and to breathe harder. Activities like:

- Brisk walking
- Bike riding

Vigorous-intensity physical activities will cause adults to sweat and be 'out of breath'. Activities like:

- Jogging
- Cross-country skiing

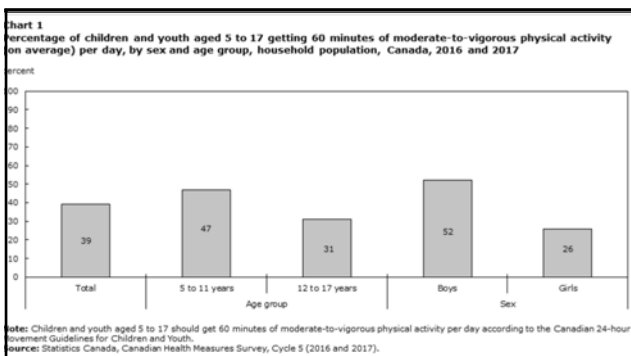
Being active for at least 150 minutes per week can help reduce the risk of:

- Premature death
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- Certain types of cancer
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Overweight and obesity

And can lead to improved:

- Fitness
- Strength
- Mental health (morale and self-esteem)

csepguidelines.ca



You're not alone!

- These targets can be **difficult** to achieve
- Today's goal is to talk about *the next step* 😊

Adults? 16% get recommended 150 minutes per week

(Participation 2019)

Benefits Summary: Daily Physical Activity

- Help foster feelings of happiness and mental wellness
- Improve **executive function**
- Improve **sleep**
- Improve **mental health**
- **Social connection**
-

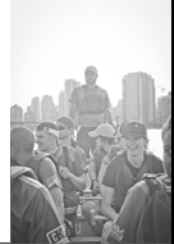
Also mentioned in this report:

- Supportive, accepting and modified environments
- Developmentally appropriate equipment
- Trained coaching staff are essential



Social Connection 'Skills'

- **Vary by age** (and required by all of us!!)
 - Turn taking and sharing
 - Conversation and 'small talk'
 - Dealing with adversity (losing)
 - Stress tolerance and emotional regulation
 - Teamwork and empathy (e.g., being helpful)
 - Leadership
 - Organization and time management
 - Problem solving
 - Comfort with new people/new situations



Where should you find Physical Activity/Recreation Goals?



Questions?



Shape of the Day

- Intro to Me and CAN
- Benefits of Physical Activity
- **Where to Start: Assessing Interests**
 - Which Activities?
- Choosing a Community-Based Activity
- Advocating for Support
- Virtual Recreation Options
- Building Rec Skills at Home

Next Steps: Engagement and Growth

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**"If you've met one person with autism,
You've met one person with autism."**

- Does the autism diagnosis tell you which sports/activities your child will enjoy?



Characteristics of Autism

- Social communication
- Sensory sensitivities
- Many other things (e.g., anxiety, learning challenges)
- **Many strengths and interests!!**



Surfing and Skateboarding?

- **Killa B**
- Nominated for Autism BC's Self-Advocate of the Year award
- The inspiration behind and co-founder of Surfs Up event
- Snowboard Day and skateboarding events
- Supasociety.net



Race Car Driving?

- Austin Riley (Uxbridge, Ontario)
- Racing with Autism.com
- Nationally sanctioned driver



Tommy Des Brisay

- **Para Athlete (Runner), Rock Climber, Paddler, Skier**
- Ottawa, Ontario
- No vocal language until age 8
- Very active child (walked at 8 months)
- Hopeful for Tokyo 2020 Canadian Para team



Team Sports

- Baseball:**
 - Kansas City Royals: Tarik El-Abour (2018)
- Basketball:**
 - Kent State Division 1: Kalin Bennet (2019)
- Hockey:**
 - ACHA Division 1: Walker Aurand (2019)
 - Linus Soderstrom (2014: New York Islanders)



Who Knows?

- Keep exploring
- Physical activity should not feel like punishment to your child (or to you!) ☺



Questions?



Shape of the Day

- Intro to Me and CAN
- Where to Start: Assessing Interests
 - **Getting started**
- Choosing a Community-Based Activity
- Advocating for Support
- Virtual Recreation Options
- Building Rec Skills at Home

Next Steps: Engagement and Growth

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Family-Based Recreation



- Kick a ball around the yard
- Rent a canoe
- Go to public skate
- Attend public swim
- Try bouldering
- Go hiking
- Play street hockey
- Go for a bike ride
- Try cross country skiing
- What else?



Who else??



- Sporty cousins, nieces/nephews, aunts/uncles
- Neighbours
- Support Workers/BIs
- School personnel

*Physical activity should be built into all learning plans!

- Get the 'village' involved as much as you can



Low Risk/*Come and Try It* Opportunities



- Low commitment, low cost
- Get a feel for the environment
- Gauge your child's interest
- Offered by 'mainstream' and 'adapted' programs



Observation



- Go and watch a session with your child
- Answer questions
- Talk about what looks like fun



Connect with Program/Access Coordinators



- Learn about what's available
- Ask about access



Keep it Short and Successful



- Work up to full participation
- Be clear about your goals
- Communicate as much as possible with the leader
- *Kids do not have to participate in the same way*



Try Not to Give Up Forever



- **This can be a tiring process**
- The first time might not be the BEST time
- Revisit activities later to see how your child's readiness and interest may have changed



What if I can't get them to do anything?



Fighting Screen Time: The struggle is real

- Recognize that you are not alone in this challenge
- Many more ideas to come in the next workshop
- Important to find activities that your child *actually enjoys* (as much as possible) 😊



Sneak Peek



Strategies to Increase Motivation and Engagement

- Relationships & Fun
- Choice
- *First-Then*
- Points Systems



Recap: Handout



What's the **first step**, or the **next step** that you could take to support your child?



Questions?



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What are the options?



Adapted	Inclusive	Mainstream
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility criteria • Specialized curriculum/structure • Trained staff/volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No eligibility criteria • 'Mainstream' curriculum/structure • Support available OR really well trained leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No eligibility criteria • 'Mainstream' curriculum/structure • No extra support

What are the options?



Adapted	Inclusive	Mainstream
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAN Programs • SUPA • <u>Municipal Programs</u> • Who else? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality Daycamps • Who else? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local sports • Rec lessons • Scouts

Where do you start?



Consider the need for support...

- Is support provided, or are support people allowed to attend?
- If support people are provided:
 - At what ratio?
 - How are they trained?
- **Your expectation may not match the reality, no matter how the program is advertised!**




The Range of Community-Based Supports




- Well-trained staff with great supervision
- Amazing volunteers
- Outstanding leadership (no extra people)
- Small groups
- None of the above



Before Registering: Ask 


- Can you speak to the Program/Access Coordinator about the program?
- Is it possible to observe a session?
 - Assess what supports your child might need
- Can you speak to the Coach/Leader in advance of the first day or provide them with some key info? Will you have opportunities to communicate throughout the program?
- Do you know any other parents who have tried the program?



What other questions/research do you do before registering for programs?

- Let's hear your ideas




To Share or Not to Share? 


Does it help to disclose your child's diagnosis?

- It depends
- Usually yes, but be aware of what this might mean

Be prepared

- To receive a range of reactions
- To advocate





Disclosing Diagnosis 

Pros	Cons
The leaders know what to expect and may respond better to your child	You may be refused registration
Supports may be available	Leaders may be scared
Leaders may adapt the program	Leaders may prejudge your child (in all kinds of ways!)
There are no surprises/awkward conversations later	

Disclosing Diagnosis

- Do you usually disclose diagnosis?
- Has it been positive or challenging?
- What happened?

Questions? 



Shape of the Day

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- Choosing a Community-Based Activity
- **Advocating for Support**
- Virtual Recreation Options
- Building Rec Skills at Home

Next Steps: Engagement and Growth

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Advocacy in Community Recreation



- Start with the leader
- Ask for the supervisor/regional lead
- If you have the energy, go far
- Think about the **end goal**



Who could I speak to?



SPORT:

- Local Sport Organization (e.g., Vancouver Minor Hockey)
- Provincial Sport Organization (Hockey BC)
- National Sport Organization (Hockey Canada)

MUNICIPAL RECREATION:

- Program Supervisors
- Accessibility Services
- Director of Recreation



What Do I Say?



- Share your concern honestly and respectfully
- Ask for a response
- Recognize the challenges from their perspective as well



Should I bother?



- Mounting pressure for sport/recreation to be **inclusive**
- **There has never been a better time to advocate**
- Don't hesitate to **speak to higher levels**
- Recognize that **people are usually doing the best they can with what they have and what they know**
- That doesn't mean we can't push for change to create **more knowledge, more resources** and a **more inclusive** recreation space ☺

Organization Spotlight: Tennis BC



Tennis BC: Creating National Impact



Jeannie Rohr: Champion for Inclusion

Tennis BC: Training Coaches



Tennis BC: Try It Days



Cliff Avenue Soccer: Coach Noah



"The module covered all the same things about being concise, clear and direct. **And it was 100% applicable to a wide range of kids. Not just those with a diagnosis,**" Noah said.

Cliff Avenue Soccer: Coach Noah



"I recommend it to all the coaches that I teach. It's a win-win, because [the training] helps us coach kids on the spectrum. But also, I **strongly feel that the tips from the module help all kids.**"

"We want to incorporate everyone into our programs."

Reflections on Advocacy



- Have you had to advocate to support the needs of your child in community recreation?
- How did it go?
- If you could tell coaches/community leaders one thing about why it is important to include individuals with autism, what would you want them to know?






Questions?




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Next Steps: Engagement and Growth


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Virtual Recreation

- Doing something active via a screen
- 'Live' programming (e.g., Zoom-based)
- Recorded programming




Virtual Recreation




Positives	Challenges
Something to do!	May require caregiver support
Get some physical activity	May not be vigorous
Feel part of a community	Not the same as in-person
(Sometimes) available 'on demand'	No schedule/accountability
What else?	What else?


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Virtual Recreation: Your Experience




Positives	Challenges
	

Virtual Recreation Options



What's out there?

- Canucks Autism Network
- Available across BC (and beyond!)
- Registered programs and on-demand online resources
- canucksautism.ca/online



Pre Recorded: Multisport (7-12) & Active (3-6)



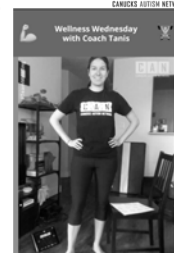
- 8 pre-recorded sessions with Coach Robbie and Coach Nish
- 10-20 minutes per session
- Get moving with no special equipment needed
- Free (on website)
- No membership/registration required



Pre Recorded: Wellness Wednesdays



- Animal Yoga with Coach Hallie
- Tabata Workout with Coach Tanis
- Free, on demand, no registration required



Partner Feature: BC Athletics Run Jump Throw Wheel: Home Edition



Workout Option #3

Dance Party

Turn on a great song and show off your favourite dance moves for 3 – 5 minutes.

If you need some inspiration, you can learn the steps to the Cupid Shuffle!

[Learn the dance steps here.](#)

[Listen to the song here.](#)

Run/Walks – Distance Edition

Go for a leisurely jog. When you're tired, walk for a bit to recover, then begin running again.

See if you can run a full 60 seconds before walking. Walk for 30-60 seconds then start running again. Repeat as many times as you like.

Modification: Adjust the times to suit your abilities.

Stretch Fest

Do some easy stretches for 3-5 minutes. Hold each position for 30 seconds.

[Pick your favourites or follow this video.](#)

CAN Registered Virtual Programs: Active and Multisport



- Get moving with no special equipment needed
- Caregiver participation required
- Maximum 8 participants per group
- 2 coaches/volunteers available to help



Registered Program: Virtual Hockey Clinics



Age Group: 7-12

- Beginner-friendly
- No special equipment needed
- Caregiver participation required



Registered Program: Virtual Challenger Baseball

Age Group: 7-12

- In partnership with JaysCare
- Activity Kits Provided
- Learn introductory baseball skills



Registered Program: Virtual Fitness



For Youth and Adults (13+)

- Get moving with no special equipment required

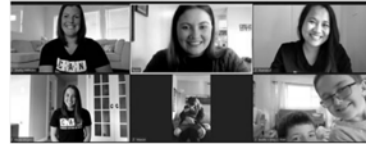


Interested?



Learn more at canucksautism.ca/online

- Information about CAN membership, registration, etc.



Other Virtual Options



- **Canucks For Kids Fund | Colouring, Puzzles & Mazes**
Download and print out over 10 activities to keep Canucks fans occupied at home!
- **JaysCare | Unstoppable Kids Challenges**
Weekly physical activity, creativity and kindness challenges. Kids ages 4-18 can win Jays Care prize packs!
- **Power To Be | #ItMatters**
Digital & self-guided activities for all ages to stay connected with nature while social distancing.
- **Tennis BC | 60 Minutes Kids Club**
Sign your family up for this FREE 30-day challenge and your chance to win tennis prize packs from HEAD!
- **BC Athletics | Run Jump Throw Wheel – Home Edition**
Track & field inspired activities modified for home! New set of exercises published every Monday.
- **BC Golf | Home To Fairway Program**
Calling all golfers! Drills adapted from BC Golf's Playground 2 Fairways program for home.

Other Virtual Program Options

12 Home Ideas with Ryan

- Anyone else found anything great?



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Questions?



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- **Building Rec Skills at Home**

Next Steps: Engagement and Growth



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The Village



- Find your people
- It starts at the playground (the field, the lake, the trails, etc.)



Let's Make an Action Plan



Municipal Recreation Opportunities	Sports	Other Community Recreation	Family Activities

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My 3 Biggest Take Aways



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Let's Share



- Activities to try
- Biggest take away



Questions?



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Next Steps: Engagement and Growth
Wrapping Up: Resources

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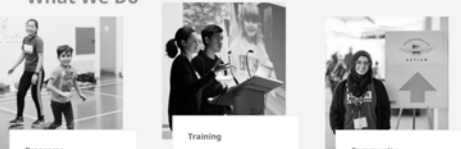


The Nitty Gritty





What We Do



Programs

Our highly supported programs empower individuals with autism to build the confidence and skills necessary to enjoy a lifetime of sport and physical activity.

Training






Through various training initiatives, we are able to further support individuals with autism and their families by building capacity in their local home communities.

Community Engagement

We strive to promote acceptance, accessibility, and inclusion in community spaces across BC so that individuals with autism and their families feel understood, accepted and supported in a range of community activities and spaces.




canucksautism.ca

Supporting Positive Behaviour Module

Free Access Code! JSCAN-A2B3C4D

E-Learning for Recreation Providers

Home Course Catalogue My Courses Basket FAQ and Help

Autism Awareness for Recreation Leaders

This course is designed to provide recreation staff with an overview of autism and an introduction to strategies for supporting individuals with autism in recreation settings. In this highly interactive one-hour module, learners will work through four real life scenarios, watching a series of video interviews with recreation staff who have dealt with similar situations. Learners will become more familiar with the behaviours associated with autism, and walk away with communication tips, teaching and learning strategies and behaviour support approaches. Learners will receive a certificate upon completion of the course.

[Take this Course](#)

Login

Username

Password

Remember Me


[Login](#) →

Questions?




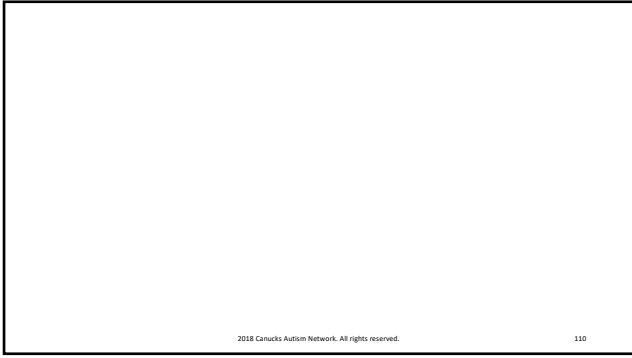

Thank You for Attending!

Building Recreation Skills



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