



BACKGROUND SOGO Active

The Challenge:

- The need to motivate youth to be physically active is well-known and many programs have been developed to tackle the issue, yet 90 per cent of Canadian children and youth are still failing to meet the guidelines outlined in Canada's Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth. Sport participation in 15-18 year-olds declined from 77% to 59% between 1992 and 2005, and many children and adolescents spend 4-6 hours of their discretionary time in front of a screen each day. (Source: Active Healthy Kids Canada)
- A wide range of factors influence whether or not young people are physically active, including lack of social support, the cost of equipment and programs and the overarching challenge of making a connection with inactive youth.

The Process:

- Against this backdrop, Coca-Cola Canada has retained ParticipACTION, the national voice of physical activity and sport participation in Canada, to assist in the design and execution of SOGO Active, a unique approach and framework for inspiring "for youth by youth" group activity in the community.
- ParticipACTION underwent a rigorous consultation process in the development of the concept, including:
 - Developing an inventory of existing programs and literature review
 - Developing a national advisory board comprised of youth and national, provincial, aboriginal and local organizations in the physical activity, sport participation, recreation and youth engagement fields
 - Holding a parallel consultation in Quebec to review the project concept and ensure successful French adaptation, which brought together a working group that will contribute to the ongoing success of SOGO Active in Quebec
 - Focus testing with youth on the project concept
 - Surveying stakeholder groups on the concept
 - Market research on the name
 - Retaining a leading website company to bring the project to life in a digital environment that reflects the feedback received in all areas of the project development.

The Program:

- SOGO Active is unlike any other youth fitness initiative because it gives young Canadians the tools to design, change and control their own individual get active plan.
- ParticipACTION designed the concept and content of SOGO Active and created a network of provincial and territorial organizations that will help activate the program.
- Grass root organizations will provide support for youth groups that participate in SOGO Active within their communities, including assisting with access to facilities, equipment and resources that youth require for their activities.

Provincial/Territorial Partners:

- By developing a network of provincial / territorial coordinators to coordinate the delivery of SOGO Active across Canada, the program responds to the unique needs of each province and territory which is unique for a national program.
- Each provincial / territorial coordinator will work with a coalition or advisory group to further ensure SOGO Active reaches diverse youth through community organizations.

- The provincial / territorial coordinators will engage traditional and non-traditional organizations to broaden the reach of the program and target the hard to reach 'less active' youth.
- SOGO Active's provincial/territorial coordinators are:
 - BC Recreation and Parks Association
 - Alberta Recreation and Parks Association
 - Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association
 - Recreation Connections Manitoba
 - Motivate Canada (Ontario)
 - Association québécoise du loisir municipal
 - Recreation New Brunswick
 - Recreation Nova Scotia and Sport Nova Scotia
 - PEI Recreation and Facilities Association
 - Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador
 - Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon
 - Sport North (NWT)
 - Kunoki (NU)

Barriers Addressed:

- For-youth-by-youth approach: Sogo Active is a youth driven program. Youth will decide what they want to do. Sogo Active provides the information; mechanism and support to make it happen.
- Creates supportive environments: Youth don't want to be directed by adults; but they may need support. Community hosts are not directive, but can provide access to facilities, equipment and the mentorship, support and expertise youth may seek.
- Barriers of income or cost are addressed by linking with community resources and by small grants that are available to youth groups.

Other resources available to support youth:

- Interactive website with social networking features
- Physical activity tracking tools
- Ability to connect with group members on-line and plan their own activities and schedules
- Facilitate connecting with community hosts who meet their specific needs
- Sogo Active is group-based; it provides social support, motivation and reinforcement which are key enablers to this age group.

Adaptable:

- Mechanism to collect and respond to youth and organizational feedback
- It will look different in every community to help ensure relevance
- The robust evaluation will help us to adjust the program as needed for continuous improvement.

Sustainability

- The level of funding and 5 year commitment is unique to the sector and contributes to the success of the program.

Evaluation

- A robust evaluation has been built into the program design and development from the start and is integrated into every aspect of the program. The data collected from Sogo Active will provide unique insight into the issue of youth inactivity that will contribute to knowledge exchange across the sector.

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