

McCreary Walk the Hall

Project Target Risk Factors:

Physical Activity

Mental Wellbeing

Target Population:

All age groups

Project Lead: Pam Little

Community: McCreary (population 480)

RHA: Parkland

Project Partners:

McCreary Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative

McCreary Community Centre Committee

Project Details:

A multiple event /ongoing project

Description:

We requested permission to use our local hall twice a week for an informal walking program. The floor is wood and provides a large area to walk. We had the hall open every Tuesday and Thursday from 4 - 6 PM. for 10 weeks of indoor winter walking. We provided music and other fitness information and equipment for the participants.

Time:

We made a request to the hall committee in September hoping to start in December with the cold weather but we didn't receive the OK till late December.

Walk the Hall ran from January 6, 2011 until March 10, 2011 twice a week.

Objectives:

- to improve access for indoor walking during cold winter months (our community has no gym or indoor track facility) so people continue walking all year round

Planning Supports:

Many people enjoy walking but stop during the winter months. For two years we organized a Walk the Hall in the local school. People found the cement floors were hard on their legs and joints. We could only use the wood floor gym when students were not using it and this often conflicted. People wanted more consistent access for indoor walking in the winter.

We ran an 'Introduction to Running' session in the fall and participants said they would like to continue to run but would like to be indoors on the cold days.

We used information from the CBC program Live Right Now web site and the Running Room to provide suggestions on walking programs, full body workouts and weight programs.

Results:

All participants said they enjoyed the access to an indoor walking environment.

The numbers of participants ranged from 3 to 17 people per day. The average number was 9 participants per day.

What worked:

- offering regular days and hours
- no cancellations
- keeping the atmosphere informal
- people could come & go as they wanted during the 2 hours that the hall was open
- having a volunteer to open and close the door
- someone to encourage people to walk by walking along - helping to get people started
- upbeat music, a variety of music was especially important for the younger people (under 55).
- having information available for people on a resource table for reference

What didn't work and any changes made:

We started with pylons to make a make shift track but deleted the use after the first day so people could change directions, walk up steps on the stage and go wherever they wanted. The leader was important to get people going and when the leader was not there some people found it hard to get motivated.

Unexpected Outcomes:

People asked for more walking/hiking in the spring but outside. They joined the local hiking group.

Other notes:

We could also offer a morning walking time for people who work all day or find mornings better for exercising.

People had to remove outdoor boots at the door, place on a piece of cardboard and bring indoor-only runners to walk.

Volunteers:

Requires at least one volunteer (we used one other volunteer when the main person went on vacation):

- to keep the key and be committed to opening and closing the hall
- set out the handouts and weights and put on music if desired

Facilities:

McCreary Community Centre:

- the key to the side door was provided to the leader for the length of the program
- the large wood dance floor was a good walking surface; the stairs to the stage & storage room were good for climbing
- washrooms were available
- the furnace was on low for maintenance; we did not have to turn it up because we wanted the area cool for exercise

Equipment:

- 4 interlocking mats for people to lie on when stretching
- a couple of donated pedometers and some light weights (2, 3 & 4 lbs)
- handouts on walking programs, simple full body workouts, proper use of weights and stretching for walking/jogging
- a boom-box for music

Other:

We had a cardboard or mat for the snow boots and signs for the door, welcome and instructions for opening up, shutting down and behavior during hall use (i.e. no outside shoes allowed)

Total Costs:

A donation (\$100-\$200) to the hall to cover electricity and cleaning of the hall was offered but rejected. All equipment was donated by project leaders and participants - mats, pedometers, and weights.

Materials developed for your program:

Letters to Hall Committee [requesting use](#) of the hall and [thanking them after](#)

[Posters](#) - to advertise the program

Handouts - walking/running; weights; stretching; full body workout

Signage - instructions for use of hall, opening up & closing

Contact Information:

Community: McCreary

Region: Parklands

Contact person: Pam Little

Email address: pamandgerald@inethome.ca

An alternate contact or for information on other Healthy Together Now programs in this area please contact Carol Schnittjer - cschnittjer@prha.mb.ca