

NWT HEALTHY COMMUNITIES Toolkit

Developing Habits

For children and teens to grow up healthy, it's important they are physically active and eat healthy foods every day.

To help children develop habits that will last a lifetime, an active, healthy lifestyle must start early in life.



Physical Activity

AND THE **BENEFITS OF DOING IT REGULARLY**



Benefits of Physical Activity

- Reduce your risk of heart attack
- Lower blood cholesterol
- Lower risk of Type 2 Diabetes and some Cancers
- Feel better - more energy, better mood, more relaxed
- Manage your weight better
- Lower blood pressure
- Stronger bones, muscles, joints and more
- Strong immune system - quicker recovery time

Things to Remember:

Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity everyday

See everyday activities as a good opportunity to be active

Try to find time for regular exercise

Minimise the amount of time spent in prolonged sitting



Kids with ready access to unsupervised outdoor play have better developed **motor skills, social behaviour, independence and conflict resolutions skills.**

Get out of the way ... and let them play!

Outdoor play is essential because kids are more active when they're outside

We may be so focused on trying to intervene in our children's lifestyles to make sure they're healthy, safe and happy, that we are having the opposite effect. We overprotect our kids to keep them safe, but keeping them close and keeping them indoors may set them up to be less resilient and more likely to develop chronic diseases in the long run.

Parents: Encourage your children to engage more fully with their outdoor environments in a variety of weather conditions. When children are supported to take risks, they have more fun and learn how to assess and manage risk in all areas of their lives.

Educators & Caregivers: Regularly embrace the outdoors for learning, socialization and physical activity opportunities, in various weather conditions - including rain and snow.

School & Child Care Administrators: Choose natural elements over pre-fabricated playgrounds and paved areas - and encourage children to play in, and help design, these environments.

Schools & Municipalities: Examine existing policies and bylaws and reconsider those that pose a barrier to active outdoor play.



Access to active play in nature and outdoors - with its risks - is essential for healthy child development.

We recommend increasing children's opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings - at home, at school, in child care, the community and nature!



Being on the Land

Being on the land is part of an active healthy lifestyle with the benefit of enjoying the sport of the game, commune with nature, and bringing home a feast to the families in your community.

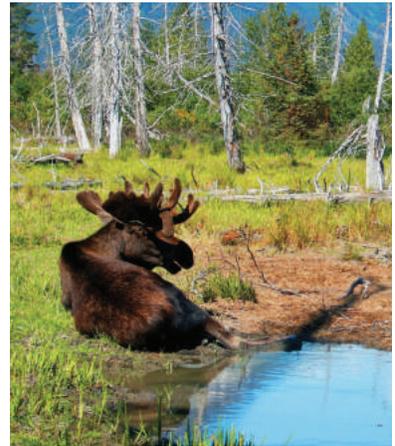
1. Connection with Family and Friends: Being on the land is a natural physical activity that can be done in solitude or socially, with friends and family.

2. Exercise: Being on the land is physically demanding. Whether it is preparing blinds, tending food plots, scouting the woods, hiking into fishing holes, or skidooring to camp. All this preparation is far healthier than that of a sedentary lifestyle.

3. Connecting with Nature: Being in nature provides time to clear your mind. There is no rush, no schedule, no deadlines; nature moves at its own pace. Outdoor exercise is associated with a decrease in tension, anger, and depression when compared to indoor activity.

4. Nutrition: The objective of being on the land is to bring home game meat and eat the fruits of your labour.

5. Adrenaline Boost: Catching wild game can be an exhilarating thing to do!



Being on the Land emphasizes the importance to support the Northern Traditional Games

For more information on the Northern Traditional Games please refer to Smart Management Practice: Culture and Community of Traditional Games

Funding Opportunities with NWT Recreation & Parks Association:

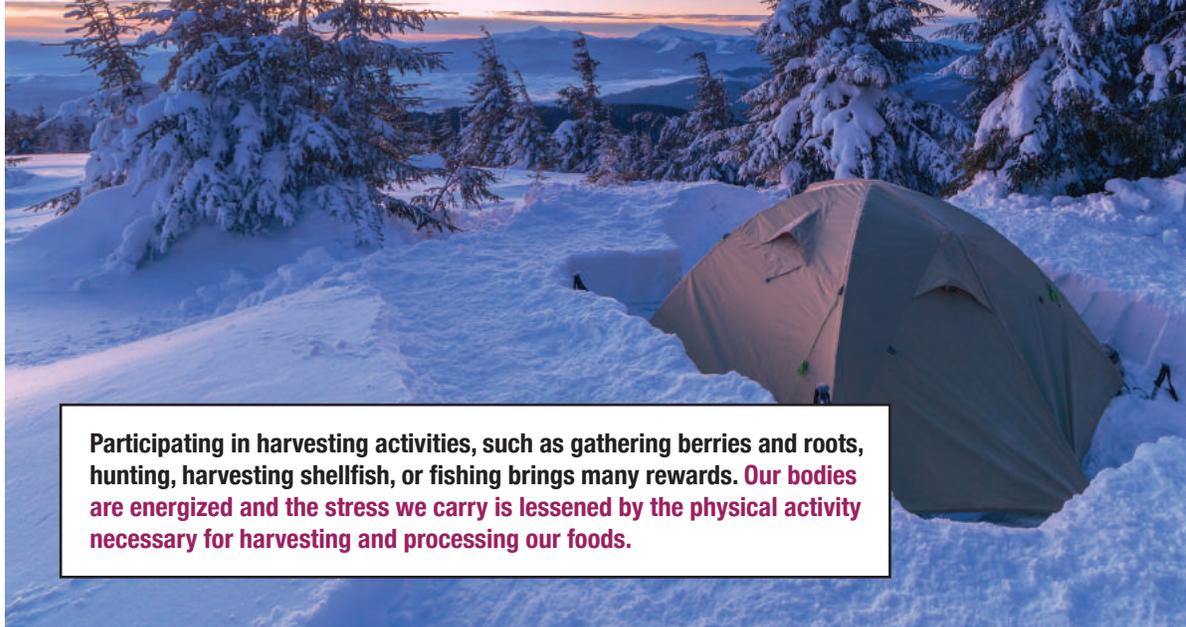
NWT on the Land Collaborative Fund was created to promote & support on-the-land initiatives in the NWT by providing easier access to funding and other resources. There is a lot of interest in on-the-land programs, but funding the money to run these programs can be a lot of work for communities and organizations that have to apply to many different places to get the funding & support they need.

For more info on **On The Land Collaborative Fund** visit:

www.nwtrpa.org/on-the-land-programs/otl-collaborative-fund.html

For more info on these programs offered at **NWT Recreation & Parks Association** please contact:

P: 867-669-8375
www.nwtrpa.org/on-the-land-programs.html



Participating in harvesting activities, such as gathering berries and roots, hunting, harvesting shellfish, or fishing brings many rewards. Our bodies are energized and the stress we carry is lessened by the physical activity necessary for harvesting and processing our foods.

Suggestions for On The Land activities:

Schools and communities across the NWT believe that the traditional way is “Fish camps come before classrooms”. Here are a few suggestions your community could offer:

- Berry Picking 101: Learning which berries are growing around your community and safe to eat. Picking the berries and bringing them back to make jam preserves. (In Tsiigetichic, the Elders volunteer to go on the land and teach students)
- Participating in fish camps and learning how to make dry fish. (Many schools across the NWT offer a fish camp during the school year. In many cases the teachers explain this to be a teach the teacher activity which is a great confidence boost for our youth)
- Being on the land and learning to use the natural resources (i.e.: moss is great for cleaning the dishes)
- Learning about winter safety and survival techniques. This is a requirement if you are going out on the land by skidoo or foot.
- Learning to use a compass or GPS.
- How to paddle and properly operate a canoe.
- Camping Out: learning what is involved in packing and setting up camp; lighting and maintaining a campfire; collecting wood and essentials for your stay.

Are these activities something your community would be interested in offering for the youth?

Through On The Land Programs, the NWTRPA supports community leaders in creating and sustaining activities and programs that help youth:

- Feel confident and safe in the outdoors;
- Develop a connection to their cultural heritage;
- Experience on-the-land learning, and;
- Have fun!

NWTRPA offer risk management packages and workshops, Paddle Canada canoe certifications, Red Cross wilderness and remote first aid, winter safety and survival workshops, and GPS workshops. NWTRPA also support the planning and delivery of and-based programs.

