What do you think of when you hear the word 'recreation'?

By Sharon Smyl, BA

Most people take for granted that recreational activities like reading, gardening, sports or just relaxing during free time benefits individuals, families, communities and societies in general. During the 50's and 60's, it was generally thought that future generations would obtain more and more recreation time as technological advances eased the workload of the average person.

Now, some 40 years later, as we stand at the threshold of the 21st century, it seems that the dream of a society dominated by recreation is just that - a dream! Look around you - ask how many people you know are truly satisfied with their opportunities for recreation?

Perhaps it is time to examine more closely, the benefits of recreation. If we really do obtain important benefits, maybe we should do something to ensure that more time is available and more opportunities are created to enjoy recreation, and that we preserve opportunities that already exist.

This is where key principles to the benefits-based approach to recreation must be introduced. Recreation practitioners are focusing on the desired benefits of having quality parks and recreation opportunities available in their communities as they begin their planning efforts. The outcome or benefit is driving the decision to implement a program, develop and present a budget, or construct a new building.

The benefits-based approach reminds us of the importance and significance of recreation in our day-to-day lives - that recreation makes a difference to individuals, families and communities that make up Alberta and Canada, and to our economy and our environment.

Through the adoption of the benefits-based approach, we as a profession have acknowledged that we must break away from, traditional perspectives - perspectives that assumed that everyone understood the inherent benefits of recreation and parks. In today's economy, no service is automatically deemed essential. We need to conceptualize the benefits we want for our communities as goal statements for specific programs and services. We must recognize that...

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I just celebrated another birthday. As I grow older and hopefully wiser, I become more aware of the stress in society today. People are living on the edge, and some are falling off. High unemployment, and reduction in welfare payments have made an unbearable situation for many. I constantly hear people telling me their job now has the responsibilities of two jobs. I know of recent immigrants who actually hold down two low paying jobs. Stress levels are high in the workplace and in the home. Women have still not achieved pay equity with men and over 60% are working full-time while raising children either alone or with a partner. Job security is a thing of the past and whole sectors of the workforce are disappearing. Talk about a paradigm shift!

In today’s economy and political climate we are told to take more responsibility for our health and recreation. However, it is often a major effort to regularly participate in recreation activities. We tend to do things in fits and spurts. We’ve become a society of couch potatoes. Recreation is good for you. I read from some of the material on the Benefits of Recreation we have in the Centre. Recreation and Fitness – A full and meaningful life. Recreation and active living are important aspects of a healthy lifestyle.

We all know these phrases but do we practice what we preach? I certainly didn’t until recently. Oh, I didn’t have time, or my budget was too tight. Any old excuse. It’s hard to get geared up after a long day at work.

On Canada Day my family joined with hundreds of other Edmontonians to eat ice cream and drink ice tea before enjoying the fireworks, all provided by the City of Edmonton free of charge. We walked and wandered for hours, the children meeting others while playing on the nearby playground equipment. There were people playing softball and soccer, others had brought picnic dinners and extended families were there. Strangers talked to strangers. I realized how we too often see recreation and active living in the old paradigms of having to pay for it at a fitness club or recreation centre. Here we all were, some had never seen fireworks before, even the youngest didn’t get tired as the feeling of mingling with hundreds of our “neighbours”, out in the fresh air, was exhilarating. My spiritual, mental and physical well-being was greatly enhanced by the experience of celebrating Canada’s 127th.

I look forward to new activities this summer in Edmonton and elsewhere on our holidays including the green spaces, trails, wading pools and parks yet undiscovered. How exciting it is to find a place you never knew existed before!

We need to recognize that the small things in life are important, such as getting out as a family, discovering a new place, running down a hill for the fun of it, seeing the joy on children’s faces as they swing across the monkey bars, hiking through a trail. These are the many aspects of recreation and active living that improve our quality of life and personal well-being and will help to keep things in perspective when the world is falling down around us.

Get out and celebrate life as often as you can by living actively, you don’t need a birthday as an excuse.
Linking Alberta's Well-Being Professionals

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The Alberta Centre for Well-Being was created to assist professionals in the promotion of well-being to all Albertans. Over the past 5 years, we have worked diligently to make your job easier. We now ask you to help make our job easier.

Over 5000 people and organizations are part of the The Network of Networks. Since it is nearly impossible to keep track of this number of people, we ask that you inform us when you move. Every newsletter that comes back to us labelled as moved or incorrect address costs us $1.00. Each quarter, a significant number of newsletters are returned. In order to keep costs down, PLEASE LET US KNOW WHEN YOU ARE MOVING! For those of you who live outside of Edmonton, call our toll-free number (1-888-661-4551), for people in Edmonton, or outside the province, call (403) 455-8692, or mail your current information to us.

After the last newsletter was mailed out, we received a number of phone calls indicating that organizations were receiving multiple copies of WellSpring, or were receiving newsletters addressed to former employees. If you can circulate WellSpring in your organization, or if someone in your company who used to receive this newsletter has left, please let us know. We will either change the name on the label, or we will delete that name. WE NEED YOUR HELP to keep our Network up-to-date.

The resources in our library are all health and well-being related, and are available for loan. Borrowers may sign out up to 5 resources for a period of 7 days. We have these limits to allow everyone the opportunity to borrow resources. PLEASE CHECK YOUR BOOK SHELVES...do you have any Centre resources that you may have forgotten to return? For those of you who have had resources for longer than 7 days, please call our new Resource Coordinator, Tracy, to discuss returning them.

Thank-you for helping us.
Sport is pervasive within our culture. It is a structured form of physical activity, bound by rules, which include some form of contest, or personal striving. Individuals may be involved in sport directly or indirectly. They may assume the role of participant, organizer or spectator. No matter what the level of participation, people are affected by sport across their lifespan. Yet, we often only think of the athlete as the youth, or the professional; sport as an activity only for the young or the skilled. Direct sport participation is, however, a lifespan activity, an activity which should be promoted for the numerous benefits it has to offer.

The benefit approach to the description of recreation and leisure has gained recent favour. Since sport is often considered a subset or component of recreation, it is perhaps of value to take a benefit approach to the description of the sporting experience. In particular, there is a need for much investigation and description of the benefits of lifespan primary sport involvement.

How can one assess the benefits of a lifespan of sport? A taxonomy of consequences of sport involvement has been offered by Csikszentmihalyi. The model identifies four main types of benefits which may be obtained from sport involvement. Two of these consequences operate at the level of the individual, while two act at the level of the community. The personal consequences include personal enjoyment, encompassing concepts such as fun or flow, and personal growth which includes aspects of physical health and psychological well-being. The communal consequences include social integration and social change. Social integration involves the transmission of societal values, morals and norms, integrating the community through shared experience. Social change through sport involvement is obtained through educational attainment or social mobility, offering the prospect of increased social status.

**Sport vs Play?**

Sport, it has been said, falls on a continuum somewhere between work and play. Play is an intrinsic activity with a focus on process. Unstructured and self-determined, play is our introduction to a lifetime of sport. Operating in a structured, often controlling environment, work is extrinsic, ego involved, and outcome oriented. Often, after years of participation and development, sport takes on some of the qualities of work. The focus is on outcome. Wins, losses, points, standings, scores and performances become paramount as the sport experience becomes product oriented. The inclusiveness of play becomes the exclusiveness of sport. Those with talent continue, those without, depart. It is at this point that large numbers of participants choose to leave sport, thereby losing the associated benefits of involvement. Re-entry into sport comes some time later, once the need to display one's skills and hide one's weaknesses has diminished. As the focus on outcome becomes reduced, individuals reconsider participation in the sport they once displayed their competence. Sport again becomes play. As before, sport becomes an inclusive experience, offering potential for benefits to be achieved. It is here where the largest potential gains from both a personal and public view may be had.

Sport repatriation has much to offer. It has the potential for physical, psychological, and social benefits. For the large number of individuals who have, at one time or another, accessed sport directly, there exists the need to address re-entry to sport at some point in the lifespan. By reducing constraints to sport re-entry, and actively encouraging sport repatriation, systemic barriers can be removed. The end product will be an intrinsically motivating, enjoyable method of physical activity, thus achieving a valuable form of sustainable recreation. It is difficult to conceive of one playing exercise or physical activity. The ability to play must be recaptured in the sport lifespan to provide the motivational key to ongoing participation.

Congratulations to Kerry on the completion of his PhD degree!
Among the benefits of recreation are the benefits of having Canadian children and youth involved in quality daily physical education programs (QDPE). The following are some of the benefits of having children and youth involved in a QDPE program.

**Academic Benefits**

Several studies indicate that students who are involved in quality daily physical education taught on a daily basis tend to perform as well or better than their less active counterparts, even though their academic curriculum time is reduced.

The Vanves project, a long-term study in France in the 1960s, found that physical education could be increased to one-third of the school day without resulting in any decrease in academic performance (Siedentop and Siedentop, 1985).

In Trois-Rivières, Quebec, a long-term, well-controlled study found that students who receive one hour of physical education daily achieved improved academic performance when compared to the control group who only received thirty minutes of physical education every other day (Shephard, 1982; Volle, 1980).

Furthermore, the student enjoys improved concentration, enhanced memory and learning, enhanced creativity, better problem-solving ability and improved mood state for up to two hours following exercise (Taylor & Taylor, 1989). It seems that these findings would indicate that schools that do not offer quality daily physical education are not meeting the learning conditions necessary for optimal academic achievement.

**Improved Behaviour and School Climate**

Observations by principals and staff in schools with quality daily physical education indicate that students who are comfortable with their ability to control their bodies tend to exhibit more confidence, are willing to take risks in other areas of school life and have a more positive attitude toward school (Green, 1992). Positive changes in discipline, self-concept, peer relations, enthusiasm, sense of mental well-being and reduced aggression lead to overall improvements in the total school climate (Fishburne, 1983). This can translate to improved attendance, reduced violence and a drop in vandalism (Fishburne, 1983).

**Health Benefits**

The health benefits of physical activity are well documented. In brief, they include: reduced risk of coronary heart disease, desirable weight control, reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression (Centre for Disease Control, Atlanta, 1992), enhanced bone and muscle development, delayed onset of osteoporosis (Martin & Houston, 1987) and reduced risk of diabetes, hypercholesterolemia, and hypertension (Fishburne, 1992). Studies also indicate that students who are active regularly tend to sleep better, have better eating habits and smoke less than their inactive counterparts.

*continued on page nine*
Vegetarianism is the practice of omitting animal products, for either health or ethical reasons, from the diet. In recent years this practice has increased in Canada and shows no signs of slowing down. Most people think of a vegetarian diet as highly restrictive and unbalanced. However, with careful consideration to certain nutrients it can be a healthier alternative for those wishing to remove flesh and animal products from their food selections.

Vegetarians vary in how much and which types of animal products they omit from the diet. Semi-vegetarians avoid some animal foods, but not all. Lacto-ovo-vegetarians will accept milk, milk products and eggs. Pollo-vegetarians will eat poultry, and pesco-vegetarians will eat fish. Pure vegetarians, or vegans, will only accept plant derived food in their diets. This is the most restrictive diet as no one plant product can possibly supply the same quality protein and nutrients found in meat.

As more animal products are restricted from the diet, greater precautions must be taken to ensure any lost nutrients are replaced elsewhere. A vegetarian must be “much more critical about what they’re eating” says Janet Polloway, a registered dietician at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton. “Vitamin B12 is not found in anything that grows in the soil, and although minute amounts of zinc and magnesium are required in the diet, they are primarily from animal sources.” The main nutrient deficiency found in vegetarians is an inadequate protein supply. Meat supplies us with essential amino acids. Therefore, greater variety of plant proteins are required in the diet to ensure all needs are met. Otherwise, she forewarns that protein and nutrient deficiencies may “affect a person’s well-being and their ability to react to illness.”

Care must be taken with vegetarian diets

Both pregnant women and children on vegetarian diets pose higher risks as they are both in stages of growth and development with greater nutrient and energy needs. Polloway notes that Vitamin B12, vitamin D, calcium, folate and iron needs are increased during pregnancy and are difficult for even non-vegetarian women to meet. She recommends that pregnant women include milk in their diet and “perhaps use a supplement” to ensure the mother’s and the fetus’ needs are met.

In children, Polloway recommends the use of “milk and eggs to maintain a vegetarian diet.” Shelly Weir, a student dietician at the University of Alberta Hospital warns that a vegan diet could be dangerous for children as “vegan diets are very low in fat and children need calories and adequate protein for growth and maintenance of body tissues.”

Weir was also quick to point out the benefits of becoming a vegetarian. “Vegetarian diets are low in fat and saturated fat, higher in fibre and help lower cholesterol and maintain blood sugar levels.” According to Polloway,
"chronic and degenerative diseases aren't as high in countries where individuals don't consume animal protein." In addition, Weir points out that this diet is also good at "meeting carbohydrate needs and antioxidant vitamin levels," which are too often found to be low in western diets.

Depending on the degree of vegetarianism, ensuring the diet contains enough nutrients to be balanced could require some work. High protein sources for vegetarians are found in items such as whole grains, legumes, beans, nuts, and various soybean products. "Vegetarians must get a mixture of protein from a variety of vegetable and plant sources," says Polloway. This mixture will help to ensure all essential amino acids are contained in the diet. Any one new to vegetarianism is encouraged to research the diet and become educated about how their food supply needs are altered. Canada's Food Guide includes meat alternatives to help vegetarians make more adequate food choices.

In addition, consulting a registered dietician can help. Dietitians can aid in smoothing the transition from a traditional diet to a vegetarian one and ensure that the new choice is a healthier one.

Suggested reading:
The Vegetarian Diet, Making it a Healthy Alternative. SNAP. Safeway's Nutrition Awareness Program.

**Bits with Bite**

An eight-ounce bag of potato chips contains nearly six tablespoons of vegetable oil and supplies up to 80 grams of fat. For most people, that's more fat than they should get from all the foods they eat in an entire day.

For a potato chip taste-alike: preheat your oven to 400 degrees, wash one large potato, and cut it into thin slices. Lightly coat a baking sheet with cooking spray or oil, and arrange the slices in a single layer; brush or spray very lightly with oil, and sprinkle with paprika. Bake for 30 minutes, turning once. The slices should be crisp and brown.

UC Berkeley Wellness Letter. 10/9.

When you see a "light" or "lite" claim on a label, the first question to ask is "Light in what?" It could mean the food has less fat, salt, alcohol, or, the claim may not have anything to do with nutrition at all, it may simply be lighter in colour or taste.

"Calorie-reduced" products were designed for people who want to limit or reduce their energy intake for weight control. These products must contain no more than half the calories of the regular product.
Statistics Canada has documented the decline in church attendance. Other studies have noted that the formal religion population is also aging and could well decline even faster, given that younger members have not joined in the same numbers. But it is apparent from other trends spirituality has not been forgotten, quite the opposite; it is simply being sought in less traditional and less structured ways. Examples of a new earth-rooted spirituality can be found in our renewed interest in the spirituality of the North American native and aboriginal, the recently popular use of the term Gaia (the spiritual mother earth) and a number of New Age approaches to the discovery of personal connectedness that relate to nature.

Herbert Schreuder (1993) speaks of wilderness as a 'place of encounter', a sacred place or sanctuary. He suggests that we will come to understand the views of the Ancient Celts who saw the 'Sacred Groves' as a gateway to the spiritual world, and the native/aboriginal spiritual link with the land. Many of us will discover 'otherness' in the future through the opportunities afforded by outdoor recreation. Canada's native and aboriginal populations are growing in numbers and influence their spiritual connection with the land and with nature will have an increasing influence on popular views.

Many of our expanding ethnic minorities may, indeed, be more ecocentric in their belief systems than the average population (with European roots). Their market and political presence may speed appreciation of the spiritual component of the outdoor recreation experience. Simcox (1991) summarizes a number of research papers with the following conclusions:

* Asian cultures are purported to be more aesthetically oriented - environmental ethics are based on a more harmonious approach where humans are a part of nature.

* Japanese groups tend to have a strong religious or spiritual orientation toward wildlands and, in particular, forested areas.

* Hispanic cultures tend to be more fatalistic in their view of nature and perceive lower possibility for control over natural forces.

MacDonald and Schreyer (1991) suggest a number of implications for the planning of leisure settings:

* develop a capacity to inventory leisure settings as to their spiritual potential.

* develop means of assessing the demand for such experiences, both existing and latent.

* provide programming opportunities that support the spiritual goals and benefits sought.

* design opportunities to suggest the spiritual component of the experience even though it may not be top of the mind for the visitor.

* develop a sensitivity to the preservation of opportunities for such experiences.

Cordell and Siehl (1989) also list four future challenges, given trends in wilderness recreation. The first will be to expand opportunities on public lands. They note that most existing public lands can accommodate substantially
higher visitation and list the following options:
* new or improved access roads.
* better and more convenient facilities.
* more trailhead parking and more trails.
* more intensive management to separate conflicting use.
* encouragement of use in the off-season.
* better information on low impact use in backcountry areas.

It is also quite clear that "increased demand will be accompanied by more overuse and misuse. Outdoor recreation resources are being degraded a little at a time by the collective actions of careless insensitive individuals" (ICOR, 1990). Many small steps will have to be taken to educate the user and limit abuse as participation levels increase on a relatively static land base.

Many new approaches to land use planning, development and management will have to be deployed to offset the anticipated negative environmental, social and economic impacts associated with overuse. Fortunately, the recent wealth of literature on impact management of tourism activity provides many clues regarding future management strategies.

Benefits of QDPE (continued from page five)

New EMG Member

The ACFWB would like to welcome Dr. Wendy Rodgers to our Executive Management Group. Wendy came to the University of Alberta via the University of Windsor, and began her appointment as a tenure-track staff member within the Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies in September 1993. She teaches courses in the areas of health and exercise physiology. She has made numerous presentations at conferences, on the topics of behavioural aspects of physical activity, motivation for physical activity participation, sport imagery, and others related to the behavioural area of sport and physical education. She also has several publications in the areas of social psychology of physical activity and health behaviours.

Wendy has quickly become a valued member of the EMG, and we look forward to her continued involvement with the ACFWB.

Fitness and Lifestyle Benefits

The fitness benefits of physical activity are also well documented. They include improved muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, respiratory endurance, bone density and cardiovascular capacities. Of course, repeated regular activity improves motor coordination and motor skills (Fishburne, 1992). The collective effects of these improvements translates into increased confidence in ones physical abilities and a willingness or enthusiasm to continue participation. Increased energy levels can also lead to an enhanced capacity for work and play.

For information about the Coalition for QDPE in Alberta, contact Schools Come Alive at 454-4745.
Who's new and what's new in the Resource room? I'm new - my name is Tracy Chalmers and I am now the Network/Resource Coordinator for the Centre. My background is in English and psychology, supplemented by training in library information management. I have a genuine interest in the health and well-being field as is reflected in my current personal reading list (Yoga the Iyengar Way, Whole Food Bible, Cultivating Stillness, and Minding the Body, Mending the Mind).

As for resources in the Centre - well - I must admit that they're all new to me! Seriously though, we do have some exciting new acquisitions. The following titles are now available:

**Live It Up! a guide to healthy active living in the senior years** (ParticipACTION & Merck Frosst). A compact health promotion kit that offers practical information for both leaders and seniors themselves on topics such as active living, nutrition, medication, mental health, and social well-being.

**Wellness Encyclopedia of Food and Nutrition: how to buy, store and prepare every variety of fresh food** (Sheldon Margen and the editors of the University of California at Berkeley Wellness Letter). A nicely illustrated and well-laid out text that describes in detail the nutritional makeup of fresh, whole foods. Also provides information on non-nutrient substances in foods that affect our health. (512 pages, 1992).

**The Bodywise Woman: reliable information about physical activity and health** (Melpomene Institute for Women's Health Research). This book represents 8 years of exhaustive research on the psychology, sociology, and physiology of active women. Facts are scientifically corroborated yet presented in a very readable fashion. Recommended for any woman who wants to make informed choices about her health and lifestyle. (287 pages, 1990)

**We're All Special: a self-esteem resource package for teachers, and health professionals** (Canadian Mental Health Association). A public education program designed to instill feelings of self-worth, individuation and responsibility in children and to help them understand their unique differences, strengths, and personalities. Demonstrates also how self-esteem relates to the choices we make and the effect self-esteem has on our overall health. (138 pages, 1989)

These are only a sample of recent arrivals. (Teachers, there are more new resources on promoting self-esteem, if you're interested.) If you have any questions about the resources described above or have suggestions for the library please call me at 1-800-661-4551 or 453-8692.
There is a new resource available through the Alberta Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA), called Benefits of Recreation: Alberta Kit. The first section of this resource is The Speaker’s Toolbox. It is a presenter’s resource package which provides a general guide to assist in making presentations on the benefits of recreation.

The second section is the Alberta Casebook, which is meant to assist in the creation of benefits-based organizations. The Provincial Benefits of Recreation Committee wants to collect more detailed Alberta cases so that practitioners will learn how others have used the benefits-based approach.

The third section includes the Benefits Research Update, and is discussed on page 12 of this edition of WellSpring.

The fourth section highlights Your Benefits of Recreation. There are four major benefit categories - personal, social, economic and environmental. Benefits for numerous target groups are also included - Parks, Children and Youth, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Families, Workplace, and Health Goals. Each package lists various benefits and presents supporting statements and references.

With the attention being paid to health in Alberta, the following are excerpts from the Health Benefits section.

* The benefits of regular physical activity (e.g. walking for older adults) include: improved cardiopulmonary function, lowered blood pressure, increased bone mineral content, increased muscle strength and joint flexibility and improved psychological well-being. Walking is an excellent activity for older adults because it is low impact and the potential for injury is very low (Moore, 1989).

* "Active Living" is based on the premise that the benefits of physical activity go beyond the prevention of disease to include feeling better, having fun, socializing with others, increasing our abilities to function in daily life and gaining more control over our lives (Edwards, 1990). "Active Living" connects the mind, body and spirit in physical activity.

* Evidence from studies involving clinical samples indicates that the psychological benefits associated with exercise are comparable to gains found with standard forms of psychotherapy. It seems that exercise is associated with improvements in mood state and self-esteem (Raglin, 1990).

* Studies have shown that temporary escape benefits are of high importance to people who recreate. Leisure can have a variety of stress-mediating functions. Different activities vary with respect to stress-reducing benefits (Ulrich, Dimberg and Driver, 1991).

* Outward bound experiences enhance self-esteem and self-awareness and increases self-confidence (Hopkins, 1982).

The Benefits of Recreation project is a joint project of the Alberta Centre for Well-Being, Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, and Alberta Municipal Association for Culture.
When the provincial ‘Benefits of Recreation’ committee established and released it’s Communication Goals Plan in September 1993, one of the major projects was the updating of information which supports the notion that recreation is beneficial to all.

In 1992 the Parks and Recreation of Ontario released the document entitled “The Benefits of Parks and Recreation”. This documented the literature which supported many statements made with respect to the beneficial nature of recreation. The literature search for this release was current to early 1991 and it was apparent to the Alberta ‘Benefits’ committee that it was time to update this information. The Alberta Centre for Well-Being’s team of researchers were given the responsibility of completing the information update.

**Our Strategy**

The initial task was to establish terms for the literature search. The list was extensive and included the following terms combined with recreation or leisure or parks: physical health, physical activity, fitness, exercise, social health, mental health, economics, environment, satisfaction, mood, volunteerism, disabilities, hobbies, barriers, benefits, play, family, community action, community mobilization, community recreation, community leisure, community activism, summer camps and camping.

As well as searching the CD ROMS for these terms, we also did a complete listing of all articles that have been published over the past three years in a variety of recreation and leisure journals. These journals included: Recreation Canada, Journal of Leisure Research, Leisure Sciences, Society & Leisure, Recreation Research Review, Therapeutic Recreation Journal, CAHPER, AAPHER, and the Journal of Parks and Recreation Association.

be determining, whether new statements need to be written and/or whether we need to add more supporting evidence to those statements that already exist in the Ontario (and subsequently Alberta) documents. The new addendum of updated information on the benefits of recreation will be available to residents of Alberta in September 1994.

This has been a large undertaking and the Centre is pleased to have been able to lend our support to this project. We have involved graduates from the Recreation and Leisure Studies program and graduate students from the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta in this project. By the time the addendum reaches your hands it will have passed through many careful reviews and many hands. This project has indeed required a team effort!
Heart disease may be the Number One killer of Canadians, but attitude surveys reveal that cancer is the Number One fear. The Canadian Cancer Society is working to reduce fears and correct misconceptions by educating people to take charge of their health through lifestyle changes and early detection practices.

October is Breast Health Month and the Society will be hosting special events throughout the province to raise awareness about breast health issues.

Currently, one in nine women can expect to develop breast cancer during her lifetime, with the majority of cases (67%) occurring after age 55. Breast cancer is the leading type of cancer in Canadian women with 17,000 new cases expected to be diagnosed in 1994. Incidence rates have increased at an average of 1.5% each year since 1981. However, this increase is restricted to women age 50 and over. Rates for women under 50 have not changed in the past two decades.

The major risk factors are, unfortunately, beyond one's control; being a woman, increasing age, previous breast cancer, and strong family history. Some additional minor risk factors have been identified but there isn't enough information yet to be able to rely on primary prevention as the way to control breast cancer. A woman's best defense against breast cancer is early detection.

The Canadian Cancer Society's strategy for breast health lies in the area of early detection. Early detection saves lives. The Society recommends:

1. Monthly Breast Self-Examination (BSE) for all women.
2. Yearly breast physical examination by a health professional.
3. Mammography. All women 50-69 years of age should have a mammogram every two years. Outside that age group, a doctor may recommend a mammogram for diagnostic purposes.

Breast Health Education resources and programs are available from the Canadian Cancer Society throughout the year. Breast Health programs are also offered by registered nurses specifically in the workplace. Many events are being organized around the province for Breast Health Month in October. Contact your local Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society for more information or phone the Division office at 1-800-661-2261.
Recreation
(continued from page one)

Recreation is actually more than just important to our well-being - that it is, in fact, essential. Take away those opportunities and what is left?

It is important to become involved now because today's decisions affect our quality of life now and in the future. Ask yourself what kind of society you want for you and your future generations. Do you want one in which recreation is considered essential? Do you want one in which recreation opportunities are abundant and available to all, where parks and open spaces are protected and cherished?

Here is a vision for the future of recreation in your life, your family, your community and your environment.

By the year 2001, recreation in Alberta will be viewed as essential:
* in determining a meaningful quality of life
* in determining personal well-being
* in determining community well-being
* to supporting family development
* to supporting development of vibrant neighbourhoods
* to supporting development of self-help groups
* to stewardship of the environment
* to economic growth and prosperity

If you can imagine this vision, then perhaps you can start to think of what you can do to make it a reality in your life and in the lives of your family, community and workplace.

To achieve personal well-being through recreation, use the benefits-based approach to recreation by: deciding on the end results of your recreation experience - what you want to enjoy, to feel, to experience; selecting the recreation activity or program that will provide this end result; and do and enjoy this activity!

The future potential of the benefits-based approach will not be realized overnight. As the benefits-based approach evolves, communities and community leaders will begin to accept and understand this new approach to recreation. Together we will shape the future - a benefits-based profession, because the future imagined for recreation and parks is simply a reflection of the values and desires that society holds.

More Coming Up...

"What? Me Talk About Sex!" October 12, 1994 - Red Deer, 8:30 to 4:30. A workshop for Health and Human Service professionals addressing a wide range of sexual issues and problems experienced by persons who have illness, disease, injury and physical disability. Sponsored and hosted by The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada. For more information contact Joanne Seeferd at 345-0290 or Shirley McFall at 471-3313.

National AIDS Awareness Week. October 3 - 9, 1994 is National AIDS Awareness Week, a national week of community activities brought to you by the Canadian AIDS Society in cooperation with the Canadian Public Health Association and the Canadian Hemophilia Society. For more information call the Canadian AIDS Society at (613) 230 - 3600.
INSTRUCTION IN PROGRAM EVALUATION. The Canadian Evaluation Society, a national organization dedicated to improving the practice of program evaluation, is sponsoring two workshops this fall as part of its "Essential Skills" series. The workshops are entitled:
* Improving Program Performance (ongoing program Monitoring)
* Evaluating for Results (outcome evaluation)
Each workshop is one day in length and will be offered in both Calgary and Edmonton.
For further information, please contact either Wendy Antoniuk at 422-1441 in Edmonton, or Carole Brownlee at 289-2221 in Calgary.

FRESH START: A Proven Way to Quit Smoking. Training for Workplace Facilitators. September 13-14, 1994, Calgary and September 20-21, Edmonton. The Canadian Cancer Society provides training sessions to workplace facilitators who want to lead their own in-house smoking cessation programs. For more information, contact Susanne Arnold or Marilyn Kennedy at 228-4487 or 1-800-661-2262 in Calgary, or contact Carolyn Weymouth at 455-7181 in Edmonton.

MANAGING CHANGE... CREATING OPPORTUNITIES. Association for Worksite Health Promotion Conference. September 21-24, 1994, Portland, Oregon. For more information, contact Rachel Riggs as (708) 480-9574.

PARTNERS - Health & Education Creating Healthy Schools. September 30 - October 1, 1994, Calgary. For more information, contact Lucille Spiller at the Alberta Teachers' Association, 1-800-232-7208.

Ted Gaebler ... REINVENTING GOVERNMENT. October 27, 1994, Red Deer, AB. For more information, contact the Alberta Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA) at 453-8631.

RECREATION & FAMILIES - ARPA Annual Conference & General Meeting. October 27-29, 1994, Red Deer, AB. For more information, contact ARPA 453-8631.

ITCH '94. CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES. A Conference Addressing Information Technology Issues in Community Health. October 30 - November 2, 1994, Victoria, BC.

FAS/FAE (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects) Conference. An interdisciplinary approach to the management of FAS/FAE from disciplines, including medical, psychological, familial and educational. November 1-2, 1994, Red Deer, AB. For more information contact Shirley Gibson at 340-5274.

HEALTH PROMOTION ASSOCIATION OF LETHBRIDGE & AREA. Monthly Network Hour. Meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month, starting September 21, 1994. 8:30 am at the Lethbridge Health Unit. For more information contact Susan MacMillan at 382-7105.

IS IT A PAIN? - Chronic Pain Group. Dealing with chronic pain support and education group meets regularly, starting September 12, 1994. 9:00 - 12:00 at the Vermillion Provincial Building. For more information contact Pam King at 853-5270.

EDMONTON WELLNESS GROUP. Mary Par Skene, Senior Vice President of Grey Nuns Hospital will speak on Creating a Community Care Industry. September 28, 1994 12:00 - 1:30pm. For information contact the ACFWE at 453-8692.

CALGARY WELLNESS GROUP. Dr. Brent T. Friesen, Medical Officer of Health, Calgary Health Services, will be presenting highlights from the Calgary Health Services recently published report: "Health of Calgarians 1994", September 28, 1994 from 3:00 - 4:00 pm at the Calgary Family Services Bureau. For more information contact Marilyn Day at 233-2370.
Physical Activity Promotes Self-Esteem

Physical activity programs are among the most common interventions for increasing overall self-esteem. In a recent literature review on the subject, Dr. Leonard Winkel and his team from the University of Alberta found out why.

Studies comparing exercisers and non-exercisers showed that male and female exercisers of all ages typically had a better image of themselves than non-exercisers. Other studies looked at physical activity as an intervention for influencing body image. Results indicated increases in self-esteem in a variety of subjects (people of all ages, psychiatric patients, alcoholics, etc.) and for a variety of physical activities (muscular endurance activities, sports, dance programs, etc.). The improvement was particularly pronounced in subjects who were initially lower in self-esteem.

Studies conducted on children also showed increases in self-esteem. Simple activities, such as physical fitness and aerobic activities, had a much more profound impact on their self-esteem than complex activities which are harder to master. Cooperative fitness programs led to greater improvements than competitive programs in the physical self-concepts of high school girls.

However, a few studies suggest that physical activity sometimes promotes a distorted body image and an unrealistic desire to lose weight. In addition, participants in certain sports may be at risk for dietary or weight management problems. Many gymnasts, skaters, dancers, and marathon runners, for example, tend to have a greater preoccupation with their weight and diet.

Controlling Weight
A large part of self-esteem is dependent on body image, which depends on weight. Unhealthy habits among women, smoking, poor nutritional practices, and vigorous physical activity are often adopted to achieve an unhealthy silhouette.

On the other hand, excessive weight also poses a health risk because it is associated with heart disease and diabetes. A crucial factor in losing weight and, particularly, in maintaining weight loss is physical activity. By affecting body image, physical activity can lead to a change in overall self-esteem in overweight people. At the same time, it enhances physical health.

Promoting Self-Acceptance
Caution must be exercised with the weight argument, however. The overwhelming importance of body attractiveness suggests that it is wiser to promote acceptance of a wide range of body sizes and shapes than to emphasize thinness. The equation between beauty and overweight silhouettes must be replaced by a realistic appraisal of one's body and, ultimately, self-acceptance.

Promoting self-acceptance through physical activity can be done by emphasizing task mastery instead of comparisons with others. Health professionals can help individuals to set their own standards and seek personal improvement with regard to a physical task. Professionals can also encourage people to accept their own limitations and capacities in terms of body build or athletic talent. By the same token, they should have success on the individual's efforts toward achieving realistic goals.

Promoting Feelings of Competence
Physical activity provides challenges for the body. These are opportunities for feeling successful and competent. Achieving short- and long-term goals related to these challenges promotes feelings of competence.

Toward Greater Self-Esteem
Self-esteem is a product of social interaction. Physical activity will therefore influence self-esteem even more when it becomes highly valued at the social and personal levels. Promoting the benefits of physical activity can enhance its social value. At the personal level, its value will increase as individuals experience feelings of competence from the practice of an activity. Enhancing self-esteem must be a social and cultural decision as well as an individual decision. Individuals may incorporate and resist the pressures toward conformity, but society and culture must reinforce this decision by turning their focus away from appearance toward the promotion of self-acceptance and feelings of competence.

For More Info...
This article is based on a 1994 literature review funded by the Vitality Program, which is an integrated program to enjoy healthy eating, enjoyable physical activity, and positive self and body image. A photocopy of the literature review, entitled "Self-Esteem and Body-Image: Structure, Formation and Relationship to Health-Related Behaviours," is available for $20 plus GST from the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, 313-1600 James Naismith Dr., Gloucester, Ontario, K1B 5N4.