

(The following guidelines have been adapted from the Walpole Island Health Centre, Ontario brochure, “*How to Set Up a 100-mile Walking Club*”)

How to Set Up a 100 Mile Club (Walking Club)

Goal of a 100 Mile Club:

To encourage community members to start walking or running for a healthier life.

Objectives to Reach the Goal:

1. Have walking workshop(s) to educate the community on proper and safe walking techniques.
2. Have set rules and criteria.
3. Have incentives to encourage community members to walk.
4. Monitor health status at monthly weigh-ins. E.g. Measure blood pressure, blood sugars.
5. Provide support and on-going education via flyers, newsletter, local radio station, etc.
6. Evaluate the health status:
 - *Monthly* – the number of community members that weigh-in
 - *Yearly* – the number of community members still walking
 - *5 Years* – the number of community members still walking
 - *10 Years* – the number of community members still walking

Planning Your 100 Mile Club

After you have decided what your overall **goal** will be and having developed a series of measurable **objectives**, now is the time to roll up your sleeves and work out the details of your club.

Consider the following:

1. **Staff Support** – Staff that practice and believe in the value of exercise.
2. **Incentive Awards** – Once a community member reaches a particular goal (100 miles, 200 miles, etc.), a prize can be awarded to recognize this accomplishment.

Incentive examples:

T-shirt, caps, water jugs, handweights, etc.

Determine funding source:

- Participants' entry fees
- Your program budget
- Donation through private enterprises

Psst! Here's a tip on seeking donations in the local community....

In requesting support from private businesses (e.g. a department store, a food market, a pharmacy, restaurants, shoe store, etc.), here's how you can proceed:

- Contact the manager
- State that you are seeking sponsorship or support for a health promotion program in your community
- Briefly describe the target problem (e.g. diabetes, obesity)

- Then describe how you, the *100 Mile Club*, will help alleviate the problem.
- Let the manager know specifically what you would like (e.g. 10 T-shirts, 3 gift certificates, a dinner for two, etc.).
- Remember to give recognition to all donations via local newspaper, community newsletter, local radio station, T-T-shirts printed with the name of the sponsor, etc.
- Acknowledge receipt of donations by sending a ‘thank you’ letter to all contributors.

3. Advertise and Promote – Determine the best way to reach your target group. For example,

- Posters/flyers
- Community radio
- Word of mouth
- Community churches
- Community newsletter
- Inter-department memos
- Presentation to community, Chief and Council

4. Community Involvement – Don’t forget Chief and Council! Encourage their involvement--they may surprise you. Ask local program staff to sign-up. Your enthusiasm will be contagious.

5. 100 Mile Club Rules and Criteria –

- a) Open to ALL ages
- b) You may choose to walk alone or in a group
- c) Each participant will be given a monthly calendar to monitor his/her mileage
- d) All miles walked must be reported to the Health Centre staff on the first Friday of each month
- e) Your distance may be covered by: walking, treadmill, jogging, wheelchair, stationary bike, swimming or aerobic exercise.

Walking or Jogging	20 min. = 1 mile
Biking (or stationary bike)	10 min. = 1 mile
Swimming	20 min. = 1 mile
Treadmill	20 min. = 1 mile
Aerobics	20 min. = 1 mile

f) Fee: \$1.00 per month

6. Registration – Having a registration fee can pay for incentives.

If there is an intensive screening (BP, BS, Wt, BMI, etc.), have plenty of support staff or volunteers available on your registration day.

7. Recording –

- A walking calendar can be given to ALL participants to record miles walked.
- Have participants report miles walked monthly. Record measurements, weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, etc.
- Keep an accurate record of each participant. This record is a good **evaluation tool** and keeps us updated on the participants' progress.

8. Displaying Mileage –

- Display miles walked on a bulletin board
- Put accomplishments in your community flyer

9. Safety – If possible, provide a “Walking Workshop” for your community on *walking techniques* and *safety*. The nearest Physiotherapist (local or at closest health facility) may be asked to provide information at the workshop.

If a *walking workshop* is not possible, all staff should be updated on proper safe walking techniques.

During the winter months, see if you can arrange to have participants walk in an indoor facility, such as at a *school, community hall, arena, or shopping mall*.

10. **Evaluation** – It is important that you evaluate the program to ensure that you are meeting your goals and objectives, and to see whether any changes are necessary. Evaluation can be done yearly, or when each participant meets their goal (e.g. 100 miles, 200 miles, etc.)
11. **Enthusiasm** – To keep the interest of your community and recruit new participants, you will need to offer new and different fitness activities.

EXAMPLES:

#1 Community Walking Contest

A one-month community walking contest where community members walk in teams of four. The team that walks the most miles in that month receives a prize.

#2 Community Biking Contest

A one-month community biking contest where there are 3 divisions: a men's, women's, and a couples' division. Prizes can be given to the men, women and couples that bike the most miles in that month.

Psst! Here's a helpful tip on starting a new program...

When starting a new program, ALWAYS check to see what is already available by networking. There may already be a program out there that is tailor-made to your community's needs. Check it out! Don't re-invent the wheel if you don't have to.

Additional Resources:

For more information on this **Walking Club model**, contact:
Penny Williams, CHR at the **Walpole Island Health Centre** at:
(Telephone) 519-627-0765 or (Fax) 519-627-0017

Walking Magazine – “the magazine of smart health and fitness.”
The magazine of interest to people who walk. Published seven times a year, it contains walkers’ stories, information on healthy diet, recipes, walking tips (e.g. advice on suitable walking wear), and insights into health (e.g. May 2001 issue contains an article entitled “*Diabetes: America’s newest health epidemic.*”)

Available on newsstands or by subscription. Contact:

Reader’s Digest Association,
WALKING,
Customer Service Department,
P.O. Box 5073,
Harlan, IA 51593
(800) 829-5585