



# **Middle Childhood Matters**

On the

## **North Shore**

# **Research Report**

Prepared on behalf of the  
**Middle Childhood Matters Coalition of the North Shore**  
2007/2008



# *North Shore Middle Childhood Matters*

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# Executive Summary

## Project Overview

The United Way of the Lower Mainland has taken the lead in promoting a closer look at the social, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being of school age children, particularly in their out-of-school time. Recent international and local research focusing on children 6-12 years old has identified a cohort of needs that are unique to this age group. Recognizing this, the UWLM has engaged a number of lower mainland communities, including Burnaby, Surrey, Richmond, Tri-Cities and the North Shore, in research and action planning initiatives designed to identify the programs and services that exist to meet the needs of school age children in their out of school time. The initiatives will also identify and work to address the gaps, overlaps and barriers that prevent universal access to out of school programming.

The North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Table is comprised of the Municipality of West Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver, the North Vancouver District and Bowen Island and Lions Bay. This report presents the results of the research and planning process conducted by the Middle Childhood Matters of the North Shore Coalition, funded primarily through the UWLM. It will highlight the research findings, and outline the action plans that have been created to support these findings.

It is the goal of this project to increase the capacity of North Shore community agencies and organizations to provide programs and services that meet the needs of its school age children in their out-of-school time by addressing issues related to availability, access and participation.

## The Rationale:

Enabling school age children to develop into confident, positive and empowered individuals requires that parents, schools and the community are aware of their key developmental needs, and cooperatively strive to meet these needs. The failure to do so puts these children at risk socially, physically and academically as the move into adolescence. While recent research is indicating that this age group has unique and compelling needs, they are often overshadowed and overlooked by the prominent focus on the needs of early childhood and youth. This same research indicates that engagement in appropriate OST programs and services is a key determinant of developmental health and wellness for children in their middle years.

There is a growing awareness that families and communities have a vital role in encouraging participation and providing access to developmentally appropriate out-of-school time programs and services. A lack of encouragement and access is detrimental to school age children. If we are to provide the kind of programs and services that meet the needs of this age group, we need to look closely at the nature of those needs, and increase the capacity of the North Shore community to meet them.

## FORWARD

As part of the ongoing effort to contribute to the development of the social, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being of children, the United Way of the Lower Mainland (UWLM) selected the North Shore to participate in the Middle Childhood Matters project, which now includes the communities of Burnaby, Tri-Cities, Richmond, and Surrey.

The North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Table was formed in November of 2006 with the mandate to conduct a research project designed to identify the particular needs of school aged children and their families on the North Shore, particularly during out of school time; the resources that are in place to support these needs; and the gaps and barriers that exist preventing universal access to available programs and services. Subsequent to the research phase of the project, the NS MCM Table developed five action plans designed to engage the community of agencies, organizations and businesses to collaboratively address identified needs, gaps, overlaps and barriers. This process was completed in November of 2007.

The NS MCM Table is comprised of the following agencies, organizations:

### Family Services of the North Shore

- Sue Bauman

### Ministry of Children and Families

- Sarah James
- Janet Campbell

### North Vancouver Recreation Commission

- Arleta Beckett
- Kristina Shubert
- Linette Smith
- Richard Gauntlet
- Trish Holme

### North Vancouver School District

- Ken Neale

### North Vancouver City

- Lisa McCarthy

### North Vancouver District

- Annie Mauboules

### North Shore Community Resources

- Li Boeson
- Nancy Hollstedt

### North Shore Multicultural Society

- Elizabeth Jones
- Wendy McCulloch

### North Shore Neighbourhood House

- Don Rutherford

### Squamish Nation

- Anjeanette Dawson
- Kim Seward

United Way of the Lower Mainland

- Jeff Calbick

Vancouver Coastal Health

- Donna Halloran
- Jean Thompson
- Linda Buchanan
- Maria Ogilvie

West Vancouver School District

- Maureen Ciarniello
- Brad Daudlin

West Vancouver Municipality

- Anne Mooi
- Lynda Shaw

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report by the North Shore Middle Childhood Table is to present the results of the research and action planning process to provide guidance to the agencies, organizations and businesses that sponsor out of school programs and services for school age children on the North Shore. It is hoped that by collaboratively implementing these developed action plans, the North Shore community will contribute significantly to the developmental health and wellness of school-age children, and significantly reduce the risk they face as they move into adolescence

## **MIDDLE CHILDHOOD; A CHALLENGE FOR COMMUNITIES**

Children 6-12 years old have unique developmental needs that are the responsibility of their family, the community, their schools, and of municipal and provincial policy. These developmental needs are physical, social, emotional and cognitive, and are in many ways different from those of early childhood and of youth 13-19. New research is indicating that many children in this age group are not receiving the support they require to be developmentally healthy, and are at risk and vulnerable as they approach adolescence.

Factors contributing to these developmental risks are:

- Growing importance of peers
- Growing desire for independence
- Growing need to manage emerging physical, social, emotional and cognitive changes and transitions
- Growing ability to move about the community without parents or caregivers
- Increasing impact of media and technology
- Growing need for connections to positive adult role models
- 

The conceptual framework developed by the United Way of Ottawa to address developmental risks of this age group identifies the following essential structures:

- Safe and caring environments
- The meeting of fundamental needs
- The opportunity to develop competencies
- The provision of stable and nurturing relationships

The United Way of the Lower Mainland is similarly committed to focusing attention on the developmental needs of school age children, predominately in their out of school time, and to indicate strategies to meet these needs across communities. The UWLM developed “The Strategy for School Age Children” to meet the following needs:

- The need for a continuum of support, specifically the need to bridge the gap between early childhood and adolescence;
- The increasing incidence of “problem behaviours” in the 6-12 year old group;
- The need to build healthy communities that include all ages and all cultures;
- The perception that there are gaps in services for this age group;
- The need for a strategic conceptual framework for services to this age group; and,
- The need for a policy framework

The United Way of the Lower Mainland has supported the “Strategy for School Age Children” through research conducted by the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology and Special Education at UBC, led by Kimberly Schonert Reichl. This recent landmark research involved 2000 children 9-12 years of age in the Greater Vancouver Regional District, and has been instrumental in identifying key areas where school age children need support, particularly in their out-of-school time.

# **Background and Introduction**

## **A Look at the North Shore**

The North Shore is comprised of five municipal communities: The District of North Vancouver; the City of North Vancouver; and the Municipality of West Vancouver, the Municipality of Bowen Island and the Village of Lions Bay, with a combined population of 187, 000 residents, 13,000 of them children between the ages of 6-12.

The socio-economic levels within and between these communities are highly variable, ranging from very high to very low. While the North Shore is seen as a primarily advantaged community, approximately 10% of families live at or below the poverty line. Single parent families comprise 21% of the population, with 80% of these headed by women. Approximately 70% of women working on the North Shore have children at home

The demographics in all five communities have changed dramatically over the past few years. Increased immigration, particularly from Iran, has put pressure on agencies and organizations to meet language and cultural needs. As an example, the number of ESL students in the North Vancouver School District has tripled since 1990. Approximately 20% of the population on the North Shore represents visible minorities, predominately Persian and Chinese, with others of Korean, Filipino, Japanese descent. The aboriginal population of approximately 2,000 people, one quarter of whom are children under 15, is divided between two urban Nations, the Squamish Nation and The Burrard Band (Tsleil Waututh).

The North Shore is a geographically challenging, bounded by Burrard Inlet to the south, large mountains to the north, and broken up by hilly terrain, creeks, rivers and inlets. The North Shore stretches from Lions Bay to Deep Cove, a distance of almost 40 kilometres in length, but with 95% of the population within 4 kilometres of the shoreline. North Vancouver District alone is divided into 45 regional areas. These factors combine to make transportation, participation and collaboration difficult, particularly for those on Bowen Island and at Lions Bay.

It is a goal of this project to create the structures that will enable agencies and organizations throughout the North Shore to plan together more effectively to provide programs and services for school age children in their out of school time.

# **A look at the North Shore *Middle Childhood Matters* Project**

## **Starting Up:**

The North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Project was initiated by a core group of leaders from key agencies and organizations on the North Shore. The UWLM assumed the sponsorship of the Middle Childhood Project on the North Shore, and a community table was quickly convened to include interested agencies and organizations, and a coordinator hired.

The MS MCM Table determined that four questions would provide the frame for the research project:

1. What are the needs of school age children as they relate to out-of-school time programs and services?
2. What kinds of programs and services are required?
3. What kinds of programs and services for out-of-school time are available?
4. What are barriers to accessing appropriate out-of-school time programs and services?

## **Learning about the Needs:**

The NS MCM project began with a close look at the issues surrounding the unique and compelling needs of school age children through a review of the literature, a study of the research by Kimberly Schonert Reichl, and input from those communities farther along the planning path.

## **Creating an Inventory**

The NS MCM engaged in a process to identify categories of programs and services available to school age children on the North Shore. This process was extended by the coordinator to complete a database of over 200 program and service providers across the North Shore.

## **Developing Research Instruments and Collecting Data**

Learning from the communities that had completed their research phase, the NS MCM developed survey instruments to be used on-line and as hard copies to collect data from parents, children, providers and school administrators. Focus groups with parents and children supplemented the surveys.

## **Creating a Strategic Plan:**

A further major step was the completion of a strategic planning process that included the development of a vision, a mission statement, a set of guiding principles and a decision making policy:

### **Vision**

A community where children 6-12 thrive

### **Mission:**

To increase the capacity of the North Shore community to collaboratively provide opportunities and supports for school-aged children 6-12 years old and their families, that support social emotional competence, physical health and well-being, and connectedness to parents, peers, school, and the community .

### **Guiding Principles:**

The North Shore *Middle Childhood Matters* Table is committed to a planning model that:

- Is child and family centered
- Is inclusive, enabling all community voices to be heard
- Is based on consensus and collaboration
- Demonstrates respect for community and parent expertise
- Builds on the strengths of existing programs and relationships
- Provides programs that reach the *hard to reach*
- Develops programs that are research-based

### **Decision Making Guidelines:**

Collaboration and consensus-building are the primary platforms for decision-making for the North Shore *Middle Childhood Matters* Table.

A decision-making process was developed to address decisions of considerable importance to the members of the Middle Childhood matters table that require a vote.

A Planning Framework was also developed to establish the links between the goals of the United Way, the mission and goals of the NS MCM, and the research findings. This framework was key to developing well-aligned action plans.

# RESEARCH

## Methodology:

The North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Table developed a four phase approach to the out-of-school time project, moving from research to action planning. The NSMCM Table determined that this research was to be both qualitative and quantitative, reflecting the atypical political, demographic and geographical construct of the North Shore area.

It also determined that the purpose of the research was to answer four questions:

1. What are the needs of school age children as they relate to OST programs and services?
2. What kinds of programs and services are required to meet these needs?
3. What kinds of programs and services for OST are available?
4. What are barriers to accessing appropriate OST programs and services?

A research plan was created that included four distinct phases:

- Phase 1: Literature review and Inventory of Community Assets
- Phase 2: Survey and focus group development and implementation
- Phase 3: Data analysis
- Phase 4: Action Planning

The results of the Research process follows

## Phase 1: Literature Review and Inventory of Community Assets

### Literature Review:

A literature review was conducted using research findings from a variety of international, national, and local sources. This research provided valuable information about the needs, risks, protective factors, barriers and appropriate programming for school age children in their out-of-school time.

### Inventory of Community Assets for School Age Children and their Families

Approximately 170 programs and services for school age children in their out of school time on the North Shore were identified and categorized in a data base. An additional 57 out-of-school care facilities and 65 churches were identified. These programs and services were offered by a combination of not-for-profit agencies, as well as municipal, educational and business organizations. Cost for participating in these programs varied from no cost to over \$60/hour.

While not exhaustive, the inventory provided an overview of the experiences available to school age children on the North Shore. What was less clear, and required further research, were the gaps, overlaps and barriers to participating in the myriad of opportunities presented

## **Phase 2: Planning Framework and Data Collection Methodology**

The NS MCM Table determined the following research questions:

1. Who will data be collected from
  - a. Parents
  - b. Children
  - c. Program and service providers
  - d. School administrators
2. What kinds of data are required
  - a. Qualitative
  - b. Quantitative
3. How will data be collected
  - a. On-line surveys
  - b. Paper surveys
  - c. Focus groups with parents and children
4. Where will data be collected
  - a. Schools
  - b. Community Centres
  - c. On-line
5. When will data be collected
  - a. February through June, 2007
6. Who will do the analysis of the data
  - a. NS MCM steering committee and committee as a whole

## **Phase 3: Data Collection and Analysis**

Through on-line surveys, data were collected from 31 program and service providers, and 34 school administrators. Paper surveys were collected from 92 school age children at Norgate and Bowen Island Community Schools, and from 50 parents from school PACs. Approximately 150 grade 6 students from six schools in North and West Vancouver were involved in focus groups through the Environmental Youth Alliance. Approximately 20 parents were engaged in focus groups held at the North Vancouver District Municipal Hall, Lucas Centre and over the phone.

The steering committee analyzed collected data, and prepared a summary report for the NS MCM Table.

## **Phase 4: Action Plans**

The Steering Committee reviewed the data from the local research project in the context of global research findings, and made five recommendations for action plan development:

1. Increased use of school-based community activities and programs
2. Increased access to program and service information for parents and children
3. Increased access to effective and appropriate public transportation for targeted groups
4. Increased agency and organization collaboration and cooperation to reduce gaps and overlaps in programming
5. Increased inclusion for children and families isolated from out-of-school activities by poverty, language, culture or disability

## **Research Results:**

Out of school time engagement is an important determinant of the social, emotional, cognitive and physical health and wellness of school age children. The purpose of this project is to answer these questions with a North Shore perspective:

1. What are the needs of school age children as they relate to OST programs and services?
2. What kinds of programs and services are required to meet these needs?
3. What kinds of programs and services for OST are available?
4. What are barriers to accessing appropriate OST programs and services?

These questions anchored the data collection process, and provided direction for the analysis and action planning process.

## **Literature Review:**

### **Needs of School Age children:**

Extensive review of the literature identified the following needs of school age children:

1. To have basic social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs met
2. To have a safe, caring and stimulating environment
3. To belong
4. To engage
5. To develop positive relationships
6. To learn developmentally appropriate skills
7. To develop confidence, self-respect and self-esteem
8. To connect with supportive, significant adults over time
9. To be resilient

The recent local Vancouver area research conducted by UBC and Kimberley Schonert Reichl supported these findings through study under the following headings:

1. Connectedness to parents, peers and significant adults
2. Feelings of competence
3. Social and emotional health
4. Positive body image

Schonert Reichl's research revealed that an uncomfortably high percentage of children in the lower mainland, particularly those heading toward grade 7, struggle in the areas of competence, connectedness, social and emotional health, and positive body image. In most respects, this is more noticeable in boys. Her research also provided some guidance for those planning out of school activities and opportunities:

1. Children benefit significantly from participating in structured OST activities
2. Children who engage in excessive use of technology report being less happy and competent than their peers
3. Connectedness to parents is central for development
4. Relationships with peers and significant adults are important in fostering children's social and emotional competence

## **Risk Factors**

The majority of school age children move into adolescence demonstrating good health and wellness. However, there are a growing number of risk factors that can make these transitions problematic for vulnerable children:

1. Poverty
2. Racism and multi-culturalism
3. Physical or social isolation
4. Decreased support from neighbourhoods and extended families
5. Increase in two working parent families and single families
6. Reduced contact and support with significant adult role models
7. Ongoing exposure to violence through TV, music, video games
8. Increased tendency toward aggression amongst children
9. Transience
10. Academic pressure

## **Elements of Successful Programming:**

Schonert Reichl asked the children in her study what they did in their out of school time, and what they would like to be doing. She found that 50% of the children in the study were engaged in structured OST activities including sports, the arts, lessons and clubs. The other half were generally at home, engaged in activities such as homework or technology that would tend to disengage them socially.

What, then, makes a successful OST program, activity, opportunity or service: An extensive review of many studies, both qualitative and quantitative, indicate that successful OST programs and services

1. Are well-structured
2. Have trained adult supervision
3. Provide choice
4. Encourage engagement and belonging
5. Explicitly teach skills
6. Are challenging, interesting and fun
7. Are multi-aged
8. Connect to schooling

The review of the existing literature regarding OST programming was valuable in setting the stage for the development of the remainder of the research project.

## **Inventory of Out-of- School Time Program and Service Providers**

The inventory of agencies, organizations and businesses providing out-of- school time programs and services included approximately 180 entries, comprised of recreation centres, libraries, schools, counseling services and extensive opportunities for sports, lessons, the arts and interest-based clubs

### **Out-of-School Care**

There were approximately 57 Group, Family and License Not Required out-of -school care facilities available on the North Shore in July of 2007, providing an estimated 1,500 spaces. Seventeen schools have out-of-school care on their sites.

### **Schools:**

A total of 42 public schools and 12 private or faith-based schools are included in the inventory. All schools provided some out-of- school time activity, although community schools and private schools provided more regular out-of- school time programming.

### **Recreation and Community Centres**

Recreation and community centres across the North Shore were the primary providers of a wide range of programs that included sports, lessons, arts and crafts, music and day camps.

Recreation and community center facilities included swimming pools and ice rinks in some areas.

### **Libraries**

The North Shore is served by libraries in the \ municipalities of Bowen Island, West Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver, and North Vancouver District, which has several branches. All North Shore libraries have extensive collections for young readers, as well as a variety of OST programs and services targeting school age children. Youth librarians report that libraries provide tacit “out of school care”, with many children using library facilities while waiting for working parents.

### **Churches**

There are approximately 65 churches on the North Shore, predominately Anglican, Catholic, and United. Church venues provided religion based programming for school aged children, and were also prime facilities for Girl Guide and Boy Scout programs.

On occasion, church facilities were available to out of school care providers.

### **Private Program and Service Providers**

Sports and youth organizations, academies for the arts, private clubs, out of school learning facilities and counseling services comprised the majority of the remaining inventory listings.

The inventory is not exhaustive, and is revised as new information is received.

## **Survey Data**

Survey Monkey, an on-line survey service was used to collect data from program and service providers, school administrators and parents. The program performed the basic data collection and compilation function, shortening the analysis process considerably.

Key findings are presented.

### **School Administrators**

Approximately three quarters of public elementary school administrators responded to the survey. Key findings were:

- Schools are a provider of a wide range of out-of- school time activities, including sports, arts and crafts, music and band and service/leadership opportunities
- Administrators feel strongly that increased out-of- school time activities in schools would improve community support and parent satisfaction
- Administrators also strongly indicated that increased out-of- school time activities would improve social relationships, increase health and fitness and increase learning opportunities
- Administrators reported that the major portion of organizing out-of- school time activities falls to teachers and administrators, followed by PACs. Businesses and other organizations are not major providers in school buildings
- The key benefit to parent of including more activities in schools would be reduced transportation issues, reduced time trying to organize out-of- school time activities, and parent anxiety about children's welfare

### **Program and Service Providers**

The major responders to the survey were recreation and community centres, support agencies and child care providers. It should be noted that 50% of the respondents were out-of-school care providers. Limited response was obtained from businesses, youth organizations or clubs. The key findings were:

- There is a wide range of activities provided for school age children across the North Shore, including recreation skills and activities, after school care, arts and cultural skills, health and wellness, and sports
- There are many venues, particularly in North Vancouver, providing programs and services
- The cost of programming for municipal programs are either free, or at less than \$10
- Over 60% of responders indicated that subsidies, including transportation were available for out of school activities. Support came primarily from agencies on the North Shore
- Recreation and community centres report that they are all well-served by public transit, and are within walking distance of at least one elementary school
- Most reported that they are able to accommodate children with mild disabilities, but only occasionally can accommodate children with moderate to severe disabilities
- The vast majority of programming is conducted in English
- 74% of respondents indicate that they collaborate with schools in some manner, as well as with municipalities and agencies
- The majority of responding providers employ staff with training and experience in child development

- Virtually all respondents indicated that the emotional development of children was central to their programming
- There was a considerable role for parents to support OST programming through volunteering. They also played a role in building community awareness, working on advisory committees and fundraising.
- Most facilities provided regular opportunities for parents to learn about what and how their children were doing
- Half of the programs encouraged long term relationships with staff. These were primarily after school care facilities.
- Role modeling by staff, cooperative games, team work and conflict resolution were well used strategies to encourage positive peer relationships
- Several assets were identified as integral to programming, the leaders being caring and compassion for others, cultural sensitivity, positive self image and peaceful conflict resolution

## **Parents**

Parents were generally satisfied with programs and services provided for school age children across the North Shore. Prime areas of concern were:

- Cost of programs
- Transportation to and from programs
- Time: time programs were scheduled, and time in busy lives to access them
- Availability of popular programs
- Awareness of available programs

### **A Closer Look at Parent Concerns:**

- **Cost:**

While programs offered by municipal recreation facilities are the most cost effective at an average of \$80 for 10 sessions of dance, skating or arts and crafts, it can be difficult for families, particularly where they have more than one child to register. North Vancouver Recreation Commission offers vouchers for families in need.

- **Transportation:**

- The transportation issues are three-fold:
- Transportation for children from school to recreation facilities after school is difficult where both parents, or the only parent, were working outside the home.
- Parents in all communities find public transportation time consuming and often indirect.
- Where bus transportation is available, parents are concerned about their children's safety

- **Time**

Many parents mentioned programs being held at inconvenient times, or difficult to coordinate with the schedules of siblings. Several mentioned the hope that “multi-aged” programs could be offered.

70% of North Shore families have both parents in the work force. Trying to balance work, school, meals, homework and recreation is a significant burden for many parents. This is magnified where there are two or more children to organize, deliver, and pick up.

- **Availability of Popular Programs:**

Parents trying to enroll children in popular programs, such as swimming lessons, frequently find classes booked before they can register.

- **Awareness of Programs**

Parents were generally aware of the offerings of recreation centres through web sites and Leisure Guides, but found it difficult to track down specialty programs run by private businesses.

## **Children**

School age children provided data in two formats. All students in grades 5-7 at Bowen Island Community School, and several grade 5-7 aboriginal students at Norgate Elementary School completed a survey designed to identify activities they were presently engaged in, activities they would like to be engaged in, and barriers to desired engagement.

### **Paper Surveys**

- Almost half of the children 10-12 years old on Bowen Island participate in sports on a regular basis, while 80% of those from Squamish Nation participated regularly in sports. Boys and girls participated in equal numbers.
- The entertainment aspects of technology (MSN, iPod Internet, email, TV), was a regular occurrence for over 50% of Bowen Island children, but was not listed at all by those from Squamish Nation
- Transportation was a problem for 50% of children from the Norgate catchment, and for 25% of those on Bowen Island.
- Cost of programs appeared to be an issue for children 10-12 on Bowen Island, but not so for those from Squamish Nation.
- Children from both Bowen Island and Squamish Nation feel they would benefit from more information about programs and services available to them on the North Shore. or both of these groups, sports, recreation and “hanging out” were the most desired activities. Barriers for both groups were transportation, cost or programs, and a lack of awareness of available programs. Universally, students in both groups want more after school activities held in their school.

### **Focus Groups for Asset Mapping**

The second data collection format was a community asset mapping process conducted in elementary schools across the North Shore by the Environmental Youth Alliance. Over 150 students from six grade 5/6 classrooms participated in this unique data collection process. The students were asked to consider what they presently did in their out of school time, and then what they would like to be doing in their out of school time, in an ideal world.

North Shore children in grades 5 and 6 indicated that they are heavily engaged in sports, and in the technology aspects of entertainment: MSN, iPods, TV, movies, and video games. It is what they presently engage in, and what they would like to continue to engage in, although West Vancouver children indicate they would like to be less involved in sports. Both North and West Vancouver students would like to increase their involvement in environmental concerns.

Considerable mention was made of having swimming pools, dance studios, and skate parks closer to where they live, supporting the data telling us that transportation is an issue for many children in their out of school time.

It was also indicated in this study, anecdotally, that children did not have a clear picture of what was available to them in their local or larger community.

## **Research Analysis**

### **What are the needs of school age children as they relate to out-of-school time programs and services?**

Based on research findings and data collected from parents and children, children in their middle childhood need out of school programming that:

- Supports identified developmental needs for health and social, emotional, physical and cognitive wellness
- Provides structure
- Supports many interests and abilities
- Provides access to positive adult role models
- Provides opportunities for socialization with peers
- Recognizes the importance of parent connectedness
- Readily available and accessible

### **What kinds of out-of-school time programs and services are required to meet these needs?**

Our local research indicates that while the North Shore is providing a large number of excellent programs for school-aged children, the needs of this group would be better met by activities and opportunities that are:

- Neighbourhood programs, ideally school-based
- Designed with specific input from boys and girls of various cultures, ages and backgrounds
- Cover a range of both structured and supervised but informal opportunities for sports and physical activity, the arts, leadership, socializing in a safe environment (“hanging out”)
- Led by sensitive, caring adults with sufficient training to deliver programming that is appropriate, safe and recognizes personal differences

### **What types of programs and services for out-of-school time are presently available?**

- Vast array of programs offered by municipalities and businesses are available. An identified lack was supervised but informal activities designed to meet the needs of boys in the 10-12 year old range.

### **What are the barriers to accessing appropriate out-of-school time programs and services?**

#### **Parents**

- Cost of programs
- Timing of programs (particularly when scheduling for more than one child, and where both parents, or the only parent, work outside the home)
- Availability of programs
- Suitability of programs
- Transportation from schools to programs
- Lack of awareness of what is available
- Lack of knowledge about developmental needs that could be met by appropriate out of school programming

## **Children**

- Lack of programs that interest them
- Lack of awareness of available programs and services
- Transportation from school to programs
- Cost of programs
- Not enough time to get involved in more programs

# **PLANNING FOR ACTION**

## **Development of Goals and Objectives:**

Based on the analysis of collected data, three goal areas were established through a collaborative process, and supporting objectives determined.

## **Identified Goals:**

1. To increase school-community partnerships to support health and wellness among school age children in their out of school time
2. To increase participation in out-of -school time programs through the provision of information
3. To increase participation in out-of-school time programs and services through continued research

## **Objectives and Activities:**

Each identified goal was extended to include a number of specific objectives. Using a logic model format, goals and objectives were aligned with supporting activities. Expected outputs and outcomes were also identified, as were target dates and indicators of success.

# Action Plans

## North Shore *Middle Childhood Matters* Demonstration Project

**Goal # 1:** To strengthen school-community partnerships

**Objective # 1:** Develop an agreement between school districts, municipalities and recreation commissions to outline the roles and responsibilities of shared use of school facilities to promote increased engagement in developmentally appropriate out-of-school time programs and services

Action	Output	Target Date	Short Term Outcome	Long Term Outcome	Indicator of Success
<b># 1</b> Conduct a parent and child assessment of out-of-school time program satisfaction at Queen Mary Community School and Lynnmour Elementary School, using same survey format as schools without community school component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data from community schools compared with data from non-community schools to see if community school format is effective in increasing participation in developmentally appropriate activities</li> </ul>	November 30, 2007	The ability to determine whether organized out-of-school time activities delivered through successful community school programs address the issues raised in child and parent surveys before planning extensively for School-Community Partnerships	An evidence-based plan for School-Community partnerships	Data collected from these two schools analyzed and shared with the MCM Table
<b># 2</b> Invite School District/Municipal representatives from Vancouver and Surry to discuss the development of successful school-community partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant information from experts provided on the effective development and implementation of School-Community Partnerships</li> </ul>	January 15, 2007	The beginning steps to developing a common understanding and shared vision of school-community partnerships	North Shore Schools and community will collaborate to deliver effective out-of-school programs in school facilities	<p>A panel presentation will be held early in 2008, with representatives from community partners in attendance</p> <p>Follow up meeting to begin a collaborative process</p>
<b># 3</b> Develop a presentation for municipal councils and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prepared PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>Informed presenters for</li> </ul>	January/February, 2008	Municipal mayors and council, school board trustees and senior staff will	Municipal mayors and council, school board trustees and senior staff will	Presentations given to municipal councils and school districts

<p>school board trustees, based on Action #1 and Action #2</p>	<p>MCM Table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation dates and venues</li> <li>• Presentations given</li> </ul>		<p>be informed about the purpose, and direction of the School-Community partnership, and provided with information about possible funding sources and staffing</p>	<p>participate in the formation of a Memorandum of Understanding for shared use of facilities and personnel</p>	<p>across the North Shore</p>
<p><b># 4</b> Create a “Joint Use” committee derived from decision makers in North and West Vancouver School Districts, West Vancouver City of North Vancouver and North Vancouver District Municipalities and North Vancouver Recreation Commission to discuss shared use of school facilities for out-of-school time activities, and deliver a Memorandum of Understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Joint Use Committee</li> <li>• A Memorandum of Understanding</li> </ul>	<p>February/March, 2008</p>	<p>The Memorandum of Understanding will provide legitimacy to the Middle Childhood matters Project, and will enable the establishment of a limited number of demonstration school-community partnerships across the North Shore.</p>	<p>School-Community Partnerships will expand to meet identified needs, with the support of municipalities and school boards</p>	<p>A Joint Use Committee that develops and memorandum of Understanding</p>

**Goal # 1:** To strengthen School-Community Partnerships

**Objective # 2:** Develop out-of-school time partnerships at three schools across the North Shore

Action	Output	Target Date	Short Term Outcome	Long Term Outcome	Indicator of Success
<p><b># 1:</b> Determine criteria to identify three school across the North Shore that would particularly benefit from school-based out-of school time programming. Use this criteria to identify the schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria determined</li> <li>• Three schools selected based on established criteria</li> </ul>	November, 2007	Identified schools can be evaluated to determine specific needs of the school community	Programs will meet the specific needs of the children in the school community	Three schools identified, with district and school-based support
<p><b># 2</b> Conduct an assessment at each of the identified schools to determine specific needs to be addressed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report on the specific out-of-school needs of each of the three schools</li> </ul>	February, 2008	Developed plans will be based on identified needs	Implementation of developed plans will be successful	Evidence-based report delivered by the target date
<p><b># 3</b> Develop and implement out-of-school time programs at identified schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans created, programs implemented</li> </ul>	Spring, 2008(?)	School age children at the three identified schools will have access to developmentally appropriate and engaging programs at their school	The demonstration projects will enable the implementation of further out-of-school time projects across the North Shore	Programs will run ( <i>two afternoons per week?</i> ) at the three demonstration schools

<p><b>#4</b> Evaluate demonstration projects to determine satisfaction from parents and participating children;</p> <p>Develop and implement an assessment tool to determine whether demonstration project attracted children who previously were disengaged from developmentally appropriate out-of-school time activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation document shared with school-community partners</li> <li>• Participation effectiveness report prepared and delivered to MCM Table</li> </ul>	<p>Late June, 2008</p>	<p>Middle Childhood Matters Table will have good data about what works and what doesn't to inform further planning</p>	<p>Planning and implementation of future school-community out-of-school time projects will have an evidence-based framework</p>	<p>Evaluation document available to MCM Table by June 30, 2008</p>
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**Goal #1:** To increase participation in out-of-school time programs through School-Community Partnerships

**Objective # 3:** To improve transportation opportunities for children from school to recreation facilities

Action	Output	Target Date	Short Term Outcome	Long Term Outcome	Indicator of Success
<p><b># 1</b> Identify school communities that are particularly challenged for transportation from schools to needed recreation facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A selected list of schools that would benefit from improved transportation options</li> </ul>	<p>December 2007</p>	<p>The MCM Table will use the list of schools to select a small number for demonstration projects</p>	<p>Children and families previously disengaged from out-of-school time activities due to transportation issues will be supported</p>	<p>A list of schools that would particularly benefit from an improved transportation plan prepared by December, 2008</p>
<p><b># 2</b> Select two or three schools for demonstration transportation projects, to include the possibilities of supervised school busses, municipal busses, “walking school busses”. Meetings with relevant school personnel, PACs and recreation facilities will be held to guide project formation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools identified for participation in a demonstration transportation project.</li> <li>Collaboration with school stakeholders to determine transportation needs</li> </ul>	<p>January, 2008</p>	<p>Nature of transportation support will be determined</p>	<p>A process will be developed to identify schools with transportation needs, and to identify the nature of the transportation to meet the needs</p>	<p>Identified schools will be notified, and arrangements made to</p>

<p><b># 3</b> Collaborate with school bus and municipal transportation providers to identify cost effective, safe and timely solutions for out-of-school time transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of possible solutions to transportation needs</li> <li>• Cost of solutions</li> <li>• Selection of solutions for demonstration project</li> </ul>	<p>January/February 2008</p>	<p>Information to direct implementation plan</p>	<p>A planning network that includes transportation, school and municipal participants</p>	<p>Collaboration took place within given timeline</p> <p>Collaboration process produced required information</p>
<p><b># 4</b> Collaborate with Recreation Commission to determine best way to manage influx of children to offered program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, programs and transportation will be aligned</li> </ul>	<p>March, 2008</p>	<p>Final plans can be prepared to launch the transportation demonstration projects</p>	<p>A model for addressing transportation needs for out of school time will be created</p>	<p>Collaboration process successfully produces a workable plan</p>
<p><b># 5</b> Develop and implement demonstration transportation plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation plan</li> </ul>	<p>April, 2008</p>	<p>Children from identified schools will be transported to recreation centre program</p>	<p>Increased participation of children in recreation facility programs</p>	<p>Children are transported from schools to recreation facilities for one session of lessons</p>

**Goal # 2:** To increase participation in out-of-school time programs and services through the provision of information about programs and services for parents and school age children

**Objective # 1:** Provide information to parents and children about the range, locations and availability of activities and opportunities for school age children in their out-of-school time on the North Shore

Action	Output	Target Date	Short Term Outcome	Long Term Outcome	Indicator of Success
<p><b># 1</b> Create an information flyer for distribution by partner agencies and organizations containing information about programs and services, and messaging about the importance of meaningful engagement in out-of school time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colourful flyer, widely distributed across the North Shore</li> </ul>	<p>December, 2007</p>	<p>Parents and children will have more information to direct their participation in out-of-school time activities</p> <p>Parents and children will have a better understanding of the importance of being engaged in quality out-of-school time activities</p>	<p>Participation in meaningful out-of-school time activities will increase</p>	<p>Quality flyer created, printed and widely distributed by partner agencies</p> <p><i>(Participation rates at recreation facilities)</i></p>
<p><b># 2</b> Organize a series of resources fairs targeting children and parents at shopping malls across the North Shore, beginning with John Braithwaite Community Centre in February, 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information for parents and children from major North Shore program and service providers</li> </ul>	<p>February, 2008 onwards</p>	<p>Parents and children will have more information to direct their participation in out-of-school time activities</p> <p>Parents and children will have a better understanding of the importance of being engaged in quality out-of-school time activities</p>	<p>Participation in meaningful out-of-school time activities will increase</p>	<p>Three Resource Fairs held in 2008</p>

**Goal # 2:** To increase participation in out-of-school time programs and services through the provision of information about programs and services for parents and school age children

**Objective # 2:** Provide information to parents that will enable them to better support the developmental needs of their school age children, with a particular focus on out-of-school time needs

Action	Output	Target Date	Short Term Outcome	Long Term Outcome	Indicator of Success
# 1 Create an information flyer for distribution by partner agencies and organizations containing information about programs and services, and messaging about the importance of meaningful engagement in out-of school time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colourful flyer, widely distributed across the North Shore</li> </ul>	December, 2007	<p>Parents and children will have more information to direct their participation in out-of-school time activities</p> <p>Parents and children will have a better understanding of the importance of being engaged in quality out-of-school time activities</p>	Participation in meaningful out-of-school time activities will increase	<p>Quality flyer created, printed and widely distributed by partner agencies</p> <p><i>(Participation rates at recreation facilities)</i></p>
# 2 Organize a series of resources fairs targeting children and parents at shopping malls across the North Shore, beginning with John Braithwaite Community Centre in February, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information for parents and children from major North Shore program and service providers</li> </ul>	February, 2008 onwards	<p>Parents and children will have more information to direct their participation in out-of-school time activities</p> <p>Parents and children will have a better understanding of the importance of being engaged in quality out-of-school time activities.</p>	Participation in meaningful out-of-school time activities will increase	Three Resource Fairs held in 2008

**Goal # 3:** To increase participation in out-of-school time programs and services through continued research into gaps, overlaps and barriers

**Objective # 1:** Partner with North Shore Multicultural to identify and address diversity issues impacting on meaningful participation in out-of-school time programs

<b>Action</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Short Term Outcome</b>	<b>Long Term Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator of Success</b>
# 1 Support independent Middle Childhood research project of NSMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to data and report developed by NSMS</li> </ul>	Ongoing	MCM Table will have data to inform planning to address out-of-school time needs of new immigrant families with school age children	Increased meaningful participation of children of new immigrant families in out-of-school time activities	Shared data; informed planning

**Goal # 3:** To increase participation in out-of-school time programs and services through continued research into gaps, overlaps and barriers

**Objective # 2:** Conduct focus groups with Grade 7 girls and boys across the North Shore to determine specific interests and barriers relating to out-of-school time participation

Action	Output	Target Date	Short Term Outcome	Long Term Outcome	Indicator of Success
<p><b># 1</b> Identify six Elementary Schools across the North Shore willing to support 40 minute focus groups with Grade 7 classes.</p> <p>Conduct focus groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data to inform planning to meet the specific needs and wants of this group of children</li> </ul>	<p>Before June, 2008</p>	<p>North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Partners will have information to make good plans to increase the participation of Grade 7 boys and girls</p>	<p>An increased number of Grade 7 students will engage in meaningful out-of-school time programs and services</p>	<p>Six focus groups will be held with Grade 7 classes in the first half of 2008</p>

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

The involvement of the North Shore Middle Childhood Matters Coalition in data collection, analysis, planning, and project implementation has set the stage for improving the lives of school age children on the North Shore, primarily through increasing engagement in developmentally appropriate out-of-school time activities. After school projects are underway in several schools, with more planned for 2008/2009. Community awareness events are bringing needed information to parents, children and families, supporting the goal of increased out-of-school time engagement.

We look forward as a coalition to continuing this forward motion, and to continuously striving to improve the health and wellness of our children with research, planning and