



Recreation Service Plan

May 2011



What is a Recreation Service Plan?

The Recreation Service Plan is:

- **A 5 year plan (2011 – 2016)** to guide the City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry & Recreation division in Planning and setting priorities for service delivery and investment
- It will direct improvements in how we deliver our services
- In 2009, **Council approved Four Guiding Principles for the Plan:**
 - ✓ Equitable Access
 - ✓ Quality
 - ✓ Inclusion
 - ✓ Capacity Building

Questions to Consider in Developing the Plan

Specifically, the Plan will address:

- How we can achieve the 4 principles of the Plan
- What the appropriate mix of programs and services should be
- What service gaps need to be addressed
- What other improvements are needed



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-We want to hear from you about the services we deliver, the quality of our programs and our inclusiveness.

-Are we including everyone or are there residents who are experiencing barriers in accessing our programs?

-How well are we doing in assisting local community and sports organizations that want to use our programs and services?

-How do we better engage groups who may not have participated previously?

-We are also seeking advice on what other improvements are needed over the next 5 years in order to achieve our principles.

What the Recreation Service Plan is Not About

- Facilities
- Parks
- Fees



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The Plan is about setting directions on what programs and services we deliver, where and how over the next 5 years, so we can fulfill the 4 Council approved principles.

We want to point out **what's not in this Plan**. It's **not** about **facility planning**. A separate study on recreation facilities will be conducted once the Recreation Service Plan is approved by Council, and once we have a clear sense of the future direction in our programs and services.

The Recreation Service Plan will **not deal with parks**. A separate **5-year Parks Plan** is currently under way and will be developed this fall. It will guide the Division in planning and priority setting for City owned and operated parks.

The Recreation Service Plan will **not specifically address fees or subsidy programs**. A separate study examining the Welcome Policy program and free programming at Priority Centres is currently underway and a report on that subject will go to Council this summer.

The Bigger Picture

Who provides Recreation Services in Toronto?

- **Parks, Forestry & Recreation**
 - Registered and drop in programs
 - Facility Permits to External groups and organizations
- **Other Providers**
 - Private and non-profit facilities (commercial, YMCAs, universities, etc.)
- **Coordinated**
 - Facilities Leased to other service providers
 - Shared Use Facilities, (e.g. School Board sites)
 - Partnerships with private / non-profit service providers
- We are interested in future opportunities to improve coordination of this system of services.

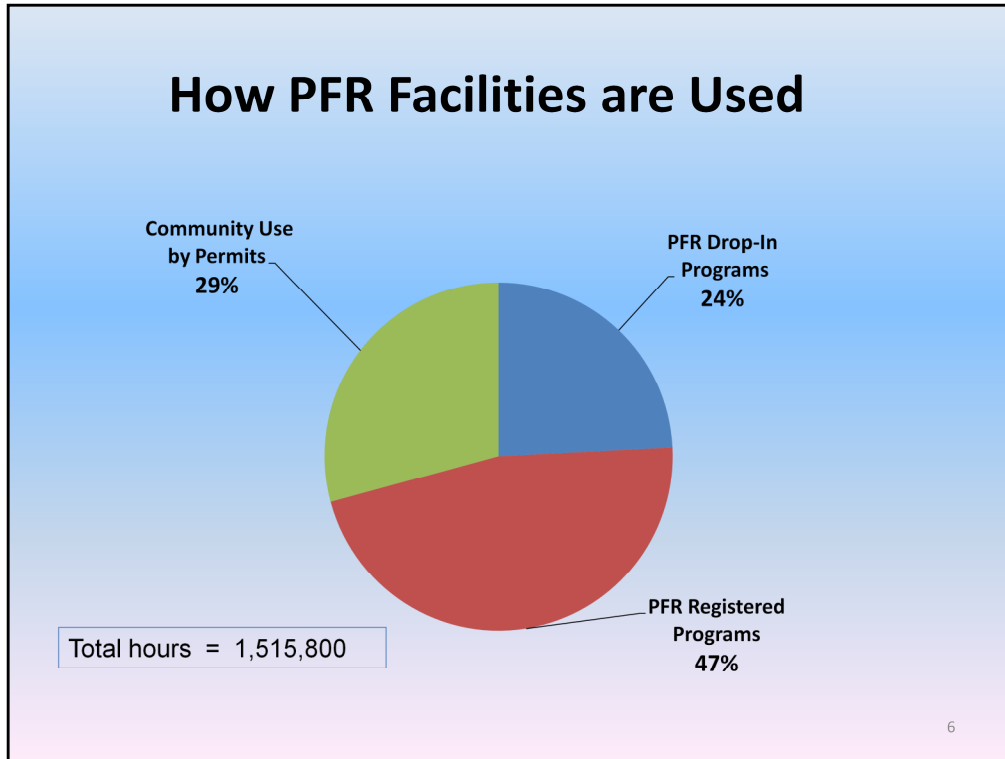
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Parks, Forestry & Recreation runs registered and drop-in programs at our recreation centres and other program locations. We also provide space in our facilities to external groups, such as sports leagues community organizations, agencies, private businesses and others to run their own programs and activities. The City issues permits for these types of activities.

Other Providers - There is a large network of recreational programs and leisure services available to City of Toronto residents. Our research indicates that there are over 600 privately owned businesses and clubs that offer recreation activities, such as: fitness, sports, yoga, dance, racquet sports, golf, hockey, skating, curling and other activities. There are also several non-profit service providers, like the YMCA/YWCA, Boys' and Girls' Clubs and other non-profit organizations that offer programs to the public.

Coordinated - Additionally, the PFR leases some of its facilities to non-profit organizations. PFR also runs programs in shared-use facilities that are owned by the school boards. We also have agreements with Arena Boards of Management (ABOM's) and the Association of Community Centres (AOCC's), who operate their own programs in city owned facilities.

We are interested in future opportunities to improve coordination of this system of services.



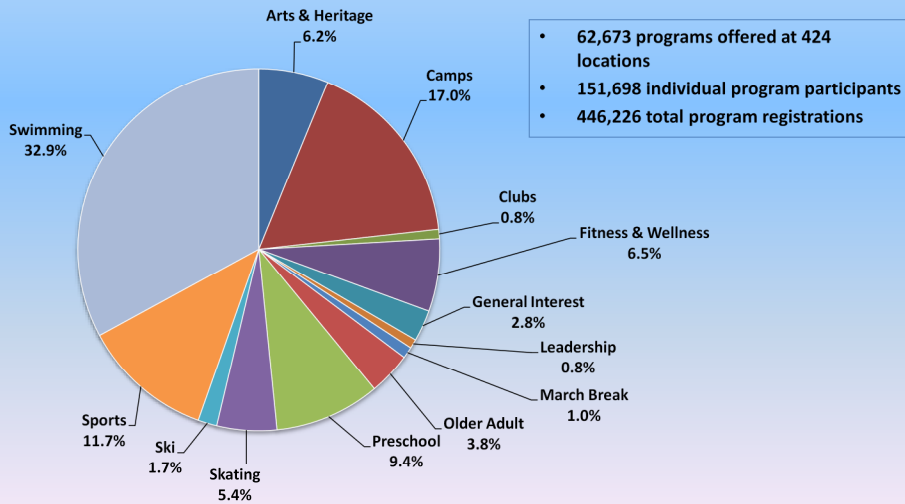
The next three slides provide a breakdown of the activities in registered and drop-in programs and permitted activities.

Registered programs are generally instructional, where participants can acquire a new skill or ability. Drop-in programs offer flexibility in participation and time commitment and provide opportunities for leisure recreational activities, such as swimming and skating. Permits allow community-based organizations to deliver programming, organize events and operate leagues in city facilities. Families and individuals can also permit space for their private functions.

Recreation services are delivered in three ways at city-run community centres – through **registered programs**, **drop-in programs** and through **permits**. Currently **47%** of our total facility usage is for **registered programs**. **Drop-in programs** account for **24%** of facility use, while permitted activities by external groups account for **29%** of the total.

Participation in Registered Programs

2010 Program Registrations Category (%)



- 62,673 programs offered at 424 locations
- 151,698 individual program participants
- 446,226 total program registrations

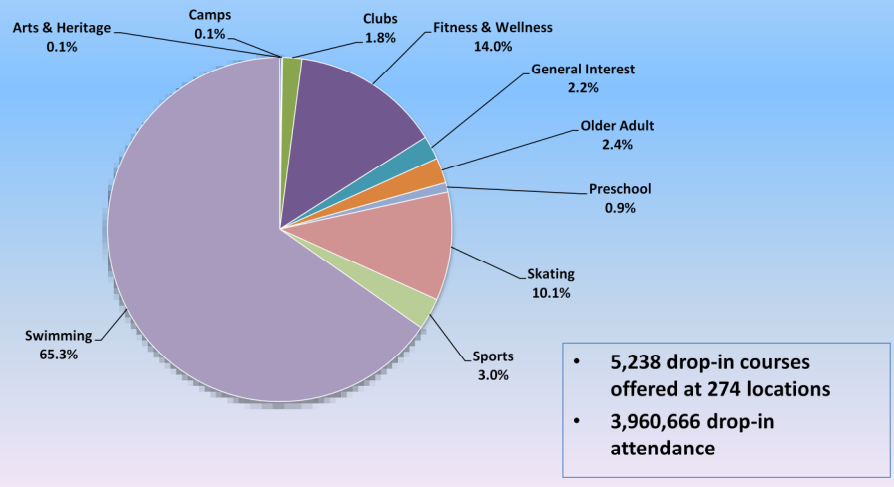
There are a wide range of City recreation programs offered to the public.

The **top 4 activities** with the **most registrations** include:

- **swimming – 33%**
- **children’s camps 17%**
- **sports activities - 12%**
- **pre-school activities – 9%**

Participation in Drop-in Programs

2010 Drop-in Attendance by Category (%)

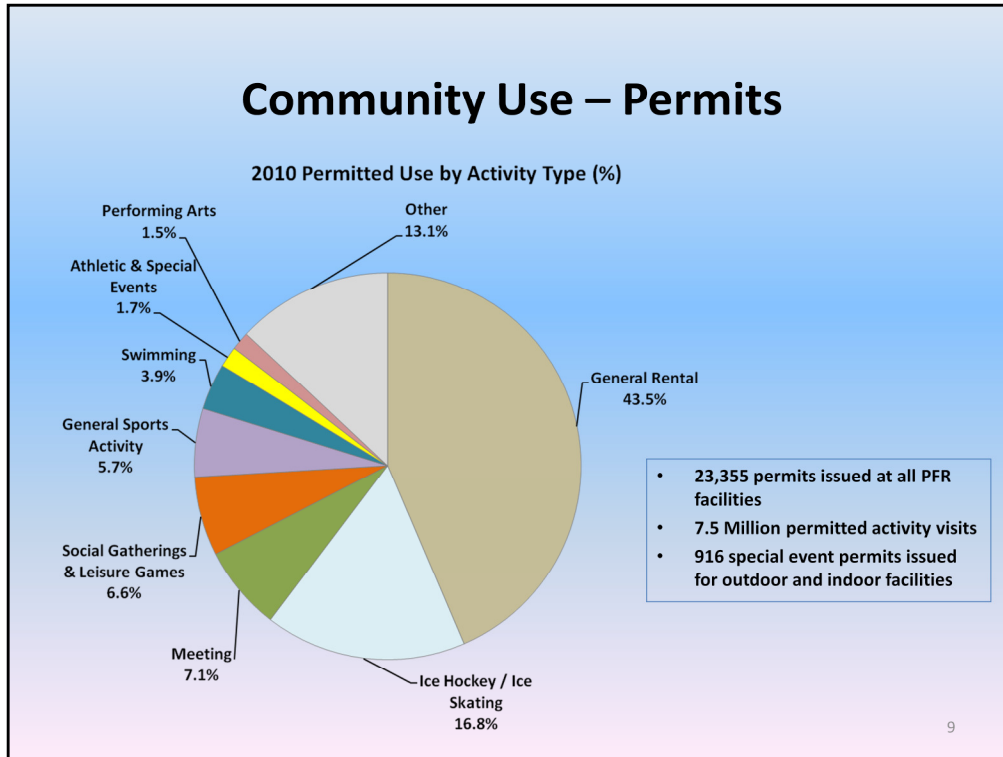


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City-operated drop-in programs offer flexibility as people can exercise or recreate at their own pace, when it's convenient for them.

The **three most popular drop-in programs** include:

- **swimming – 65%**
- **fitness and wellness – 14%**
- **skating – 10%**



Permits allow for a wide range of community activities .

The **most popular activities** include:

- **general rentals** (e.g. for meetings and community activities) – **(44%)**
- **skating and hockey** – **17%**
- **Meetings and social gatherings** – **(14%)**

These last three slides have given you a sense of the current programs and service mix offered by the City of Toronto.

Equity

Principle: Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) should provide **equitable** recreation access to all city residents on a geographic and demographic basis.

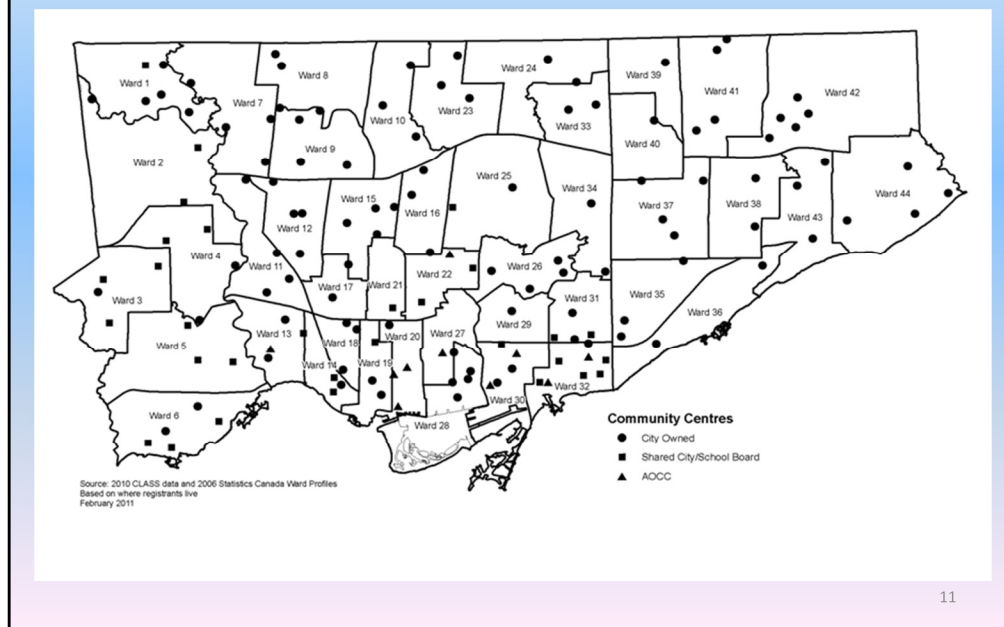


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As I mentioned at the beginning of the presentation, we are building the Plan by reviewing our services against four principles. The first principle is Equity.

The next few slides will show the distribution of city-run registered programs across the city, as well as, the levels of participation of our users by age category. This will give you a sense of whether or not PFR's programs are distributed equitably across the city.

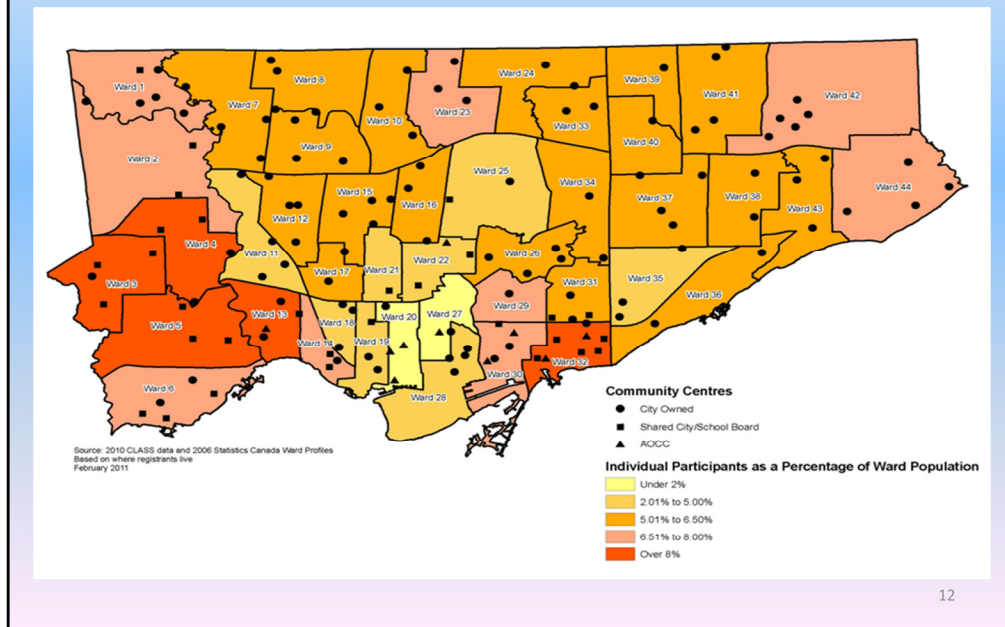
2010 – Geographic Equity



This map shows the distribution of major recreation program locations across the city. There are 134 city-run community centres, of which 30 are shared facilities with schools.

In addition, there are recreation programs that are delivered by the Association of Community Centres (AOCCs) in 10 city owned facilities.

2010 – Geographic Equity

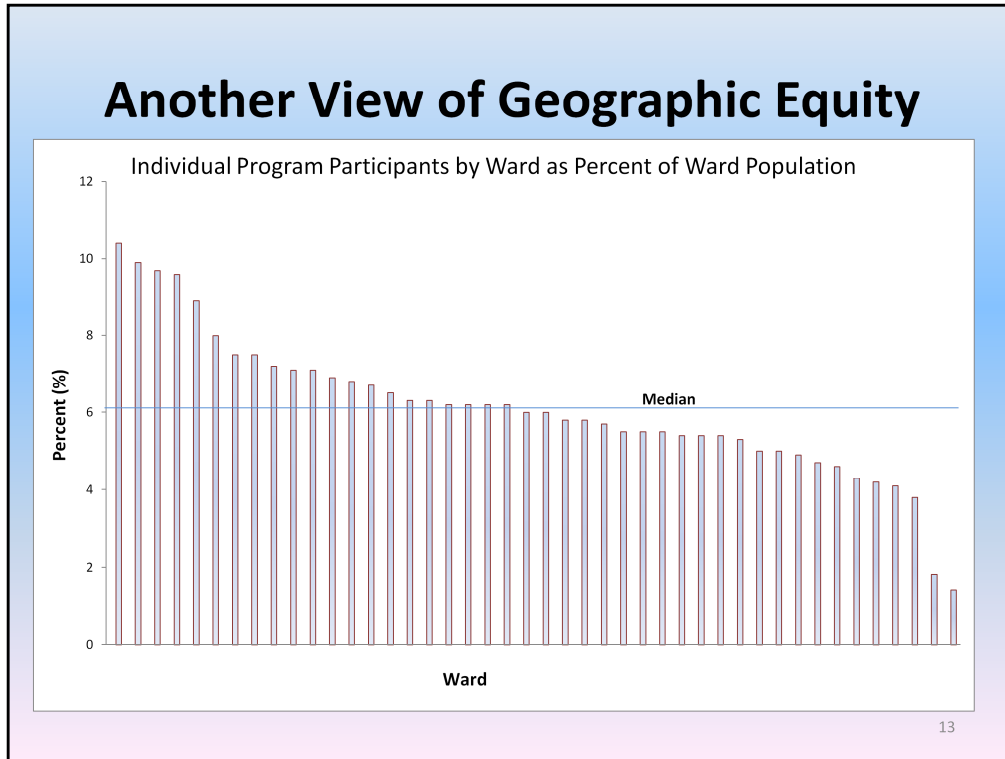


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Although the distribution of facilities is fairly widespread across the city, the map shows varying levels of participation. The map shows the percentage of residents in each Ward who participated in city-run recreation programs.

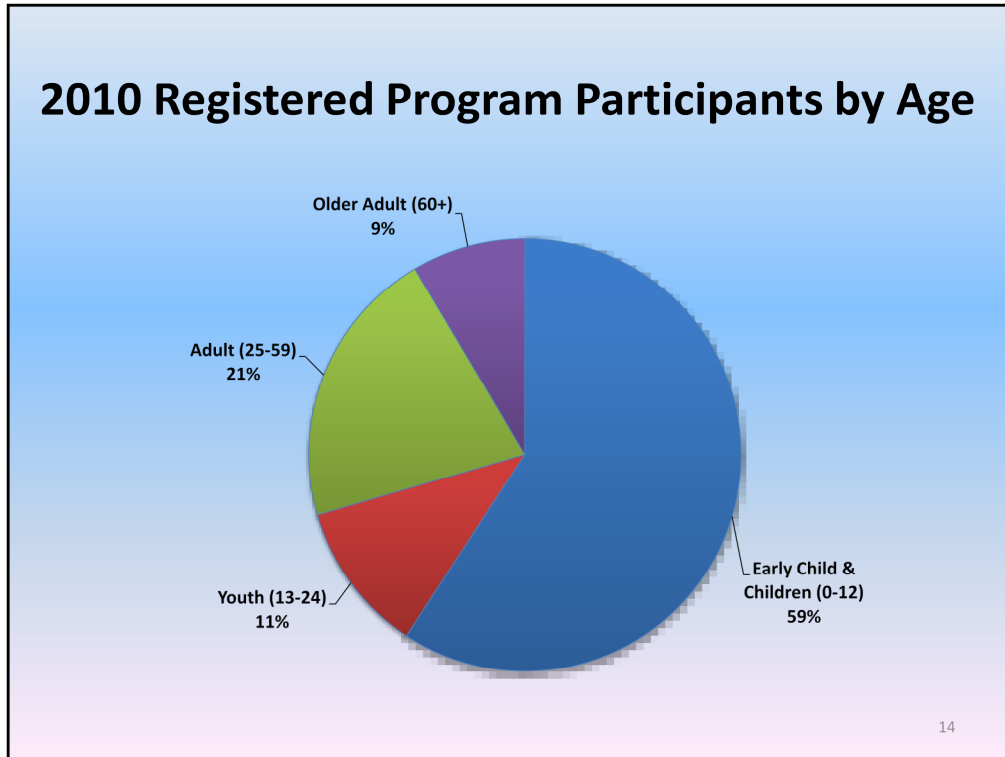
On this map, the Wards with the lightest shading have lower participation levels than those that are shaded in red, pink, or orange.

Another View of Geographic Equity



This graph depicts the same information as the previous map in bar chart form. It depicts the percentage of people in each Ward who participated in registered recreation programs in 2010, from the highest to the lowest levels.

The median line on this graph (6%) represents the middle participation level of the total city population. The bar chart shows that approximately 50% of the Wards have participation rates that are above the line while 50% are below the line. Again, you can see through this bar chart the difference in participation rates across the City.

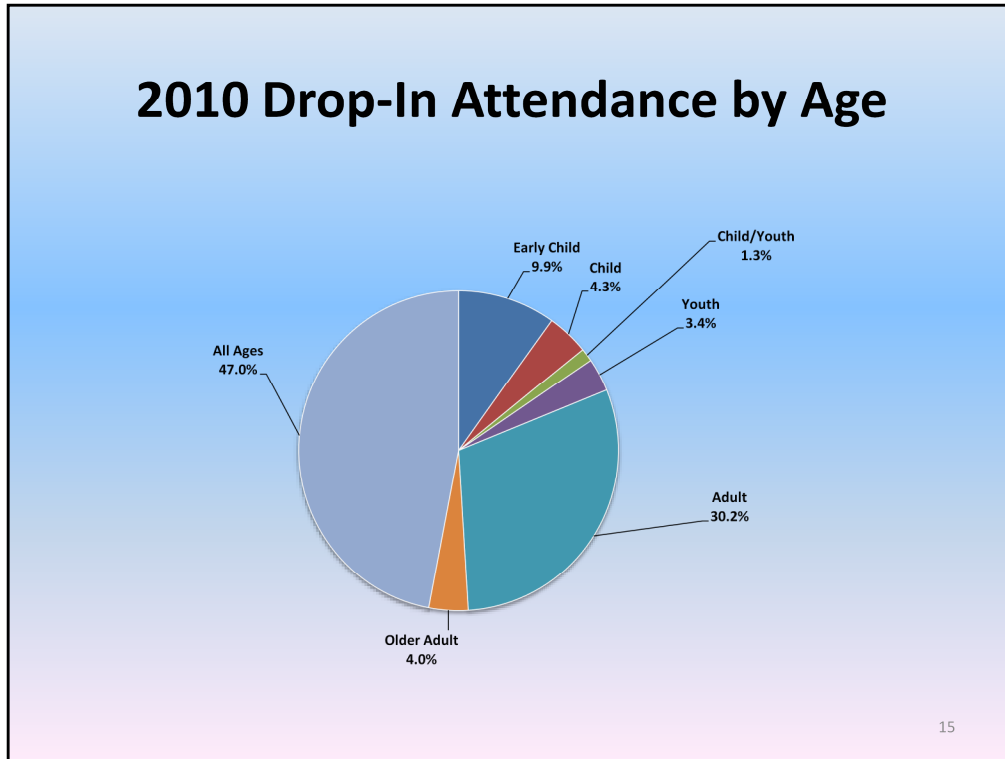


The next few slides give you a view of who participates in our programs by age category.

This chart indicates that the majority of **registered program participants** – **almost 60%** - are **children (both pre-school and school-aged (0-12 years of age))**.

The next highest category is **adults** – **(aged 25-59 years) at 21%**.

Youth and older adults have the lowest participation rates.



Drop-in program attendance has a different pattern.

The **bulk of drop –in participation (47%)** is by **all ages**, as families tend to recreate together in leisure recreational activities, such as: swimming, skating, etc.

In the specific age ranges, **adults** have the **highest level of participation** at **30%**.

The combined participation level of **children and youth** is **approximately 19%**.

Quality

Principle: PFR should provide the **highest quality** of recreation programs and services to enhance the health, quality of life and well-being of residents.



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The second principle is Quality.

Quality

Recent PFR Customer Satisfaction Surveys (2009 AND 2010):

- **92%** of recreation facility visitors were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their visits.
- **90%** rated parks and recreation as either an important or somewhat important contributor in Toronto's quality of life.
- **79%** were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of programs and service offered by the Division.
- **88%** would register in the same program again.
- **93%** of permit holders were either satisfied or very satisfied with their experience.

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We have obtained customer survey information on the quality of our recreation programs and services. These surveys, conducted by Environics and by PFR staff at our Recreation Centres, indicate a high level of satisfaction with our recreation programs and services.

Quality (continued)

Recreation Staff Training & Development:

- Community Recreation staff are well trained and qualified to deliver high quality programs and services to meet the needs of City residents.
- Two key areas of quality assurance include: Aquatics and HIGH FIVE programs.



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Quality is often associated with staff training. Staff have received extensive training in:

- Instructors' & coaching qualifications
- Aquatic safety supervision qualifications
- Standard First Aid & CPR training
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Access & Equity training
- Human rights and anti-harassment training
- Health & Safety training
- Facilities maintenance and inspection

Quality - Aquatics

One measure of training is certification:

- City of Toronto provides **swimming instruction** to people of all ages – from basic learn to swim to lifeguard and swim instructor certification.
- City of Toronto Lifeguards and Swim Instructors must meet all Provincially-regulated qualifications.

Quality – HIGH FIVE Program

- Canada's nationally-recognized quality assurance standard for children's recreation programs.
- City of Toronto children's recreation and sport programs must meet **HIGH FIVE standards**.
- Over **1,500 program assessments** conducted in 2010.
- **535 PFR** staff trained on the use of this program assessment tool.

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Another measure of quality is the HIGH FIVE Program.

Not all programs have the same levels of vigorous standards, depending on the program. The HIGH FIVE Program is an example of a nationally recognized quality assurance standard for children's recreation programs.

Inclusion

Principle: PFR should ensure that **everyone** has the opportunity to access and participate in recreation programs and services that are planned, delivered and managed to recognize diversity and encourage participation of marginalized and racialized people and groups.



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The third principle is Inclusion.

Inclusion

2010 examples:

- **54%** of registered program participants were **women** and **46%** were **men**.
- 120 programs developed under the **Toronto Newcomer Initiative** for over 3,500 newcomer participants and families.
- **After School Recreation Care** - over 850 children at 26 locations.
- **Investing In Families** program received 1,600 new referrals and conducted over 1,000 new recreation assessments.

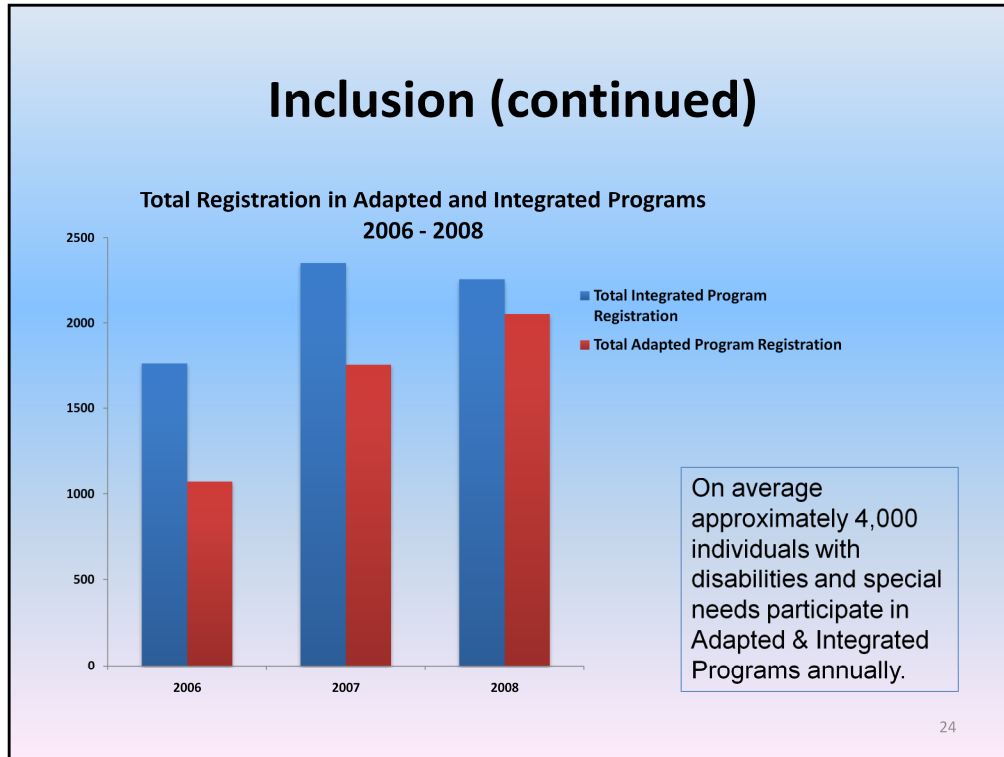
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PF&R tries to eliminate barriers to participation in recreation and leisure through a variety of program supports and outreach activities.

Inclusion (cont'd)

- **29 Youth Outreach Workers** – made contacts with over 85,000 youth.
- Over **5,000 youth** employed – approximately **54% of all active PFR employees**.
- Approximately **75,000** residents were enrolled in the **Welcome Policy** Subsidy Program.
- 21 Priority Centre locations across the City.

Inclusion (continued)



Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation runs **Adapted and Integrated Programs** to enable people with **disabilities and special needs** to participate in recreation programs at our facilities. Staff match the unique needs of individuals to programs and assist them while they participate.

Adapted Programs are designed specifically for people with disabilities.

Integrated Programs accommodate people with disabilities in recreation programs by providing support to them.

Since 2006 there has been a steady increase in the number of registrations in PFR registered recreation programs by people with disabilities and special needs (approximately 4000 annually).

Capacity Building

Principle: PFR should provide programs and services of social, economic and physical benefit to all participants that **create a sense of community**, belonging and vitality.



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The last principle is Capacity Building.

Capacity Building

- Capacity Building involves working with communities through:
 - Partnerships
 - Volunteerism
 - Mentoring and teaching leadership skills
 - Assisting groups to organize themselves
 - Community festivals and event planning
 - Working with other agencies – service integration

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Parks, Forestry and Recreation has engaged residents in a number of ways, such as:

- through **partnerships**,
- encouraging **volunteerism** at our facilities,
- **mentoring groups and teaching leadership skills**,
- **helping communities** to organize themselves and to plan and run local events and;
- working with **other city divisions and agencies** to provide an **integrated support system** to **communities** across the city, particularly **vulnerable communities**.

Capacity Building

Examples:

- We **engage** over **6,000 volunteers** in PFR activities.
- We work with **Community Advisory Councils** in several recreation centres.
- We **partner** with **social service and local agencies**.
- We **partner** with external organizations, (e.g., Pan-Am Games Organizing Committee, Toronto Sports Council for 2012 Games).
- We work with **Youth Advisory Councils** to promote youth involvement in recreation.

Capacity Building (cont'd)

- Malvern “bike day” event engaged over 250 participants.
- Over 500 children engaged in “Operation Cricket” programs across the city.
- Four free ski events were held for over 280 diverse youth at Centennial and Earl Bales Ski Centres.
- Over 1,000 youth performed in the urban dance and performance showcase, “STOMP.”
- Caribbean Junior Carnival engaged over 100 children who participated in this event.
- Over 500 older adults received awareness training on elder abuse and pedestrian safety.

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PF&R helps communities organize and run programs and events.

Thank You!

We need your input...



Equity: Questions to Consider

- What do you think the barriers are to achieving equitable recreation opportunities across the city and how can they be overcome?
- Does the current mix of programs and services support the principle of equitable access to all City residents? Please explain your answer.



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Quality: Questions to Consider

- In your opinion, what are the most important areas that the City of Toronto needs to focus on in providing high quality recreation programs and services?



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Inclusion: Questions to Consider

- How can PFR engage communities and groups who do not participate in recreation programs and services?



Community Capacity Building: Questions to Consider

- How can PFR help to strengthen communities and who can we partner with?
- How can we attract, support and retain volunteers?



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Next Steps

- Your comments and suggestions will be summarized and included in the final Recreation Service Plan Report.
- Final report will go to Community Development & Recreation Committee and Council this Fall.
- Recreation Service Plan will be implemented in early 2012.
- Please visit our website for more information:
www.toronto.ca/parks/engagement/serviceplan

