



Building Your Case: Investing in Physical Activity for Mothers and their Families



Building your case is an important first step before starting any new strategy or initiative. It provides the necessary rationale and 'makes the case' for investing resources to achieve desired outcomes.

Why Develop a Case for Investing in Physical Activity for Mothers and their Families?

1. To provide an evidence-based rationale for the development or modification of programs and services.
2. To present a concrete plan explaining what you will do, how you will do it and how you will measure and report success.
3. To create reports, proposals and presentations to secure support from stakeholders, managers and funders.

What needs to be included in your case?

Title - develop a catchy title for your strategy or initiative, e.g. *Mom's in Motion* or *Mom's Making the Move*.

Mandate or vision - describe what your organizations 'business', 'vision' or 'mandate' is and how this initiative fits, e.g. "Our department is in the business of getting and keeping all citizens of our community physically active, including mothers and their families."

Goals - outline what you intend to achieve over the short and long term. Goals should be measurable and time-sensitive so they can be evaluated and adjusted if necessary. For example, short term - "To assess current programs and services to determine the number of mothers participating.", and long term - "To increase participation of mothers and their families by 10% in city-run physical activity programs run by December 2012."

Rationale - provide information on why this initiative or strategy is important and how your approach is unique. Use evidence-based information to build your rationale. *Making the Case: Getting More Mothers Physically Active* provides national statistics that will be helpful, but also plan to collect your own local or provincial/territorial data. The *Organizing Focus Groups and Community Consultations* fact sheet provides information on how to gather this information.

Activities - list the specific activities you will implement and the resources needed. Activities should be time-sensitive so that you can use them to develop a yearly work plan. eg. "Review and revise program descriptions and titles to make them more appealing to mothers (September 2012)."

Evaluation - explain how you plan to evaluate your goals and activities including the tools you will use. The *Evaluating Physical Activity Initiatives Aimed at Mothers and their Families* fact sheet provides information on surveys, focus groups, etc.

Partners - provide information on whom you plan to partner with and how they will contribute to your strategy or initiative. Perhaps churches or community centres will donate facility space, well baby clinics, prenatal programs or grocery stores will disseminate information, public health nurses will train staff, or health departments and doctors will provide referrals.

Financial - provide a budget for your strategy or initiative including hard costs and in-kind contributions (e.g. materials, staff time, etc.). Estimate the actual investment per mother (eg. 20,000 women between 18-50 years of age in your community divided by a \$500,000 investment over 5 years = \$25/woman over 5 years or \$5 per year) and the projected benefits of making this investment. It is also important to point out that having more mothers and their families (potentially children, partners, etc.) participating in your programs and services is a revenue opportunity.

Getting started

1. Research

- Examine your programs and services. Are mothers attending? What are they attending and what are they not?
- Examine your community. Are mothers active? Are they active with their children? Is the community walkable, safe, and accessible? If not, what are the problems and what needs to change?

2. Consult

- Ask mothers what they would like to do and what their barriers are so you can support them to be physically active. The *Organizing Focus Groups and Community Consultations* fact sheet will help with your planning.
- Share information and brainstorm with a variety of stakeholders around increasing physical activity opportunities for mothers and their families.

3. Prepare Your Case

- Using the information you have collected, prepare your case for presentation, e.g. a one-page summary, full report or PowerPoint.

4. Generate Support

- Share this information with key decision-makers in your organization and within your community. Making the case to them for investment of resources (time, money, human) will be necessary before implementation.

5. Implement and Evaluate

- Once you have support, try out your ideas and evaluate their impact. By evaluating the success of your interventions you can adapt what you are doing and continue to build on what is successful.

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For more information on CAAWS' *Mothers in Motion* project, please contact caaws@caaws.ca or visit the website at www.caaws.ca/mothersinmotion/e/.

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