Public Health and the Great Outdoors: Leveraging Partnerships to Achieve Shared Goals in Minnesota

Arielle Courtney | Principal Planner
Health is good for your parks!

**Goal:** Enhanced coordination with other agencies, organizations, and nonprofits.

**Strategy:** Continue partnering with health agencies, health maintenance organizations, and providers.

- Support the promotion of healthy lifestyles through developing joint programs that incentivize recreating in parks and trails and recreation areas.

Increases state sales tax by 3/8 of 1%
Implementing our strategies

1. Research and learn from other park/health efforts
2. Secure a healthcare partner
3. Develop shared ideas for the partnership
4. Turn shared ideas into action
5. Evaluate!
1. Research and learn from others
The ParkRx movement is upon us!

- New Mexico’s Prescription Trails Program
- Pittsburgh Parks Prescriptions
- Miami-Dade County Rx4Health
- Healthy Parks, Healthy People: Bay Area
- Vermont Park Prescription Program
- Kaiser Permanente Rx2Move
- DC Park Rx (Rx America)
2. Secure a healthcare partner
Who is the right healthcare partner?

- Major healthcare player in metropolitan area
- Staffing and financial resources
- Marketing and outreach resources
- Goals for reaching out to diverse families with young children
- Enthusiastic and easy to work with!
Who are possible partners?

- Fairview
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Mayo Clinic
- HealthPartners
- Essentia Health
- Allina Health
- University of Minnesota Health
**Build on existing efforts**

**PowerUp** is a community-wide youth health initiative to make better eating and active living easy, fun, and popular, so that our youth can reach their full potential.

[Click here to learn more!]

**Kids get $10 prescriptions for fruits and veggies**

During well child exams until July 31, doctors are handing out a special prescription to help kids learn about healthy foods.

[HealthPartners]
Challenges: The red tape

• Operational order
• Memorandum of understanding
• Funding sources for staff time, resources
• Special event requirements
3. Develop shared ideas for the partnership
Goal 1

Provide opportunities and incentive for kids and families to be physically active and enjoy the outdoors.

Estimated reach: 1000+
Goal 2

Introduce families to local parks through a kick-off event, with transportation for families who have limited access to parks.

Estimated reach: 350+
Goal 3

Strengthen the connection between the child and the pediatrician and the importance and fun of outdoor physical activity.

Photo Credit: Department of Pediatrics, University of Minnesota Medical School
4. Turn shared ideas into action
Here’s what happened...
### Minnesota

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARK/TRAIL</th>
<th>HIKE</th>
<th>BIKE</th>
<th>PADDLE</th>
<th>CAMP</th>
<th>RENTALS</th>
<th>FEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afton State Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park</td>
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<td>Brown’s Creek State Trail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gateway State Trail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hardwood Creek Regional Trail</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Ki Chi Saga Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Elmo Park Reserve</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnesota Interstate State Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canoes, kayaks</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Point Regional Park</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Square Lake Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Croix National Scenic Riverway</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamarack Nature Center</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XC skis &amp; snowshoes</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Bear Lake County Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>William O’Brien State Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

**Rentals:** Snowshoes Y

### Wisconsin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARK/TRAIL</th>
<th>HIKE</th>
<th>BIKE</th>
<th>PADDLE</th>
<th>CAMP</th>
<th>RENTALS</th>
<th>FEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple River County Park Y - camping</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Brook County Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gandy Dancer Trail</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Hills County Park (not pictured on map)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canoes, paddleboats, kayaks, paddleboards</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homestead Parklands/Perch Lake X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Canoes, paddleboats, kayaks, paddleboards</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinniakimic State Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lotus Lake County Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Croix National Scenic Riverway</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Lakes Trail</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy Beach</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willow River State Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin Interstate State Park</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Rentals:** Snowshoes Y

Visit [powerup4kids.org/parks](http://powerup4kids.org/parks) for more information about these parks, activities and more!
Kick off the partnership with fun events!

William O’Brien State Park

Willow River State Park
PowerUp in the Parks at William O’Brien

Activities Location Map

Tic-Tac-Toe!
Get 3 in a row and win a prize!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Free Space</th>
<th>Hiking</th>
<th>Free Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biking</td>
<td>Free Space</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>Free Space</td>
<td>Fire Building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bring completed card to Information Booth to be entered into a prize drawing
Getting the word out

• Press releases
• Social media
• Website
• E-mail newsletter
• At the clinics
• Through additional partners
5. Evaluate!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Rx booklets distributed at each clinic location</td>
<td>1,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of community members participating in two park events</td>
<td>~250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from physicians on the program</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from participants</td>
<td>Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Approach

- HIPAA rules made it difficult to directly contact participants
- An optional online survey was posted on PowerUp website and printed on booklet
- Incentive to participate prize drawing as incentive was made available
Participant Survey Responses
Figure 1. The PowerUp in the Parks Rx encouraged families to be more physically active. N=10

As a result of receiving the PowerUp in the Parks Rx, how likely are you to do each of the following?

- Trying to get 1 hour or more of play each day: 54% More likely, 46% The same likelihood
- Being active as a family: 54% More likely, 46% The same likelihood
- Visiting the local parks: 68% More likely, 32% The same likelihood
Figure 2. 80% respondents reported their medical provider spoke with them about the importance of physical activity when using the PowerUp in the Parks Rx. N=10

Did your medical provider talk with you about physical activity when you received the PowerUp in the Parks Guide?

- Yes, a lot: 70%
- Yes, a little: 20%
- Not Really: 10%
Figure 3. Respondents’ favorite part about the PowerUp in the Parks Guide. N=32

What was your favorite part about the PowerUp in the Parks Guide? Select all that apply.

- Map of the parks: 44%
- PowerUp Adventures: 34%
- Adventure Bingo: 16%
- Hike: 22%
- Bike, Trike or Roll: 25%
- Paddle: 16%
- Play: 19%
- Animal Aerobics: 3%
- Dos and Don’ts page: 3%
- The free events in the...: 78%
- Please let us know any...: 16%
Figure 4. People visited new parks after receiving the PowerUp in the Parks Guide. N=33

Did you visit any new parks?

- Yes: 45%
- No: 45%
- I can't remember: 9%
Figure 6. 80% of providers agreed that the Parks Rx and Guide helped facilitate meaningful conversations with their patients.

"The Parks Rx and Guide helped me have meaningful conversations about physical activity with patients and their families."
Figure 7. Providers feel the lack of time, above anything else, hinders their ability to discuss physical activity with their patients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack process/support within clinic</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack time in appointments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not confident patients will follow through</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure how to talk about physical activity</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure where to refer them for information</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other health issues are a priority</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not an issue for my patients</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8. Time with patients is the most important thing that providers need to support physical activity conversations with their patients.

Which of the following are needed to support meaningful conversations with your patients around physical activity? (Select all that apply.)

- Other (please specify) 20%
- Community programs promoting physical activity 60%
- Patient resources including handouts, websites, recipes, etc. 60%
- Care team support 20%
- Time with patients 80%
- Embed into established workflow 60%
Figure 9. The Parks Rx was distributed mainly by doctors

Who distributes your Parks Rx/Rx to Move? (Select all that apply.)

- Doctors and APP’s: 60%
- Nurses: 20%
- Other clinic staff (dietitians, etc.): 20%
- Receptionist
- Other (please specify)

Other Provider Feedback:

- “Include more frequent "opportunities" to offer would be helpful- open gym info?”
- “I think it is important to remind parents that organized (team) exercise is good but not sufficient as the literature would support that when the team ends, so does the exercise.”
## Sharing work and resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HealthPartners and PowerUp</th>
<th>MN DNR Parks and Trails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Staff time: project coordination, event</td>
<td>• Staff time: project coordination, naturalists and park staff for event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graphic design</td>
<td>• Help design booklet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Printing and distribution</td>
<td>• Marketing/promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Marketing/promotion</td>
<td>• 2 $35 state park gift cards for drawing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prizes and “owner” of drawing</td>
<td>• Recreational equipment: kayaks, life jackets, paddles, fishing gear, GPS units, firewood supplies, archery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grant $ for buses</td>
<td>• State park as venue for event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Entire bike fleet for rodeo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Majority of event equipment, including tents, fun toys, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Covered some food truck expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paid for 10 daily park passes for individuals that could not pay entry fee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned

- Ok to be opportunistic
- Call it a “pilot”
- Think more critically about evaluation methods
- Better communication around event logistics and planning (staffing, weather contingencies, etc.)
- Healthcare provider buy-in is critical
- Need support and input from field staff
- Focus on getting new visitors in your “pitch”
- Sharing messages across organizations increased credibility and audience
What’s next?

• Considering a repeat of events and well-child Rx distribution for fall of 2018

• Expanding access for community members with library pass

• Exploring additional reach with new partners and ideas (e.g., Essentia Health, Mayo Clinic)
Questions?

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