

Building Inclusive Recreation and Sport Communities for Women and Girls: Facility Use & Design

MODULE: Organizational Culture

Funding provided by:
Government of Canada,
Women and Gender Equality Canada



A Culture of Feeling Welcome & a Sense of Belonging

- What is Organizational Culture?
- Feeling Welcome – 3 pillars
- Sport England example
- Discussion – “What would improve our organizational culture?”



What is an Organizational or Group Culture?

- The culture of a group defines both the values and beliefs that are aligned with the goals of the organization.
- Org culture includes articulation of the acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.
- It is the major determinant of the success or failure of the group's/organization's endeavors.
- A culture is often defined as an organization's competitive advantage.



What Comes First in Strengthening an Organizational Culture?

- Where is your organization starting?
- Do you have an articulated culture with defined values and behaviours? (examples on next slide)
- **Job One** – Define and or strengthen your organization's supportive culture.
 - Values stated that reflect commitment
 - Performance measures reflect commitment
 - Staff experience a positive organizational culture
 - Psychological health and safety in the workplace (Canada's Standard) - [Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace - CSA Group](#)
 - 13/15 psychosocial factors
 - Organizational Culture



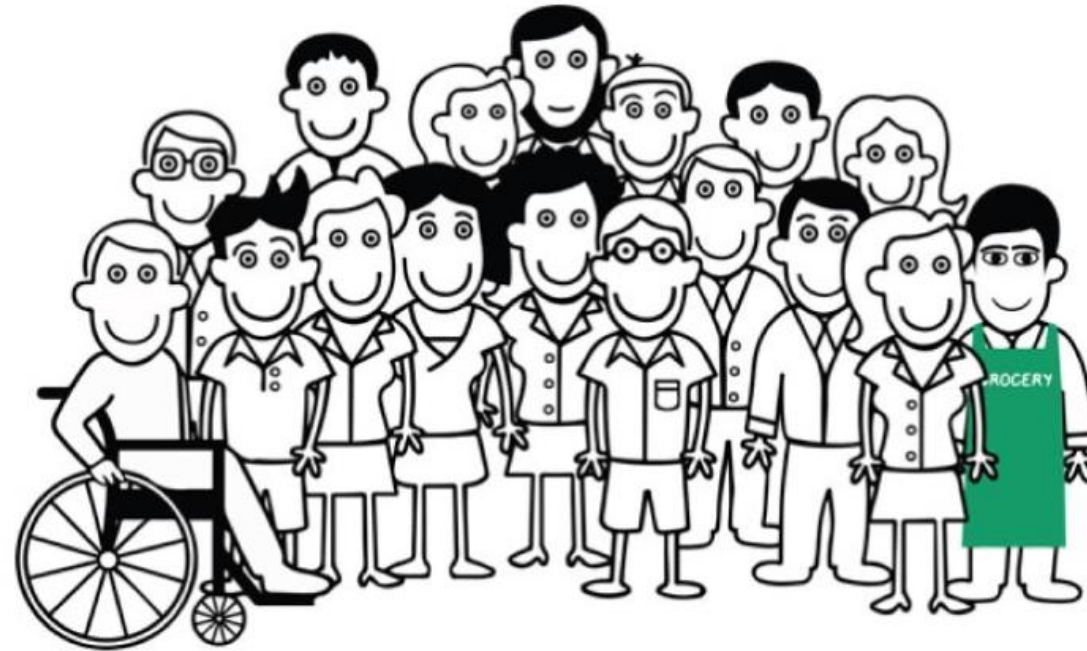
Values to Support Increasing Girls, Women & Gender Diverse People's Participation in Sport and Recreation	Sample Principles / Behaviours
We are <u>intentional</u> about our work	• We understand the current participation levels and set realistic goals. • We engage girls, women and gender diverse people in order to listen and model our initiatives around current barriers and needs. • We will create welcoming and safe spaces. • We employ evidenced-based approaches, and we measure our outcomes, satisfaction levels and our processes. • We will use people's proper pronouns.
We are <u>stronger together</u>	• We have a strong desire to change the status quo and we are each value added. • Shared leadership will demonstrate alignment to the larger vision. We all play our part.
<u>Equity</u> is not treating everyone the same	• We'll take different approaches to include girls, women and gender diverse people and their varying needs. • We'll go to where they are to form and strengthen our relationship. • We will seek to understand and address barriers.

For workplaces

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[For workplaces - Ottawa Public Health](#)

[Learn about the National Standard - Organizational Culture - YouTube](#)



For Workplaces

These whiteboard animation videos on the 13 factors in the [National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#) (PDF 1.58 MB) will be a helpful resource for all workplaces in Ottawa. Let's keep the conversation going about mental health. Each of the videos has a facilitator's guide to help get the conversation started.



Organizational
Culture

Feeling Welcome ...

If **diversity** is the reality, **equity** is the practice, and **inclusion** is the goal, **belonging** is the feeling people have when these are realized. The power of belonging is owned by the member, and it is our role as community rec professionals to help foster that power.

A Sense of Belonging ...

If you feel you belong to a community - and that community makes you feel valued and accepted - you're more likely to be healthy and engaged.

Why it's Important

We know through research that our connections to others and the strength of those relationships make us less likely to suffer from poor physical, mental and emotional health. With COVID-19 and social activism currently at the forefront in our society, strong social networks encourage engagement to community and willingness to take action.

(Marc Iturriaga, Community
Rec. Sept/Oct. 2022)

[The Power of Belonging in Community Recreation - Community Rec
\(communityrecmag.com\)](https://communityrecmag.com)

Feeling Welcome ...

A Sense of Belonging ...

3 Pillars

(Marc Iturriaga,
Community Rec. Sept/Oct.
2022)

Belonging in community recreation is a member centric approach focused on three pillars where everyone feels **invited, welcome and included**.

Invited.

What are the cultures, behaviors and understanding members experience or observe before participating?

How are members being invited into your programs, spaces and opportunities that motivates, inspires and leads them to show up as their authentic selves?

How are you using language and imagery, creating facility spaces, storytelling, building staffing compliments, creating varied program options and creating invitations based on feelings rather than informing people of opportunities?

[The Power of Belonging in Community Recreation - Community Rec \(communityrecmag.com\)](https://communityrecmag.com)

Feeling Welcome ...

A Sense of Belonging ...

3 Pillars

(Marc Iturriaga, Community Rec.
Sept/Oct. 2022)

Welcome.

- What are the cultures, behaviors and understanding members experience or observe when they arrive or begin participating?
- Once members arrive in your programs, spaces and opportunities, how are they made to feel comfortable, important and accepted by instructors, lifeguards, referees and fellow members?
- Are your programs, policies, facilities and structures created with a welcoming environment for all in mind?

Included.

- Everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences in a way that meets their physical, mental and social needs.
- How is your community being included in your programs, spaces and opportunities that motivate and inspire them to be lifelong members and/or co-creators of their experience?
- How are you removing barriers and negotiating constraints to ensure everyone of all shapes, sizes, motivations and identities feel included?

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Feeling Welcome

...

A Sense of Belonging ...

Potential Strategies

(Marc Iturriaga, Community Rec. Sept/Oct. 2022)

[When people feel like they belong](#) – that is they feel welcomed, invited and included – we will begin to see a tipping point in our communities of more people, being more active, more often. When community recreation puts **more resources into fostering belonging rather than into systems, facilities and infrastructure**, we will begin to see a revolution of a healthier society.

Community recreation professionals are experts in recreation, but not everything, and it's okay to admit where you need help. There are so many **community partners** you can turn to, but if all you do is tell them what you have to offer, those relationships become very transactional. Instead, look to create true **collaborations** by understanding their values, challenges, successes and goals and look to see how working together can help include the community they serve.

Don't program at these partners and target populations, instead look to work with them to **co-create meaningful opportunities**. This may mean what you create together may not be in-line with your traditional programming system, but if you are willing to **be flexible and think of inclusion and belonging as your outcome**, this new system you create will be a wonderful addition to an inclusive organization.

[The Power of Belonging in Community Recreation - Community Rec \(communityrecmag.com\)](#)

Feeling Welcome ...

A Sense of Belonging ...

Invitational Marketing

(Marc Iturriaga, Community Rec.
Sept/Oct. 2022)

Typical community recreation relies heavily on traditional marketing (e.g., social media, websites, guides, orientation blitzes) to inform people of what activities are offered. This works well for those already comfortable in a traditional recreation landscape because they know what they want and just need the information.

These tactics do not work for those who do not already feel like they belong in recreation.

Instead, ask how you are using **language**, **imagery** and **storytelling** based on feelings, instead of informing members of opportunities that leave them feeling like they belong in community recreation. Does the invitation represent the diverse nature of your community – not just racial, cultural or sexual identity, but also those of different skill levels, body types and motivations? How does the invitation help members understand and navigate the community recreation space before they even arrive in your facility?

- Does your staff represent the diversity in the community.
- Name programs to be inviting rather than exclusionary.
- Engage members of the community (especially influencers) in personal invitations – word-of-mouth.
- Work through partners who already engage the intended members (e.g., LGBTQ+, women's health centres)
- When we ask our community to join us, it needs to be delivered in a way that creates space for them to feel like they belong.

Feeling Welcome ...

A Sense of Belonging ...

Beyond the Front Desk (Part 3 in series)

(Marc Iturriaga, Community Rec.
Sept/Oct. 2022)

- Include approaches for program instructors/coaches, accessibility features, music and imagery, space-making, staffing and volunteer diversity, risk management and participant demographics.
- Provide training & development to staff that prioritizes fostering a welcoming environment.
- Provide time before a program for orientation & to answer questions.
- Get to know your new members.
- Create virtual tours so they know what to expect even before arriving.
- Watch the language – “you guys”
- Facilitate the experience – intentionally approach those looking mystified;

WHAT IS A GOOD WELCOME?

Making people feel welcome, comfortable and relaxed from the very beginning is vital:

- Make sure reception staff are welcoming and well informed.
- Take time to welcome anyone new.
- Say hello to people and tell them it's nice to see them.
- Tell people what to expect, where to go, what to do and what (if any) equipment to get.
- Reassure them that they can take it at their own pace.
- Invite people to tell you about their needs, but allow for this to be done discreetly.

Source: Sport England

Changing or Strengthening the Inclusive & Proactive Culture of Your Organization

1. Articulate the existing culture - values and behaviours (what exists)
2. Define the preferred culture - values and behaviours (what could exist)
3. Align the culture with legislation, national and provincial directions, strategy, mandate and corporate priorities – Give yourself a mandate
4. Connect Culture and Accountability (a lens on performance)
5. Visible Proponents – champions, early adaptors
6. What are the non-negotiables – what behaviours are unacceptable?
7. Align Culture with your brand and visual identity
8. Invest in needed training and open discussions – reinforcing the refined Culture. Don't rush it.
9. Three repeatable key messages...
10. Measure alignment and commitment

Examples - (60) Allyship at Netflix - YouTube



Describe the features of an
(your) organizational
culture that support girls,
women and gender diverse
people in sport and
recreation?

What will be the biggest
barrier in strengthening the
culture and commitment in
your organization?