



Saugeen Shores an example for PLAY in Grey-Bruce

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Some time was set aside for PLAY at the Saugeen Shores committee-of-the-whole meeting last Monday night. Gerry Moss, a member of the Community Action Network and Jason Wepler, of Grey Bruce Public Health made a deputation on behalf of PLAY-a Physical Activity Initiative to up to date councillors on the group's accomplishments and its future plans to promote physical activity.

PLAY, which is funded by a two year \$115,000 Trillium grant and community donations is a volunteer based program which promotes educational, unstructured, unorganized, spontaneous activity for children and their families in the Grey Bruce area.

Wepler said Saugeen Shores is a good example of a community who creates settings for PLAY.

"It's not the case with all communities, said Wepler.

He said PLAY consultant Catherine Smart is trying to get other communities up to the activity level displayed in Saugeen Shores, as three out of every five residents in Bruce and Grey counties are overweight or obese.

"Play needs to be an essential part of childhood," Wepler said.

He described 2010 as a very busy year for the group as they strove to promote activity to get those statistics down by releasing their play guide, hosting kite nights, taking part at the Bruce Power Beach Party, torch run festivities, and the walking festival.

Wepler said there are two upcoming activities which will promote healthy living in the Bruce and Grey counties. On Jan. 19, PLAY will be hosting a Moving On forum at the Grey Bruce Health unit in Owen Sound.

"It (the forum) will be a great opportunity for communities," Wepler said, noting more and more communities are looking for trail development and bike lanes like the ones in Saugeen Shores.

The forum will feature keynote speaker Gill Penalosa, executive director of 8 -80 Cities, "a Canadian based non-profit organization with an international outlook of creating healthy communities, where residents live happier and enjoy great public places."

The public is invited to the free forum and are welcome to share their ideas, concerns and help in

identifying priorities and solutions.

With Family Day coming up in February, PLAY will be providing swimming, skating, and other fun activities in collaboration with MacGregor Point Provincial Park.

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