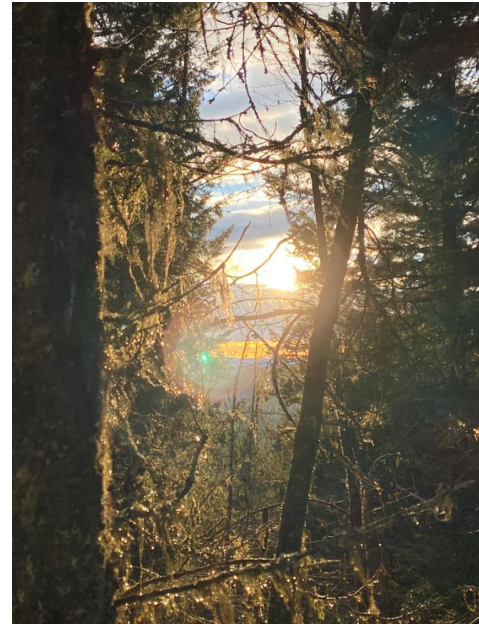


## Coming Soon – More (Comfortable!) Opportunities to get Active Outdoors!

As we round the last corner of winter in northern BC we can start to breathe a little easier knowing the official start of spring is weeks away. We may still have snow, but the temperatures are warming, making it easier to be outside. This means more opportunities to take safe, socially distanced walks with friends and loved ones, as well as additional opportunities to reap the many benefits of getting active outdoors!

Reflecting on the past year of physical distancing and public health restrictions, when it comes to staying active, there are some clear advantages to living in the north:

- [Recent research](#) indicates that people living in rural settings tend to associate the concept of physical activity with getting out in nature;
- Most, if not all, northern communities have easy access to outdoor recreation opportunities;
- While many facilities are closed or limiting access, nature is always open for business;
- Risk of COVID-19 transmission is significantly lower in outdoor settings;
- Outdoor play spaces (e.g. trails, mountains, parks, lakes, etc.) are less crowded, making it easy to maintain a safe distance from others.



Regardless of current public health restrictions, one message has remained clear: **Get outside** for some fresh air and activity. Now that spring is around the corner, let's take advantage of the best physical activity "facility": the great northern outdoors.

## Resources (toolkits, reports, websites)

### DASH BC: Healthy at School & Home Resources

During these times of physical distancing and reduced opportunities to gather, play, and connect, DASH BC continues to [create new resources](#) aimed at building student connections. Topics include: Food Based Learning during COVID-19; Nature Art;

Spreading Joy; and Physical Literacy at Home. All resources are connected to the BC curriculum, free to use, and ready to download.

### **Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA): Active Travel Fact Sheet**

CPHA and partners are working to provide insight into what a healthy, green, and just recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic could look like. This Active Travel [factsheet](#) highlights the benefits of investing in Active Travel.

## **Surveys & Research Studies**

### **Survey: Poverty Reduction in Prince George Deadline: March 12, 2021**

As part of the City of Prince George's commitment to addressing poverty in the community, the City is seeking feedback from residents by asking them to complete the Poverty Reduction survey currently available on the City of Prince George's [website](#). By completing the survey, residents can help the City prioritize a series of recommendations. In addition to the survey, the City is hosting focus groups and interviews with individuals who have lived or living experience with poverty. Following the engagement process, final recommendations will be presented to City Council for consideration and approval. Your input will shape local government actions, including advocacy with other levels of government, to reduce poverty. Your feedback is appreciated and will help shape the City's community poverty reduction strategy.

### **Survey: Lung Cancer Care During COVID-19**

Legacy for Airway Health and UBC are conducting a study about lung health care during COVID-19 to better understand how changes to health care and support for asthma and COPD during the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted patients' health and well-being. The researchers are recruiting participants to fill out an [online survey](#), which takes roughly 15-20 minutes to complete. Participants will also be asked if they would like to be considered for a 45-minute virtual interview, which will be aimed at exploring impacts more in-depth. Participants that complete the online survey will be offered a \$10 electronic gift card and those participating in an interview will be offered a \$50 electronic gift card. For more information, and to fill out the survey, [visit the UBC Survey page](#).

### **Study: SHRed Concussions Duration: 3 years**

Concussions are the most common form of head injury. Young people who get concussions take longer to recover and are at higher risk of developing symptoms that persist for many months after their injury. Researchers at the BC Injury Research and

Prevention Unit [are conducting a study](#), with the aim of improving the ways in which concussions are prevented, recognized, managed, and treated. Our current understanding of sports-related concussion comes largely from adult studies. In youth, we are less able to predict the recovery process, and have little understanding of the long-term effects of concussion, which makes this study particularly important.

### **UBC Study: Early Childhood Outside: Early Childhood Educator Tool Randomized Controlled Trial**

Outdoor play is important for children as it can promote healthy social and physical development, emotional wellbeing, self-confidence, risk management and overall physical activity. BC Children's Hospital and UBC have developed a tool to help early childhood educators learn about outdoor play and would like to test the effectiveness of this tool. If you are 19 years old or older, and currently working as an early childhood educator and/or administrator in Canada, you are invited to take part in [a study](#) to assess the effectiveness of this online tool in reframing early childhood educators' perceptions of outdoor play, and changing their service delivery to give children at their centre more opportunities for outdoor play.

## **Events and Learning Opportunities**

### **ISPARC - FitNation Leader Training Deadline to apply: April 13 – 15,, 2021**

If you have a passion for keeping your community moving, then we encourage you to [apply for FitNation](#)! FitNation Leader Training equips leaders with the skills and resources to design and deliver a physical activity program for all ages and abilities - from youth to elders! The FitNation Leader Training Agenda includes: Instruction in over 100 exercises and modifications; adaptable for introductory, intermediate, and advanced fitness levels; The Holistic Wellness Model; Tips for delivering programs during COVID-19; How to design an online program for virtual delivery.

### **Virtual Event: Bridging Silos – Advancing Climate Adaptation and & Low Carbon Resilience in Small Communities and Rural Regions Date: March 4-5, 2021**

Bridging Silos is a free virtual knowledge-sharing event being hosted by the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute at Selkirk College, ACT (Adaptation to Climate Change Team) at Simon Fraser University (SFU), and Planning Institute of BC's Kootenay-Rocky Mountain Chapter. Bridging Silos welcomes local government and Indigenous nations (staff and elected officials), community organizations, consulting

professionals, researchers and interested members of the general public from across BC, Yukon, and Alberta. [Virtual event registration](#) is now open!

### **Virtual Event: Higher Ground – Civic Governance Forum**

**Date: March 24-27, 2021**

The Columbia Institute is gearing up to offer their annual Civic Governance Forum in a virtual space for 2021. The conference will span three days. High Ground participants include Mayors, Councillors, Regional Directors, and School Board Trustees. [Virtual event registration is now open!](#)

### **Webinar: Why is outdoor risky play more important now than ever?**

**Date: March 25, 2021**

Children are spending more time indoors and on screens, engagement in outdoor play has never been lower and inequities of access are widening. This [webinar](#) will explore the effects of changing childhoods, as well as strategies to restore balance.

### **Workshop: Planning and Designing Healthy Communities**

**Date: April 23-24, 2021**

This two-day intensive [workshop](#) will introduce you to key principles and strategies for the planning and designing of healthy communities. Building on recent work and new research on the relationship between urban design and public health, your instructors will introduce you to the Healthy Built Environment (HBE) Linkages Toolkit and provide guidance on how to develop a health impact assessment. Featuring guest speakers from the Metro Vancouver public health community, this interactive course will be grounded in the practical demands of local government policy development, design and implementation.

## **Funding Opportunities**

### **Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program (MCIP)**

**Deadline: March 15, 2021**

MCIP is a [five-year, \\$75-million program](#) that helps municipalities prepare for, and adapt to, climate change, and to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and funded by the Government of Canada, MCIP is available to all municipalities and their partners.

### **FireSmart Economic Recovery Fund**

**Deadline: March 19, 2021**

The [Community Resiliency Investment \(CRI\) program](#) was announced by the provincial government in 2018 and is intended to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate their impacts on BC communities. The first in a series of funding streams is the [FireSmart Economic Recovery Fund](#); the intent of which is to support immediate job creation in order to build local wildfire resiliency and assist communities in recovering from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Emergency Operations Centres & Training**  
**Deadline: March 26, 2021**

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) is offering a funding stream intended to support the purchase of equipment and supplies required to maintain or improve Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) and to enhance EOC capacity through training and exercises. The maximum available funding is \$25,000. For more information, visit the [UBCM webpage](#).

**Strengthening Communities' Service**  
**Deadline: April 16, 2021**

Within the [Safe Restart funding](#), \$100 million is being delivered through the Strengthening Communities' Services Program, which aims to support unsheltered homeless populations and address related community impacts through an application-based program. The goal of this program is to support local governments and Treaty First Nations that wish to take action, understanding that this will complement parallel provincial efforts. For more information, and to apply, visit the [BC Civic Info webpage](#).

**Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative**  
**Deadline: September 30, 2021**

The objective of [this initiative](#) is to increase economic development opportunities of Indigenous Peoples and communities in Canada by supporting Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs who are ready to launch agriculture and food systems projects, and others who want to build their capacity to participate in the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

**ParticipACTION Community Better Challenge Grants**  
**Deadline: June 1-30, 2021**

The 2021 challenge will be following public health protocols and recommendations across Canada as it aims to inspire, motivate and support recovery and connection through physical activity and sport (in-person or virtually) and crown Canada's Most Active Community. Registration is open! For more information visit [ParticipACTION](#), or check out this [webinar](#) for more details on the challenge.

## Northern Health Stories

### Resilient communities grant: Terrace art workshops good for artists, gallery, participants, and community

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Terrace Art Gallery was very busy with opening night galas, art workshops, and kids' camps. The COVID-19 safety restrictions initially made it difficult for the gallery's board and staff to follow their mandate 'to enrich local and regional culture by providing a continuous exposure to the visual arts and encouraging community involvement through outreach, education and service'...

[continue reading](#)

### There is no vaccine for stigma

Public health responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have the potential to either generate or prevent stigma – something that has the potential to lead to discrimination, which can negatively impact health outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. A new resource is now available from the [National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health](#) (NCCIH) and Northern Health that focuses on evidence-based recommendations to counteract COVID-19 related stigma in Indigenous, rural, remote, and Northern communities in Canada...

[continue reading](#)

### Growing green to ward off the winter blues: Part 1

[Parks Canada](#) suggests that spending time in nature, surrounded by greenery and fresh air, is beneficial to our mental well-being. [Nature Canada](#) also touts the benefits of the outdoors and references *forest bathing*: “the act of being among nature and taking in the sights and sounds of your surroundings.” We certainly live in a great place to follow that advice, as Canada has “more than 17 times the world average” in natural forest space per person in which we can immerse ourselves. This need for a connection to nature, known as [biophilia](#), is a year-round desire, but what do we do when winter hits?... [continue reading](#)

See the latest stories at [stories.northernhealth.ca](https://stories.northernhealth.ca).

## E-Brief Information

The Healthier Northern Communities [E-Brief](#) is produced by [Northern Health's regional Population and Preventive Public Health program](#).

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