With Support from CTRA TRO is proud to present:

**Mood Walks – The Nurture of Nature**

Tuesday October 6th, 2015
12:00 – 1:00 pm

**Webinar Evaluation:**

Please click on the link above to complete the evaluation after the webinar. Please note, if you are interested in receiving a letter for your CTRS renewal and/or collecting PCCs, you must complete the evaluation.

**Questions:**
- Professional Contribution Credits: members@trontoario.org
- Letter for CTRS renewal: executivedirector@canadian-tr.org

**Comments & Suggestions:**
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Mood Walks – The Nurture of Nature

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Coordinator of Recreation and Fitness/PDL
Homewood Health Centre

Melissa Moreau, R/TRO
Recreation Therapist, PPL
HERO Centre- Rehabilitation Services
Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care
AUDIENCE POLL!
• An internationally recognized psychiatric hospital and forensic mental health research facility located in the town of Penetanguishene, Ontario

• Extensive range of both acute and long-term psychiatric inpatient and outpatient services

• The provinces only high secure forensic mental health program

• www.waypointcentre.ca
• 300-bed mental health and addiction facility located on 50-acres in Guelph, Ontario.
• Provide a variety of highly specialized care which includes both in-patient and out-patient treatment
• A resource for individuals from across the country and our local catchment area
• [www.homewoodhealth.com](http://www.homewoodhealth.com)
What is Mood Walks

• Mood Walks is a provincial program
• Training, support and funding
• Educational walking programs for people who experience mental health issues.
• Promotes both physical and mental health
• Reducing barriers and creating new opportunities for people to be physically active.
Project Partners

Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Conservation ONTARIO

Hike Ontario
Experience it...one step at a time

Ontario
Mood Walk Group Locations
Homewood Group Details

• Hikes ran June to September
  – Thursdays - 11am Spring & 10am Summer months
• Majority of participants required assistance with transportation
  – Option to carpool from Homewood or meet at planned location
• Average number of hikers per week - 19
• Largest number of hikers - 27
• Ave. of 5 staff
  – Rec Therapist, Peers Specialist, 2 Case Managers, Student
Fletcher Creek Ecological Preserve - Flamborough
Homewood Group Details

• Participants were from 3 out-patient programs:
  – Case Co-ordination, Social Connections, Guelph ACTT
• Mood Walks promoted by Case Managers, Nurses, Recreation Therapist, Peer Specialist and participants
• New partnership created with CMHA Waterloo-Wellington Support Co-ordination program
  – enabled their clients to access program
• Partnership with the Guelph Hiking and Trail Club (GHTC)
• Hiked local trails maintained by GHTC, Conservation Halton, Grand River and Hamilton Conservation Authorities.
Program Partner

- Guelph Hiking and Trail Club – Bill Mungall
- Planned hiking locations and routes
- Provided weekly hike leadership (1-4 volunteers)
- Promoted accessibility to trails by highlighting bus routes and transportation options
- Volunteers brought a wealth of knowledge of local area and history of trail systems
- Invited participants to join GHTC and promoted events
- Provided Safe Hiker Training to 10 Mood Walks participants
Program Partner Benefits

- Knowledge, expertise and hiking experience
- Awareness of local hiking options and appropriate routes
- Participants felt “safe” with leaders
- Opportunity to socialize with different people and forge new relationships.
  - Those “outside” the mental health community
- Selected challenging hikes that increased participants self-confidence, self-efficacy
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement to join club
- Promotion of upcoming hikes and club events
Copeland’s Creek – Penetanguishene Trail
Waypoint Group Details

- Hikes ran May to September
- Average number of hikers per week - 6
- Largest number of hikers - 12
- Ave. of 1 staff and 1 student and 1 volunteer
- Built partnerships with volunteers, local community Hiking Groups and conservation areas
What Worked?

• Combination of camaraderie and the opportunity to get outside the city, visit new places (escape)
• Large/Small group interest created more excitement
• Education and leadership from volunteers
• Learning where to access local trails and potential routes in and around city
• Healing aspects of connecting to nature
• Opportunity for challenge and personal commitment
• Right balance of physical challenge and accessibility
• Hiking gear ($500) to ensure sustainability
• Measurable outcomes
Program Challenges

• Transportation and Bus strike

• Weather and MOSQUITOS!!!

• Meeting needs of a large group of people with varied physical abilities

• Following up with those who attended initially but did not continue with program (participant consistency)

• Completion of program evaluation measures
The Evaluation Plan

• Concerned with outcomes of Mood Walks at 3 levels:
  – Participants
  – Participating Agencies
  – Project Overall
MOOD WALKS

Walking Groups

22 new walking groups across Ontario

64% of groups walked for at least 10 weeks

70 minutes = average length of walk

140 hours of group walking time

896 hours of walking by participants

Most groups walked once per week, with an average of 6.4 participants per walk

42% of hikes took place in Conservation Areas

Partnerships

Mental health agencies partnered with local hiking clubs, Conservation Authorities and student volunteers.

37 local partnerships (29 new partnerships)

29 hours = average contribution by partners

92% of partnerships described as “successful”

73% of partnerships “definitely” expected to continue
### Impact on Mental Health Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating in Mood Walks has...</th>
<th>Average Rating (out of 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased overall client engagement</td>
<td><strong>3.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced capacity to implement physical activity interventions</td>
<td><strong>4.2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthened our agency's ties with the greater community</td>
<td><strong>3.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced our agency's ability to develop community partnerships</td>
<td><strong>3.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported the creation of peer leaders</td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthened a health-promoting culture within our agency</td>
<td><strong>4.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved community awareness of our agency and its services</td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved staff connection to clients</td>
<td><strong>4.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Impact on Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating in Mood Walks has...</th>
<th>Average Rating (out of 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased my awareness of nature's influence on mental health</td>
<td><strong>4.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased my understanding of mental health issues</td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased my comfort working with people who experience mental health issues</td>
<td><strong>3.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased interest of others in my organization to learn how to support people who experience mental health issues</td>
<td><strong>3.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised the profile of our organization in the community</td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthened our organization's ties with the greater community</td>
<td><strong>3.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced our organization's capacity to develop community partnerships</td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracted the interest of new groups or members to our organization</td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
</tr>
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Mood Walks Evaluation Tools

- Pre- and Post- Mood Walks Questionnaire
- Sign In for Participants
- Leader’s Tracking
- Post-Mood Walks Focus Group
- Final Mood Walks Report
- Feedback from Partner Agencies

Completed by partner

Completed mental health agency staff leader
Pre- and Post- Mood Walks Questionnaire

To be completed by participants before first walk and after 10 weeks of walking

3 parts:

1. **SF-12v2™ Health Survey (3 mins)** [sf-36.org](http://sf-36.org)
   - Functional health and well-being from the respondent's point of view

2. **Nature Relatedness Scale (3 mins)** [naturerelatedness.ca](http://naturerelatedness.ca)
   - Cognitive, affective, and physical connectedness with the natural world

3. **Additional Questions (max 5 mins)**
   - Individual Mood Walks Goal
   - Perceived abilities, beliefs, and behaviours regarding walking and physical activity
Sign In for Participants

- Rate happiness, anxiety, and energy level before and after each walk
- Record first word that comes to mind following a walk
Post-Mood Walks Focus Group

• To understand participants’ experiences in Mood Walks, including those who may have limited literacy skills

• Guiding questions provided to explore 3 main areas:
  – Reactions to Mood Walks
  – Any impact that participating in Mood Walks had on participants
  – Suggestions for how Mood Walks could be improved
Participants demonstrated a significant positive change (measured on a 10-point scale) in happiness, anxiety, and energy levels from pre- to post-walk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Walk Happiness Score</th>
<th>Post-Walk Happiness Score</th>
<th>Significant Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness Score</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Yes ($p &lt; 0.01$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety Score</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Yes ($p &lt; 0.01$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Score</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Yes ($p &lt; 0.01$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95% of participants achieved or somewhat achieved their personal goal.
Other important outcomes ...

• Increased social connections
• Increased confidence exploring community
• Increased community integration
  – Visit parks and conservation areas outside of group
  – Join local hiking club
• Go for more walks outside of group
“Conversation is different: when we meet in a room or a coffee shop we have a tendency to talk about what we did yesterday/tomorrow; when we are in nature we talk about things when you were a kid, how you’d like to have a cottage someday. Your mind just frees right up.”
Participant Comments

Accomplishment:
“\(I\) lost some weight, saw some new places, had fun with friends. I feel better about things. I can do things that I thought I couldn’t.”

Managing Mental Health:
“\(\text{It is a useful exercise and do it to not be dependent on antidepressant tablets alone.}\)”

“I notice the difference of being able to breath, calm myself, reduce the number of counselling sessions.”

Positive Shared Experience:
“I enjoyed every minute, every conversation, every emotion, every sight of the walks.”
What’s Next?

• Mood Walks for Youth in Transition (2015-2017)
• The Mood Walks for Youth in Transition project will build capacity for community-based social service agencies in Ontario to plan, implement and evaluate hiking groups for youth at risk of, or experiencing, mental health disabilities. The program is designed to encourage and support young people (age 13-24) to become more physically active and to benefit from exposure to the healing effects of nature.
How to get involved:

• Check out the Mood Walks website for up to date information
• The project has been approved. A project manager has been hired who starts on September 21.
• The funding will be similar ($500 per group).
• The call for expressions of interest will go out to agencies later this fall, for new hiking groups to run in 2016 (May-October). It will be posted on the Mood Walks website and announced through the mailing list (sign up for the newsletter for up to date info).
The Mood Walks Website

- www.moodwalks.ca
- The manual, useful forms, and evaluation tools
- Information about past Mood Walks groups and events
- Resources and news from Conservation Ontario and Hike Ontario
- Links to other relevant websites
- Newsletters, promotional materials
- Power point presentation
  - The Mental Health Benefits of Physical Activity and Exposure to the Natural Environment
The Mood Walks Manual
Available in hard copy and online

– Time Saving Tips
– Safety and Choosing Your Route
– Engaging Volunteers and Students
– Using Motivational Interviewing
– Running Introduction and Orientation Sessions
– Leading an Inclusive Group
– Warm Up and Cool Down Exercises
– Sample Themed Walks
  • Group Challenges and CO’s Healthy Hikes Challenge
  • Using Photovoice
  • Peer Leadership Opportunities
  • Participant Awards
  • After the Project Period...
    – Staying Physically Active
    – Writing Proposals for Funding
The Mood Walks Manual
Handouts and Worksheets

• External Mood Walks Referral Form
• PAR-Q
• Are You Ready to Be Active?
• Physical Liability Waiver
• Consent to Use of Image Form
• My Mood Walks Goal
• Sample Press Release
Mood Walks
MENTAL WELLNESS AND THE GREEN LIFT

Pilot Year Successes
- Create a space
- Connecting with nature and our history
- Giving thanks to our ancestors
- I feel recharged and empowered

Panel Discussion
- Healthy Hikes
- Meet friends
- Connected with like minds
- Environment and naturalist
- Bring a clipboard for nature notes
- Equipment to borrow
- Hiking training
- Need to get the people out who really need this!
- Gift certificate for groceries

New Leaders
- CMHA clients
- Many new leaders
- New groups
- 22 new groups
- 408 walking hours

Challenges
- Lack of motivation
- Difficulty accessing parks
- Weather

2 Groups
- Different abilities
- I discovered places in Green I didn't know about
- Kept me in check with who I am
- Helped me discover what I'm passionate about
- I want to encourage everyone to get out and hike

Ontario Parks
- Diverse
- Accessible
- Free

ThinkLink Graphics
Questions?

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THANK YOU!