


# Adventure & Outdoor Education: A Health Promoting Schools Strategy



Chris Byron, Christine Avey, Murphy McMaster & Chris Hooper

# Presentation Outline

1. Historical perspective
2. Strategy rationale
3. Innovative programs
  - a) Project Earth (Chris Byron)
  - b) DPA (Christine Avey)
  - c) Outdoor Education (Murphy McMaster)



The pursuit of a  
healthy learner...

# Customization

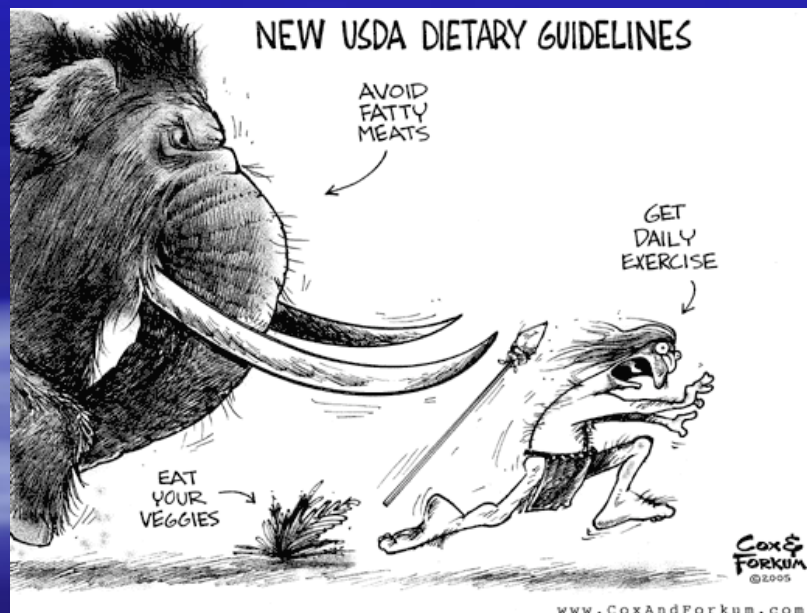


# Purpose:

- **To provide qualitatively differentiated educational programming for Kindergarten through Grade 12 students who are gifted (*The Charter, 1998*).**

# Heightened emotional responses

- Useful fight or flight response
- Not useful fight or flight response



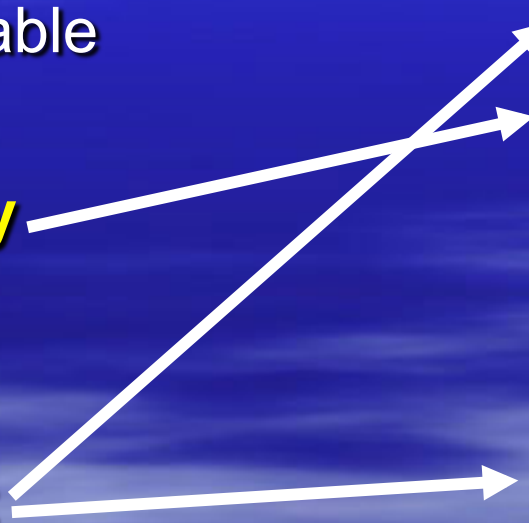
# Children's activity barriers and Giftedness

## Children's barriers to Becoming more active

- convenience
- programs available
- safety
- **skill and ability**
- information
- cost
- **social support**

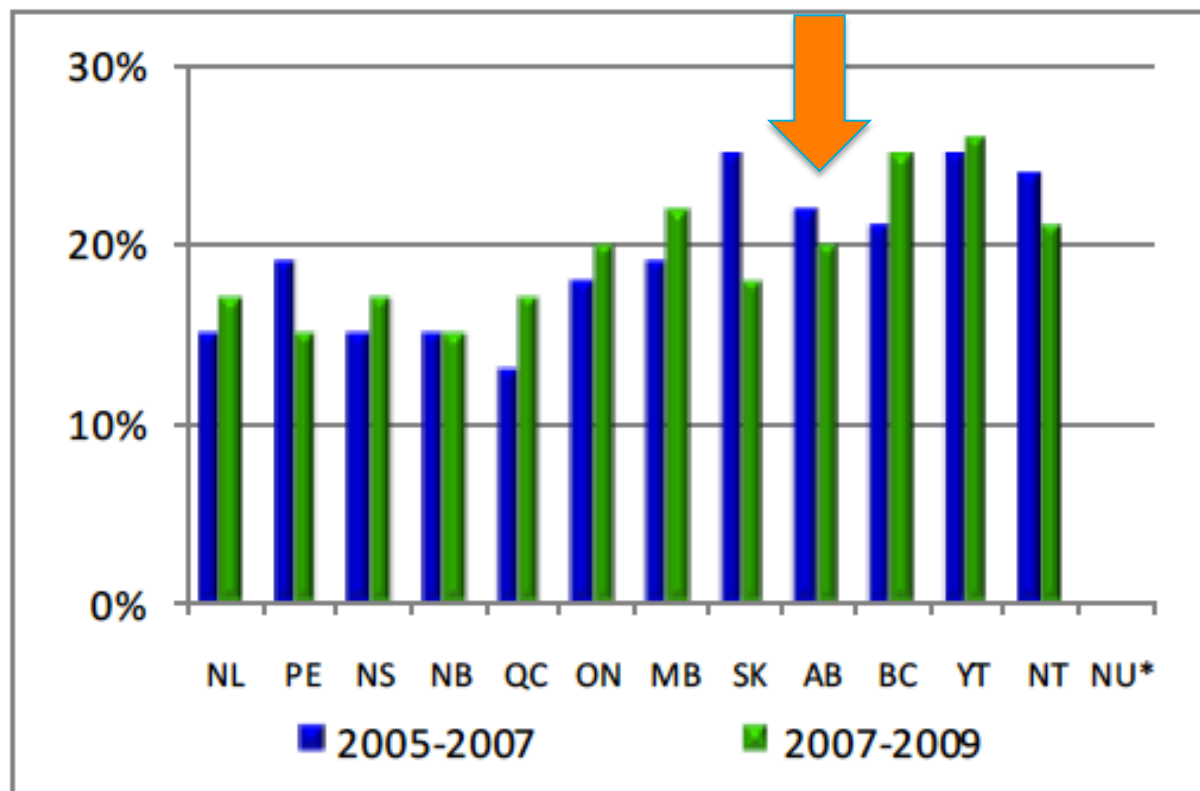
## Common Gifted Characteristics

- Depressive symptoms
- Motor instability
- Hyperactivity
- Attention deficits
- Impulsivity
- Low self-esteem



## FIGURE 13

Meets 15,000 steps criterion, by province/territory, 2005 - 2009



\*Insufficient data in Nunavut. See Nunavut bulletin for data from this and local studies.

CANPLAY 2005 - 2009, CFLRI

AISI Conference 2011

# The importance of physical activity for gifted children

Physical Activity  
develops both!  
(John Ratey MD)

Learning Focus?

Cognitive  
(Cortex)

Affective  
(Limbic System)

Asynchronous development

Happiness

85 yrs

6 yrs

# Conclusions:

- Physical activity may be even more important for gifted children than initially thought.

What do we do next?



# Factors to consider

1. Divisions (K-12)/age groups
2. Staff
3. Types of activities/programs (engagement)
4. The *challenge* of the “Gifted”

# Approach

1. Surveys (student and staff)
2. Past successes
3. Following natural passions in staff and students
4. Consulted Gifted research (engagement)

# Differentiated Strategies

1. Elementary-DPA support
2. Mid-School-Integrated AE/OE approach
3. High School-Outdoor Education
4. Student Wellness Committees for each level
  - a) K-5: HASC Force
  - b) 6-12: SWAT

# Thank you & Questions

## Contact Information

Westmount Charter School

2519 Richmond Road SW

Calgary, AB T3E 4M2

Canada

Phone 403.217.0426

General Fax 403.217.0252

Chris Hooper, Vice Principal

[Chris.hooper@westmountcharter.com](mailto:Chris.hooper@westmountcharter.com)