

# STAFF REPORT

**Department: Recreation**

**Date: March 6, 2024**

**Item: Decrease the age of youths to use the Fitness Centre with an accompanied paying adult**

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**Recommendation:** Be It Resolved That: The Community Services Committee Recommend that Council approve the adoption of a lower age limit for youths to 9 years to use the fitness centre with an accompanied paying adult.

**Background:** The current age for youths to use the fitness centre with an accompanied paying adult is 12-15 years old.

**Analysis:** Physical activity is an important part of healthy living at any age and is essential for children. The benefits of exercise are plentiful such as to develop cardiovascular fitness, strength, flexibility, bone density, reduce the risk of chronic diseases and health problems. It lessens the likelihood of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use.

Lowering the age limit of youths to use the fitness centre with an accompanied paying adult will welcome a larger number of families into the Recreation Complex. It will increase the opportunity for the entire family to get fit and be active together. Currently families who have a family membership can only use the pool and squash court with children younger than 12 years old.

There are many benefits to this lowered age limit;

- 1) Increase usage of our facility
- 2) Increase family memberships being sold
- 3) Increase family physical activity
- 4) Increase healthy habits at an early age

The YMCA allows youths access to their fitness centre while accompanied by a parent or guardian. They permit Youths aged 7-9 to access their stretching area and equipment, light 2-5lbs free weight, resistance bands, Bosu's, matts, foam rollers, etc. Youths aged 10-14 have full access to the fitness centre following a completion of an orientation.

**Existing Policy:** See current Leisure Services



**Strategic Goal:**1. Building off the mission statement “we will aspire to advance a prosperous and diversified local economy and a healthy and active quality of life for all ages.” 2. Community Goal 4. Quality of Life: A healthy and active quality of life for all ages. “the Regional Recreation Complex is recognized as a rare jewel for a Town of Espanola’s size, but underutilized.”

**Financial Commitment:**There is no financial commitment to this recommendation. There will only be financial benefits.

**Budgeted:** Yes  No

**Implementation:**Implementation would be effective immediately upon approval. With implementation we will introduce an additional Youths in the Fitness Centre Rules and Recommendations form for all parents/legal guardians to read, understand and sign before bringing a youth under the age of 16 into the gym. This form explains the areas of the gym and equipment youths can use. It also gives recommendations to exercise safely. \*Please see the attached for the Youths in the Fitness Centre Rules and Recommendations form

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**Prepared By: Cori Duplessis**

**Department Manager: Bailey Bouwmeester**

**CAO/Clerk: Joseph Burke**

**Approval of Recommendation:** Yes  No

**Comments (CAO/Clerk):** Our insurer has been consulted and there are no concerns with this change from an insurance premium or contract standpoint.