



YMCA YOUTH EXCHANGES CANADA

Toolkit for the Delivery of Course Credit



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Canada

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Introduction

This toolkit is intended for Group Leaders planning to offer a course credit through the YMCA Academy, to students participating in a YMCA Youth Exchange. It includes information on course content, the curriculum expectations and potential activities and assessments.

These activities are only examples, and you can create your own activities, assignments, and grading rubrics that suit your own group. However, you will need to assess students based on their achievement of curriculum expectations.

In the toolkit, the course is split up into the three phases of the exchange: pre-exchange, exchange, and post-exchange. However, many of the curriculum expectations can be applied in other stages of the exchange.

Course Description

This is a grade 12 Ontario physical education course, which will be issued by the YMCA Academy. Here is a description of the course (PLF4M -- Recreation and Healthy Active Living Leadership, Grade 12) from the Ontario curriculum:

“This course enables students to explore the benefits of lifelong participation in active recreation and healthy leisure and to develop the leadership and coordinating skills needed to plan, organize, and safely implement recreational events and other activities related to healthy, active living.

Students will also learn how to promote the benefits of healthy, active living to others through mentoring and assisting them in making informed decisions that enhance their well-being.

The course will prepare students for university programs in physical education and health and kinesiology and for college and university programs in recreation and leisure management, fitness and health promotion, and fitness leadership. Prerequisite: Any health and physical education course.”

Overall Curriculum Objectives

Leadership

By the end of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of leadership and of the attributes, skills, and styles needed to be an effective leader;
- Demonstrate leadership skills in a variety of contexts related to healthy, active living;
- Demonstrate an understanding of group dynamics, and apply teamwork skills in a variety of contexts related to healthy, active living.

Facilitation of Recreation and Leisure

By the end of this course, students will:

- Identify and explain the benefits of lifelong participation in active recreation and healthy leisure, and demonstrate an understanding of factors that enable and constrain participation in active recreation and healthy leisure activities;
- Demonstrate the ability to plan and coordinate an event related to healthy, active living;
- Demonstrate an understanding of safety procedures needed for injury prevention in a variety of activities related to healthy, active living.

Mentoring Development

By the end of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of mentorship and the methods used by effective mentors to contribute to the growth and development of others;
- Demonstrate the ability to help others develop and implement a personal healthy active living plan.

Course Content and Teaching Strategies

Course Outline

Unit #	Unit Title	Hours
1	Pre-Exchange (Leadership)	20
2	Exchange (Facilitation of Recreation & Leisure)	50
3	Post-Exchange (Mentoring Development)	20
4	Culminating Activity:	20
TOTAL 110 hours		

Teaching and Learning Strategies

- active and experiential learning strategies
- case studies and simulations,
- teamwork, brainstorming, mind mapping,
- problem solving, decision making, independent research, personal reflection,
- seminar presentations, direct instruction, portfolios, and hands-on applications

Course Assessment and Evaluation

Students are assessed on their achievement of the provincial curriculum expectations. Achievement charts are used to determine student achievement, which is demonstrated in 4 categories of learning: knowledge/understanding, thinking/inquiry, communication, and application.

Final Grade

The final grade is reported as a percentage corresponding to levels of achievement: Level 1 (50-59%), Level 2 (60-69%), Level 3 (70-79%), Level 4 (80-100%).

In calculating the student's final mark, the following weighting will apply:

Knowledge & Understanding	Thinking/Inquiry	Communication	Application
20	20	20	40

Learning Skills and Work Habits

Learning skills and work habits are assessed throughout the course and reported in these areas:

1. Responsibility,
2. Organization,
3. Independent Work,
4. Collaboration,
5. Initiative, and
6. Self-Regulation.

These are reported separately and are not included in the calculation of the percentage mark. The development of these skills is critical to academic achievement and directly affects the final mark.

Transfer Credit Administrative Process

If you are part of a community organization - Before confirming participation in the high school credit offering, you would support youth in:

- Verifying with their school guidance counselor or administrator about the process and eligibility for transferring this Ontario course credit in your province or territory. Credits obtained through the program are subject to the school's acceptance.

If you are part of a school program - Before confirming participation in the high school credit offering, you would:

- Verify with your school guidance counselor or administrator about the process and eligibility for transferring this Ontario course credit in your province or territory. Credits obtained through the program are subject to the school's acceptance.

Before starting the course with your students, you would:

- Participate in an orientation session with the YMCA Academy online. This will cover the course requirements and administrative processes.
- Provide your Regional Coordinator with a course plan, rubrics, and a class list.

During the course

- Students participate in activities during the three phases of the exchange
- Students complete assignments throughout the exchange
- You would mark assignments and return them to students in a timely manner.
- You would track student grades and weight the assignments
- You would track Learning Skills, though these are reported as letters (E, G, S, N) and don't count towards course average

2 weeks after the exchange is complete:

- You will submit the student grades, reported as a percent, in a template and provide a sample of graded work at different grade levels.
- You would provide comments on the report card speaking to student's strengths and areas for improvement.

Issuing the credit

- The YMCA Academy will submit and process the credit for each student.
- The YMCA Academy will issue a letter for each student demonstrating the completion of the Ontario course.
- The student will provide this letter to their guidance counselor or administrator to transfer that credit to a course in their own province or territory, and to have the course added to their report card.

Assignments should be stored for a year, as there are two possibilities requiring revisiting them:

1. Student challenges his/her/their grade
2. Ministry of Education conducts and inspection

Pre-Exchange – Curriculum Connections

During the pre-exchange phase, youth participate in a number of activities to prepare to travel and host their twin. Some of these activities include:

- Developing a group contract
- Developing your group's learning objectives
- Building the group and participating in team building activities
- Researching your home and host communities
- Twinning the youth and getting to know your twin
- Planning host activities
- Holding fundraising events

Here are some connections to the curriculum expectations in this phase of the exchange.

Group Dynamics and Teamwork

At the end of the course, students will:

- Describe factors that affect the interaction of people within groups;
- Describe strategies that can be used to facilitate group effectiveness;
- Describe individual behaviours and attitudes that contribute to effective teamwork and group success.

Leadership Styles

At the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of leadership, and compare various leadership styles and their use in a variety of situations;
- Identify the attributes and skills needed to be an effective leader;
- Demonstrate the ability to select and apply the most appropriate leadership styles for achieving a specific objective in a variety of contexts related to healthy, active living.

Pre-Exchange – Potential Activities

Here are a few potential activities and assessments to support the curriculum connections in the pre-exchange phase.

Creating a Safe Space

Ask the group what safe space means to them. If they have not heard the term, explain that you would like to create a safe space where everyone feels comfortable and participates. Write their answers on the chart.

If it has not come up, explain that many injustices happen. We cannot control what happens everywhere. As a group, we would like to control our own space so that everyone feels included and safe. Prejudice still exists but we hope the exchanges zone can be free from discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, ability, religion, culture, etc.

Explain that conflict is not a bad thing, but a natural part of most groups and that it happens in a safe group. Having guidelines will help the group deal with conflict when it arises.

Ask the group to come up with guidelines to make sure the group is a safe space. Say that it is also important to develop ground rules to deal with issues that that may come up such as punctuality. Record ideas on the chart.

With the help of the group, write guidelines. Ensure the group deals with punctuality, group discussions, group participation and confidentiality

Sample guidelines

- Stories shared in the room stay in the room (no gossiping).
- I agree that only one person should speak at a time.
- I agree to speak for myself and from my own experience. I will use “I” statements.
- I agree to be honest.
- I agree to treat everyone with respect.
- When I hear something that is inappropriate or I disagree with a statement I will respectfully tell the person and disagree with the statement rather than attack the person.
- I agree to be patient.
- I agree to be open-minded and listen to opinions different from my own.

Ice Breaker Activities

1. Brainstorm as a group elements that might affect the success of a team.
2. As a group, brainstorm teamwork skills that would be helpful to the development of a strong and effective team.
3. After brainstorming about group dynamics and teamwork skills, students should apply these skills in icebreaker and teamwork activities.

Example Icebreaker – The Human Knot

- Ensure participants are comfortable with being very close to each other.
- Have the team make a circle.
- Now tell them to put their right hand in the middle and grab the hand of someone that is not BESIDE them.
- Next, have them put their left arm in the circle and grab someone else's arm who is not beside them AND who isn't the person holding on to their right arm. Otherwise, it won't work.
- Now the teens have to talk to each other and figure out how to untangle without letting go of the hands. It may involve climbing over arms or crawling under.
- The players will become more tangled if they don't communicate with each other.

Journaling

Throughout this exchange, you will be learning about and practicing leadership and mentorship skills.

It is your responsibility to journal throughout your exchange. We will come back to this journal at the end of the exchange, so keep up with it! Here are the requirements of this task:

- You must have a minimum of 7 journal entries
- In each journal entry, you need to write a description of what happened. What was your role? Did the activity go as expected? How did you feel during the activity?

Here are some more example journal prompts:

Pre-Exchange

- What are your hopes and fears about the exchange?
- How can you contribute positively to the group and the planning of the exchange?
- What would you like to learn about your own or your twin community?
- What would you like your twin to see/experience that they probably couldn't do if they were just a tourist in my community?

During and After the Exchange:

- What is one thing you learned today?
- Compare what you are seeing on the exchange vs. what you already heard and knew about the community you are visiting.
- What impact did your community service project have on the community?
- What are you finding challenging about the exchange? What is one thing you will take away?

Understanding Leadership

1. **Brainstorm.** The group comes up with a list of leaders. Discuss why they think of them as leaders, and what skills or attributes makes them leaders.

2. **Leadership styles.**

- Review different leadership styles and try to match leaders that they previously brainstormed to the leadership style.
- *Four corners:* This activity gets students moving and discussing. On each wall hang a poster that says 1 of the leadership styles. One of the teachers will call out the definition of this leadership style and the students need to run to the poster that they think reflects that definition. Once students are at the poster they can discuss with one another why they think the definition matches the leadership style they are standing next to.
 - You can play an adapted version of this if you call out a scenario and have students run to the leadership style they think would be most effective. Once they are standing beside the leadership style poster they can discuss with other students around them why they believe this style would be the most effective.

3. **On-going leadership discussion**

- Throughout the entirety of the program, have students reflect about what leadership style they utilized during different activities and why they chose to implement this particular leadership style.
- This reflection could be done in a journal.

Pre-Exchange Potential Assessments

Group Dynamics and Teamwork

You could use a similar chart to assess student's learning on group dynamics and teamwork.

Student Name	Success criteria	Is the student demonstrating this criteria?	Additional Comments
	I can describe 1-2 factors that affect group interactions		
	I can contribute 1-2 strategies for making group work successful		
	I can describe 1-2 factors that affect group interactions		
	I can contribute 1-2 strategies for making group work successful		

Group Roles

What roles do you typically play in a group? List them below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

You can adopt behaviors and attitudes to contribute to effective teamwork and group success.

- Do the roles you chose contribute positively or negatively to group success? Explain.
- What positive group role would you like to adopt and how do you think it will help achieve group success in any future group you are part of?
- What are some different ways you can make sure you follow the norms of any group you are a part of?
- What are some ways you can ensure that any conflict in a group remains constructive?

Leadership Style Scenarios

For each scenario, indicate:

- The leadership style that would work best and give reasons why

Scenario 1

You are a camp counselor assigned with a group of rookie campers. You will be competing against other cabins in a scavenger hunt held in half an hour. The other cabins have older and more experienced kids, but your group would like to show them up.

Scenario 2

Your boss is away in the hospital and puts you in charge for the month they will be off work. Everyone in your care has worked for the company for at least eight years. Everyone really likes their job and the group is close - in fact, the employees often socialize after work as a group.

Scenario 3

You find yourself elected as the group leader (6 people) for a class project that involves writing and putting together a dramatic presentation that will be filmed on video. There are people of all types of abilities in the group and most seem pretty keen on doing the project. The group has one month to complete the project.

Scenario 4

When the high school you are a coach at decides to go from having only a varsity soccer team (seniors only) to a junior and senior team, you are asked to coach the junior team. The students trying out for the team have no prior experience playing soccer, but are very motivated for this new opportunity.

Scenario 5

A committee is planning the annual Christmas party for employees and their families, and you have been chosen to take the lead. Last year was one of the better parties and all of the people who are working this year had a job on last year's committee.

Introduction Poster

Create an introduction poster so that your peers get to know you a bit better. You can make the poster using whatever format you would like (Canva, Pain 3D, Google Slides etc.).

You can have total creative freedom. Here are some questions to answer in your introduction:

- What do you like to do in your free time? What are your hobbies?
- How would your friends describe you?
- What do you hope to get out of the exchange?
- Why is active recreation important to you?
- What active recreational activities do you do? Where do you do them?
- What motivates you to participate in active recreation? What stops you from participating in active recreation?

Exchange Phase – Curriculum Connections

During the exchange phase, youth take turns travelling to their host community and hosting their twin in their home community. Groups experience the diversity of Canada by visiting their twin community and seeing their own community through their “twin’s eyes” when hosting.

Through the experience of planning the exchange, hosting, and travelling, youth also develop leadership, interpersonal, and event coordination skills. They may plan and participate in many activities related to active recreation.

Here are some connections to the curriculum expectations during the exchange phase.

Leadership Skills

At the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to use communication skills to develop healthy relationships and provide direction to participants involved in a variety of activities related to healthy, active living
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal skills and conflict resolution strategies to minimize and resolve conflicts when interacting with others
- Demonstrate the ability to make decisions, set goals, and solve problems when in a leadership role, taking into consideration the viewpoints of oneself and others and the availability of resources
- Demonstrate the ability to use adaptive, organizational, and time management skills to plan physical activities
- Demonstrate the ability to apply leadership skills within the context of activities related to healthy active living objectives

Group Dynamics and Teamwork

At the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of strategies and teamwork skills to facilitate group effectiveness in achieving goals related to healthy, active living

Safety and Injury Prevention

At the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to apply procedures for preventing injuries in a variety of activities related to healthy, active living

Promotion of Lifelong Participation in Recreation and Leisure

At the end of the course, students will:

- Explain the terms *active recreation* and *healthy leisure*, and describe the potential social, economic, and environmental benefits that active recreation and healthy leisure can provide for a community
- Explain why lifelong participation in active recreation and healthy leisure is an important contributor to one's quality of life and well-being
- Describe motivational factors and potential challenges that affect lifelong participation in active recreation and healthy leisure, and identify strategies for overcoming these challenges

Event Planning and Coordination

At the end of the course, students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to implement an action plan to run a healthy active living event, evaluate its success on the basis of pre-established criteria, and make recommendations for improvements

Exchange Phase – Potential Activities

Active Recreation: Understanding its Importance and Purpose

Mind map/word association

Write the words “Active Recreation” on a board/sheet etc. Have students share word associations that come up when they hear this word. Use these word associations to create a mind map for understanding “Active Recreation”

Benefits of Active Recreation

Break students up into three groups and task each group to brainstorm one of the following topics - social, economic or environmental benefits of Active Recreation.

Once each group has developed a substantive list of benefits they can role-play a scene of how this benefit could play out. The other groups need to guess what the benefit they are role-playing is.

Conflict Resolution and Group Decision Making

Objectives: To let participants safely express their views on how they make decisions as a group; to develop respectful, inclusive techniques for making decisions and resolving conflicts.

- 1. Tell participants to take five minutes to think about a conflict that they have been involved in. Invite them to share with the group:**
 - What was the conflict about?
 - Why did it occur?
 - How was the conflict resolved?
 - What was their role in the conflict and its resolution?
 - How do they feel about their role?
- 2. Divide participants into four groups and give each a scenario.** Ask them how they would manage the conflict. Give them 20 minutes to think about and discuss it. Then each group shares its responses with the larger group.

3. Reflection

- How did your group figure out a solution to your scenario? What processes did you use?
- Was there any conflict in your group?
- If so, how did you deal with it? What worked? What didn't? How do you feel about your group process?
- Is it always better to try to avoid conflict? Is this possible or realistic? Is conflict necessarily bad? Why or why not?
- What can we learn from dealing with conflict? What characterizes good conflict management? What skills do you need to resolve conflict well?
- What are the biggest challenges to resolving conflict?
- What are some positive, inclusive ways to manage conflicts and make group decisions?

Sample scenarios

- A. While planning the exchange, the group decides to put on a talent night to promote the program and serve as a fundraiser. They divide into four groups, each taking responsibility for key aspects of the show. When the whole group gets together the following week, it becomes clear that one group has done nothing. When asked why, they offer excuses and tell the rest of the group to relax.
- B. During the weekly meetings, three members tend to do all the talking. They dominate the meetings with their strong opinions and loud voices. When some of the quieter participants bring this fact to their attention, the talkers respond by saying that if they don't talk, nobody else does and nothing ever gets done.
- C. There have been some personality clashes within the group. The group decides to meet to try to resolve them. At the meeting, half the participants (including some involved in the clashes) insist that everything is fine and everyone should put bad feelings aside and focus on the positive. The other half really wants to talk and work through the problems together, believing that otherwise the problems will never go away.
- D. During the travel phase of your exchange all members of your twin group host your group. One participant, who does not have any food allergies or dietary considerations, is placed with a host who prepares food that she is not used to eating. During one supper, the participant is served some dishes she has never seen before. She makes some faces and says "this is really slimy, what's this?" The host mother is upset and says "just eat the food." After this meal there is some tension between the participant and the rest of the family. When the participant talks to her twin, she is told that the parents feel offended because she is not respecting their traditions.

Exchange Phase – Potential Assessments

Leadership Skills Assessment

You could use a similar chart to assess students' leadership skills.

Student Name	Success criteria	Is the student demonstrating this criteria?	Additional Comments
	Student uses strong communication skills when leading activities		
	Student uses communication to minimize conflict		
	Student demonstrates leadership skills when running activities		
	Student demonstrates goal setting and an effort towards reaching said goal		
	Student demonstrates organization and adaptive behaviour when running activities		
	Student demonstrates an application of safety procedures and protocols when running and participating in activities		

Action Plan: Active Recreation Event

Step 1: Assessment process

- Students should create an interest checklist/survey of different active recreation ideas, and additional elements to consider for their event (participants experience, participants accessibility, participants average activity level etc.)
- Students should seek feedback on their interest checklist/survey from the twinned group before starting their planning process.

Step 2: Developing an Action Plan

- Using the information they have gathered from their twinned group students should create an Action Plan for the Active Recreational Event.
- Students must include the following components into their Action Plan
 - What is the goal of the activity?
 - What is the activity?
 - What materials are needed to facilitate the activity?
 - What are the potential risks for injury in this activity? What actions are being taken to mitigate these risks?
 - What roles will each group member take on for this activity?
 - Create success criteria for their event so that they can reflect at the end

Action Plan Template

Event Title

Overview:

Event Goal:	
Activity Description:	
Required Materials:	

Health and Safety:

Potential risks for injury	Safety Protocol	Resource

Financial budget:

Item/Need	Price
Total Price:	

Promoting the event:

Who is your target audience for this event?	
What format will you use to promote this event to that target audience?	

Preparation for the event: Create a timeline for tasks that need to be completed leading up to the event.

Date	Task	Group member responsible for completing the task

Running The Event:

Group member	Event Role

Success Criteria:

Our event will be successful if...	Criteria Check-Off

Event Reflection

1. Success Criteria

- In the Action Plan have students create success criteria for their event.
- Ex.

The event is successful if... all participants are actively engaged for the duration of the activity
The event is successful if... all disputes or conflicts are resolved

2. Reflection of success criteria

- After the student groups have run their Active Recreation Event they will reflect on their success criteria as a group.
- Ex.

Success Criteria	Was the criteria met?
The event is successful if... all participants are actively engaged for the duration of the activity	Yes. All of the students were engaged throughout our dodgeball tournament.
The event is successful if... all disputes or conflicts are resolved	Yes. The conflict between two participants about boundary lines was resolved

Students should make recommendations for improving their event. For example, “next time I run a dodgeball tournament I will... have the rules posted visually on a wall so that everyone can see it”

Post Exchange - Curriculum Connections

Post-exchange activities are essential to putting the whole experience of the exchange together and giving both group leaders and participants the chance to reflect on and share their learning. Typical post-exchange activities include:

- Debriefing the experience as a group
- Sharing the exchange experience with the community
- Sending thank-you's
- Participating in evaluations (ex: filling out surveys)

In the context of the course, this would also include the development of a culminating activity, such as a healthy active living plan. Here is more information on the connections to the curriculum in the post-exchange phase.

Mentorship

At the end of the course, students will:

- Describe the concept of mentorship, and identify the attributes of an effective mentor
- Explain how an effective mentor contributes to the growth and development of others

Healthy Active Living Plan

At the end of the course, students will:

- Describe how healthier choices related to physical activity, healthy eating, and other aspects of everyday living contribute to better physical, mental, and social health and greater personal well-being
- Demonstrate the ability to assist “clients” in selecting and using a variety of appraisal methods and resources to assess personal physical activity levels, fitness, and eating patterns
- Demonstrate the ability to assist “clients” in interpreting appraisal results and using the information to make changes in their daily lives that are related to physical activity, fitness, healthy eating, and other factors that affect overall health
- Demonstrate the ability to assist “clients” in designing and following a personal healthy active living plan
- Identify community resources and support services related to physical activity, healthy eating, and personal well-being

Post-Exchange – Potential Activity

Here are some potential activities and assessments to support the curriculum objectives in the post-exchange phase.

Thoughts and Feelings about your Exchange

In point form record your findings.

1. What is the most interesting thing about your twin family?
2. List the similarities and differences between your twin family's lifestyle and your family's lifestyle.
3. Indicate similarities or differences that you have noticed.

Twin community

Home community

- music
- leisure
- rural or urban development
- building design
- employment
- cost of living
- religion

4. Interview your twin family about _____
 - a. Record this information.
 - b. What do you think and feel about this matter?
5. As our theme is active recreation, what do you notice about:
 - a. Recreational activities
 - b. Food
 - c. Sports
 - d. Outdoor activities
 - e. Health
6. How has this exchange changed your outlook about Canada?

Post-Exchange – Potential Assessments

Journaling – Reflective Practitioner

Remember your journal entries? It is time to look at the recording of those events and analyze and reflect on them. You have come a long way in the last few months. Your leadership and mentorships skills have been tested and you have been challenged with new learning and social experiences. Here is the requirements of this task:

- Re-read the description of these events
- Analyze each event that you journaled about. You can ask yourself some of the following questions.
 - How have you applied things you have learned?
 - What have you done well?
 - What could you have done differently?
 - How does your learning relate to your life goals and plans?
- Comparing the destination and your own community, what are the most striking differences and similarities in the culture and the way people go about their lives?
- How has this exchange changed your outlook on Canada?
- Write a final reflection answering this following question: How will you use this experience in your future life?

This activity could be done within your own group after travel and hosting.

Creating a Health Plan

Partner's Name:	
Health Advisor's Name:	

Assessment:

Question	Answer
How many hours of physical activity do you do per week?	
How many hours of sleep do you get per night?	
How many hours of sedentary activity do you have a day?	
List the food that you eat on a typical day: breakfast, lunch and dinner menu at your home.	
Personal health considerations to take into account:	
What do you want out of your Healthy Active Living Plan?	

Analysis:

Use the following information sources and others to analyze your partner's responses.

- [Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Adults ages 18-64 years](#)
- [Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth \(ages 5-17 years\)](#)
- [Canada's Food Guide](#)

Personal Healthy Active Living Plan:

Topic	Recommendation (Per week)
Physical Activity	
Sleep	
Sedentary activity	
Food	
Other	

Recommended community resources:

Community Resource	Describe how it supports a health goal

Why do you think that your partner should follow this health plan?

Health Plan Reflection

- What leadership style did you utilize while you were working with your partner? Why did you think that this was the best choice?
- What leadership skills did you utilize while you were working with your partner?
- How did you take your partners personal characteristics, preferences etc. into consideration when making their plan?