Youth with cerebral palsy (CP) have reduced physical activity (PA), leading to increased risk to develop secondary health problems.

The purpose of this part of the program is to develop an innovative approach to active lifestyle to optimize and maintain PA.

Stay-FIT is program of research to identify, understand, and ultimately reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in youth with CP by focusing on novel strategies to promote healthy active living. See figure.

**BACKGROUND**
- Youth with cerebral palsy (CP) have reduced physical activity (PA), leading to increased risk to develop secondary health problems.
- The Stay-FIT Study team recognizes the need for a comprehensive approach to active lifestyle to optimize and maintain PA.
- Stay-FIT is program of research to identify, understand, and ultimately reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in youth with CP by focusing on novel strategies to promote healthy active living. See figure.

**METHODS**

**PURPOSE OF 4: COMMUNITY PARTNERS**
- The purpose of this part of the program is to develop an innovative approach to promote active lifestyle and community participation, in collaboration with community partners throughout the research process.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**
- Environmental Scan
- Engage knowledge users
- Develop research questions

**FUTURE RESEARCH CHART**
- Intervention
- Working mechanisms (executive function)

**KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS**
- Exchange info about community PA programs/evaluations and Stay-FIT research program
- Foster linkages between community services, treatment centres, CanChild

**DISSEMINATION OF PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**
- Partners are invited to provide feedback or add information to the preliminary summary
- DISSEMINATION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM GUIDELINES
- Final outcome is a developed physical activity intervention/evaluation plan
- All contributing partners will be acknowledged in disseminated materials

**RESULTS**
- Participating OACRS centres hosted regional planning meetings between March and May 2012.
- Over 60 multi-sector partner organizations participated in regional community planning meetings.
- Nearly 50 elements across the five themes emerged during discussions:
  - **THEME 1**: Raising awareness of the options and opportunities
  - **THEME 2**: Peaking interest and motivating youth to become and stay active
  - **THEME 3**: Ensuring community programs are ready for youth with a disability
  - **THEME 4**: Being fit, fitting in, and finding the best fit
  - **THEME 5**: Exploring the layers of physical activity and how they interact

**DISCUSSION**

**WORK-IN-PROGRESS**
- Online Delphi consensus process ongoing among multi-sector partners.
- We welcome others who are interested in participating in the online consensus process. Please email galuppi@mcmaster.ca for details.

**ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY LINKED RESEARCH**
- Engaging community partners in the research process and knowledge translation activities establishes a strong clinical research network to evaluate the extent to which the proposed programs lead to change.
- Inviting input and incorporating knowledge-users’ feedback at every step leads to a more tailored and relevant final product.
- Established by consensus of multi-sector partners, the guidelines for implementation and evaluation of a program to promote physical activity take a multi-level approach to provide strategies at the policy, community, school, family, and youth level.

**EMERGING IDEAS**
- Youth need exposure to possibilities and opportunities to try activities
- Strategies to promote PA should focus on active lifestyle behaviours and on community participation rather than on prescribed exercise.
- In order to promote opportunities to be active, there is a need for centralized local information hubs.
- Overlapping or ‘stepping stone’ programs facilitate the launch from CTCs to community programs.
- While family education around the value and benefit of PA is important, promoting the fun and social aspects may be a more successful way to engage and sustain interest among youth.

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- Other members of the Stay-FIT Study Group: Peter Rosenbaum, Marilyn Wright, Denise Mulder, Nina Kozlowski, Stephen Noodoin, Joyce Obud.

**THEME 1**
- Feeding interest and motivating youth to become and stay active

**THEME 2**
- Ensuring community programs are ready for youth with a disability

**THEME 3**
- Being fit, fitting in, and finding the best fit

**THEME 4**
- Exploring the layers of physical activity and how they interact

**THEME 5**
- Raising awareness of the options and opportunities

**FOCUS GROUPS**
- Gathering Information in Focus Groups and Barriers

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Jan Willem Gorter, Barb Galuppi, Maureen MacDonald, Robert Palisano, Peter Rosenbaum, Brian Timmons, and Virginia Wright for the Stay-FIT Study Group