

# Sport

## in the Neighbourhood

## 4 IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM

The program by now should have its shape and structure. This section outlines some of the final key steps in putting the program into operation and how to keep it going.

### Implementation plan

It is important to formulate a plan to allow a smooth transition from planning to implementation. An implementation plan is a useful tool to map out your final few steps and to apply some time frames to these tasks.

Your implementation plan might include things such as:

#### Promotion

Several weeks of promotion may be necessary to create heightened interest in the community. You might consider using a number of different methods to promote your program including:

- Word of mouth
- Existing networks
- School newsletters
- Community newsletters
- Community newspapers
- Community radio
- Letterbox drops
- Flyers on the notice-boards of schools, community organisations, shopping centres.

#### Volunteer orientation

Take the time to fully brief your volunteers about the program and their roles and responsibilities. Make sure volunteers have been trained to do the tasks required of them and that they are familiar with the venue and the equipment that will be used.

#### A trial run

You might even consider a “trial-run” with a small group of participants prior to the actual start date to ease the volunteers into their new roles and to iron out any logistical problems before starting.

#### *Lessons from Sport in the Neighbourhood*

*Before the start of SITN we had a trial run about two weeks before the program start date. This was great because it gave the volunteers a chance to go over everything without any pressure and it also doubled as a chance for the local newspaper to come down and take some photos for a newspaper article about the program.*

#### Program launch

Have you considered kicking off your program with a bang? To create more interest and possibly get greater media coverage you might consider staging a more formal program launch including an “official opening” with extra activities such as a BBQ, giveaways, music etc.

This will create more work but the extra activities might give the program a special appeal and create better awareness within the community!

#### *Lessons from Sport in the Neighbourhood*

*SITN held a launch to create more interest and it worked really well. We put together a bag of goodies for each of the kids who participated – contents donated by KBT agency groups and local businesses. Advertising the giveaways in our flyers worked really well in getting plenty of kids and parents to come along.*

#### Program refinement

It is worthwhile seeking some early feedback from participants and volunteers about the program over the first few weeks. Feedback can help program organisers make changes, if necessary, to keep the program community focused and ensure that it is delivering what the participants want.

It is essential that volunteers and participants are given the opportunity to provide feedback and that their concerns or suggestions are taken seriously by the working group.

This can be as easy as an informal talk with a number of the participants. Any suggestions or feedback made by the community should be taken back to the working group for discussion and action if required.

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**TIP** Keep in mind that participants may grow tired of the same old things. Providing new equipment occasionally, a new game/activity, using a local sports club to deliver a sport specific session or a competition day of novelty games might be useful ideas in providing variety that keeps the participants coming back.

## The importance of volunteers

Your implementation plan is also a good tool to use to build some volunteer recognition into your program. Volunteers are vital and it is important to recognise their efforts – recognising the contribution of your volunteers helps you to retain your volunteers and keep them happy.

**TIP** Why not organize a regular BBQ or morning tea to thank the volunteers for time? A certificate of appreciation is also a small token that may go a long way in showing that the community values their time. Find out if there are any local volunteer awards or recognition schemes and when nominations close. Set some dates and put them into your implementation plan so you don't forget!

## IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM – SUMMARY OF KEY TASKS

- Develop an implementation plan
- Ensure you have realistic time frames for actions