



WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET
and GREAT THINGS HAPPEN
EDMONTON FEDERATION of COMMUNITY LEAGUES



A Manual and Resource Guide for Program Leaders

Preface

This manual and resource guide was developed for Community League members who lead a walking program in their community, particularly urban pole walking sessions. The information in this guide has been compiled from various sources and synthesized to help leaders develop, promote, deliver, evaluate, and sustain their walking program. The bibliography lists the sources where the original information was obtained. The materials in the appendix can be used by leaders to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their program. We hope you find this guide useful and continue to encourage other Community League members to find fitness, friends, and fun!

Acknowledgements

- Urban Poling Inc. and Representatives
- Edmonton Sport Council
- Government of Alberta, Culture and Tourism



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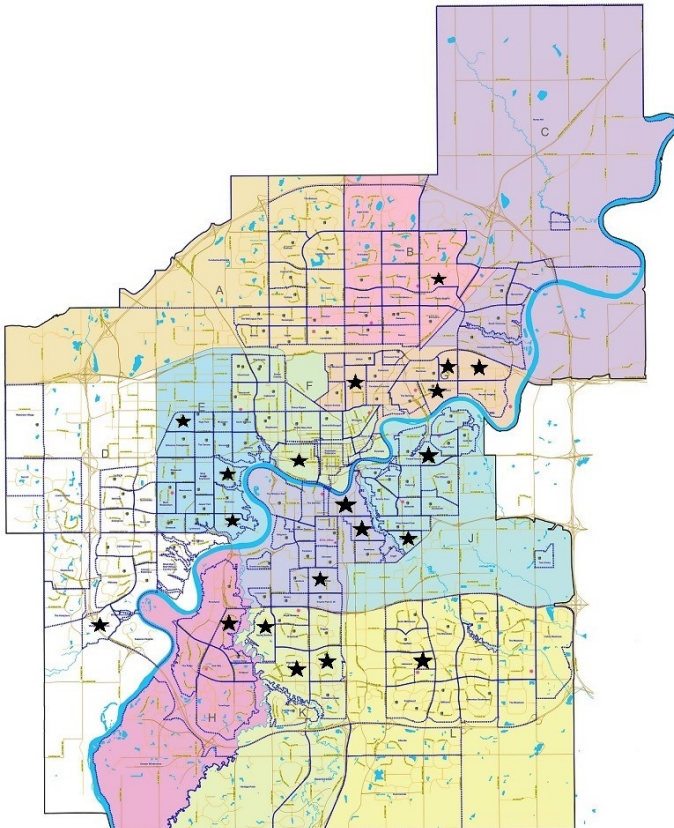
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Introduction

Over the years the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) and individual Community Leagues have offered numerous active recreation and sport programs for members across the city. However, what was lacking was a program that encouraged walking in a structured and inclusive way. In 2016, the EFCL received a Recreation and Physical Activity Project Grant from Alberta Culture and Tourism to strategically expand the urban poling program - a walking workout with poles - which was successfully piloted by a few Community Leagues. Through this grant, the Community League Walking Program was developed to provide members with an accessible and inclusive alternative for active recreation that could foster holistic community wellness by:

- Improving members' health and well-being;
- Increasing opportunities for social engagement and cohesion;
- Enhancing opportunities for members to connect with nature and utilize the extensive trails and infrastructure networks in their neighbourhoods.

The first year of the program focused on building leadership and capacity within 20 Community Leagues, representing 10 EFCL Districts. Three training sessions were organized by the EFCL and facilitated by a qualified Urban Poling instructor to equip members with the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver the program in their community. A total of 35 Community League members were trained and volunteered approximately 500 hours as program leaders. The EFCL supported these Leagues in launching their respective programs through on-site community sessions and urban poling starter kits.



The EFCL has devised a plan to continue supporting and growing the Community League Walking Program based on feedback received from program leaders and participants. Starting 2018, training sessions will be offered on an annual basis for both current and new program leaders. In addition, urban poles and accessories can now be purchased through our membership supplies order at a discounted price to make the equipment more readily available and affordable for Community Leagues. For Leagues that want to try it out before they commit to purchasing equipment, urban poles can be rented through the EFCL office. Visit the [EFCL website](#) for more details.

We hope you take part in this growing initiative and enjoy the social side of walking!

Why Start a Community League Walking Program?

Walking is a convenient, low risk, and affordable form of physical activity that is accessible for almost everyone. It has several physical, psychological, and social benefits, especially for older adults and seniors. Some of these benefits include improved functional mobility, strength, self-esteem, mood, and perceived quality of life. One of the best motivators for regular walking is to walk with a group. This makes walking a great community program that can bring neighbours together and increase feelings of connectedness. By walking around our community, we are also more likely to interact with neighbours outside the program, which could decrease social isolation.

The Community League Walking Program affords members the opportunity to develop a walking program responsive to their community's needs. The EFCL has formed relationships with Urban Poling representatives and developed this manual and resource guide to help Leagues build an efficient and effective walking program. We also currently offer formal training for urban poling - a certain type of walking workout - to increase leadership skills among members interested in planning and delivering a program.

What is Urban Poling?

Urban poling is a particular version of Nordic walking that requires specially designed poles. It is a total body workout that combines an upper body technique similar to cross-country skiing with the lower body technique of regular walking. Because it engages more of your body, it has greater health benefits than regular walking.

What are the Benefits of Urban Poling?

Evidence from over 100 research studies indicate that walking with poles is an effective, safe, and enjoyable form of physical activity. Below are some reasons to try urban poling.

- **It whittles your waist** – Your abs tighten each time you push off with your poles. That is the equivalent of 1,000 abdominal contractions every kilometre or 1,800 each mile!
- **Your knees and hips will thank you** – The poles let you offload weight from your hips and knees into your upper body. You can walk further, faster, and even pain free.
- **It sculpts your arms and shoulders** - Urban poling uses 90% of your muscles - especially those under used upper body muscles. Hello short sleeves!
- **It revs up the calorie burning** - Research shows that urban poling burns on average up to 20% more calories than regular walking. Wow!
- **You can adjust the intensity** - Urban poling is an activity that can be enjoyed by people of varying fitness levels. Just press on the ergonomic handles with more or less intensity to modify your pace.
- **It is an amazing stress buster** – The smooth, rhythmic action provides a distraction from everyday concerns and lifts your mood.
- **It is a fun social workout** – Invite your neighbours to enjoy all the health benefits with you!

If you are interested in reading the comprehensive list of health benefits associated with urban poling, check out the [Urban Poling website](#).

Testimonials

Alberta Avenue Community League

Written By: Valerie Parr

Alberta Avenue Community League (AACL) participated in the EFCL's launch of the urban poling program in 2016. Margaret Larsen and Valerie Parr attended a day long workshop with people from various Community Leagues across the city to learn the fundamentals of pole walking with hands on practice. After the training, we were convinced of the benefits of the program and decided to offer it for our League. The EFCL donated 10 pairs of poles to encourage participating Community Leagues to create walking groups.

To promote the program, an advertising campaign was created by Rat Creek Press, hand bills were posted about the community, and information about the program spread by word of mouth. Between May and October of 2016 and 2017, AACL offered multiple 4-week walking group sessions twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. All registrants were current Community League members. Participants were given poles at the beginning of each session and returned them at the end. Although the registration numbers were less than we hoped for, participants were dedicated to the program and attendance was very good. Our highest number of walkers in one group was five, not including the leaders.



Photo Credit: AACL

On the first night of each program, participants took the hour allotted to learn the basics of urban pole walking such as adjusting the poles to the appropriate height, holding them correctly, and working on their stride and arm length. The group practiced around the parking lot of the community hall. Once the group felt they were ready, we set off walking. We walked throughout the Alberta Avenue community venturing on both sides of 118 Avenue. These routes allowed us to be out and visible to neighbours, who often started a conversation about the activity. It was also a chance for us to connect with residents and promote additional programs of the AACL.

Women 40 years and older made up the majority of our groups. Last year, however, we had an octogenarian couple join us who have lived in the community for decades. The woman chose not to use the poles and was happy to walk without them, but her husband liked the poles once given an overview of how they worked. The couple were very strong walkers and easily kept pace with the group. They enjoyed the camaraderie and came out for all three sessions. They have added so much to our group in terms of providing history about the community and being avid gardeners. Al kindly brought some of his heirloom tomato seedlings to give away. The ones I took blossomed and the tomatoes off those vines were the best I have ever grown.

We look forward to our 2018 urban pole walking sessions and thank the EFCL for launching the program, providing poles, and encouraging Community Leagues to get poling!!

Newton Community League

Written By: Annemarie van Oploo and Susan Sasvari

Since 2016, we have been running 8-week fall, winter, and spring Nordic walking sessions from 6:30 – 7:30pm on Monday evenings at Newton Community League (NCL). NCL offers drop-in-for-free fitness programs for its members to increase accessibility. This has attracted a great core group, as well as new participants each session. We welcome everyone from newbies to experienced Nordic walkers to those who prefer to just join in for the walk without poles. Our participants are diverse: families, couples, seniors, athletes, and a few with mobility limitations. For this reason, having two instructors is ideal as it allows us to walk in two groups: one for beginners and/or slower walkers, and one for faster walkers.



Photo Credit: Rienk Mulder, November 2017

We are grateful to NCL for supporting remuneration for the instructors; it helps with commitment, safety, and consistency. Although we are both cross-country skiers and fitness professionals, during our Urban Poling/ Nordic walking instructor certification training we discovered that simply adding poles while walking can play tricks on your brain! Breaking down the movements, building on skills incrementally, and keeping a sense of humour are always important when learning something new. Most participants catch on in only one or two classes.

We meet in front of our community hall, distribute poles, and start with a few dynamic warm-up exercises before we begin walking. Newton includes a large school field, two small parks, and a berm, which add some variety to the residential sidewalks. After participants learn regular (diagonal) stride, we introduce double poling. Later in the session, a group favourite has been hiking in the river valley while practicing our uphill and downhill technique. After walking, we cool down with a few minutes of static stretching.

Walking is already a great exercise; adding poles ramps it up to a core-strengthening, total body workout, burning up to 46% more calories and using 90% of your muscles. During our Newton Nordic walks we use 100% of our muscles, since we love to share community news and socialize! Nordic walking is also great for improving posture and suitable for those who need a workout that puts less stress on the lower back, hip, knee, and ankle joints. We walk throughout winter with traction devices strapped to our boots, lights, and reflective vests for visibility, and some hot chocolate to stay warm!

Participants living with physical and/or mental health challenges, who have the courage to come out to try the poles or just join in the walk are most inspiring to us. The benefits to overall wellness through being active, connecting with others, and learning a new skill are undeniable. Our group also contributes to neighbourhood safety by putting extra eyes on Newton's streets and supporting community engagement. Some of our participants have gone on to volunteer for our Community League and a couple have signed up to take the instructor training themselves.

We love building community, encouraging people to be active, and hope that everyone feels happier and more energized after their Monday evening Newton Nordic walk!



Photo Credit: Dailey-O'Cain, March 2018

Considerations Before You Begin

Community Leagues that are interested in offering walking sessions in their neighbourhood should identify members who will serve as program leaders. It is important that Community Leagues carefully select members as the role is a significant responsibility. Candidates should include members who will support the vision, mission, and values of the Community League, strive to make the program as accessible and inclusive as possible for all participants, and use the Community League Walking Program as a means to champion their League. These members should also be committed to delivering the walking program in their community for a pre-determined length of time, at the discretion of the League. The EFCL currently offers urban poling leadership training once per year for new program leaders. This means selected members should be committed to leading the program for about a year, if not longer. Specific details like the time of year the program is offered and duration of the program can be negotiated later among the Community League board, program leaders, and participants.

A letter of commitment has been included in the appendix of this resource to act as a written agreement between the program leader and Community League board. Completion of the letter is optional. It is intended to outline the core responsibilities of the program leader and facilitate discussion between the leader and Community League board around program expectations.

What Happens After Members are Selected?

Selected members who intend to lead urban pole walking sessions in their community should participate in the urban poling leadership training session organized by the EFCL. This session will generally take place in spring of each year. Members will learn about topics such as urban pole technique, risk management, and route planning, with opportunities to practice walking with the poles! A qualified professional, with a background in fitness and training in urban poling, will be available to answer questions you have about the workout and how to run a walking program in your community.

Getting Started

Stage 1: Launch the Program

Your Community League has identified you to be a walking ambassador for your community and participate in urban poling leadership training. Now what? You should start to plan your program!

- **Determine your target audience.** The Community League Walking Program is an accessible and inclusive active recreation program for individuals of all ages and most physical fitness levels. Who do you want your walking program to be aimed at?
- **Choose dates and times.** You will need to determine when and how often you can commit to leading the program. For example, are you able to lead walking sessions on weekdays or weekends? What time of day? And how many times per week? Keep in mind that the dates and times you pick will affect who participates in the program. If you can only offer a weekday morning session, you may want to target older adults, retirees, or stay at home parents.
- **Prepare to manage risks.** While walking is generally a safe practice for everyone, it is important to have participants sign a waiver form indicating that they recognize the risks of outdoor walking. Go to the appendix to find a participant agreement and release form. You should keep the completed and signed forms on file for your records. If participants are unsure about their readiness to be more physically active, they should complete the [Get Active Questionnaire](#) and [Reference Document](#). Anyone with a chronic health condition should consult their physician before starting the program.

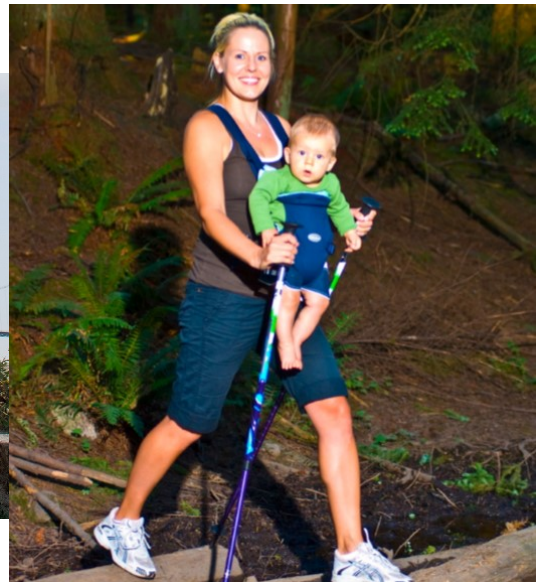


Photo Credit: Urban Poling Inc.

□ **Consider additional safety concerns.**

- **Ratio:** The recommended ratio is one leader for every 10 participants. This may change depending on the group's fitness level. More leaders will be necessary if the group is inactive, older adults. Groups can be increased to 15-20 people when leaders are experienced and participants are healthy and active.
- **Insurance:** Leagues should inform their insurer of any new program being offered.
- **First Aid:** Leaders should be prepared to carry a small fanny pack with a first aid kit to manage small injuries and a charged cellphone in the event of an emergency.
- **Clothing:** Leaders should wear bright or reflective clothing during early morning and evening sessions for high visibility when crossing streets.
- **Weather:** Determine whether or not the program will run rain, snow, or shine. You may want to consult your walking group about their preferences and develop a back-up plan together.

□ **Find walking routes.** Walk Edmonton has created walking maps for different areas of the city. These maps are available [online](#), at Citizen Services, Edmonton Public Libraries, and the EFCL office. Ensure walking routes and distances are appropriate for your target audience.

□ **Plan to gather program information.** Leaders should plan to track how many members participate in each session and the number of poles borrowed from the Community League (if applicable). This information will be requested by the EFCL periodically to inform our funding applications to support the program. A template to track participants and poles has been created for your convenience and is available in the appendix.



Photo Credit: City of Edmonton

Stage 2: Promote, Promote, Promote

Your Community League Walking Program is now set in motion and you are ready to spread the word. The following strategies will help you recruit participants to form your walking group.

- **Advertise the old fashioned way.** Determine how to reach your target audience and market the program where your audience is. Examples include community centres, childcare centres, libraries, and medical clinics. Your posters and flyers should include the information below.
 - Program details (e.g., dates, times, meeting location, League membership required, age and abilities of participants, equipment requirements)
 - Registration or drop-in information
 - Cancellation policy (e.g., rain, snow, and shine)
 - Contact information

Sample advertisements are available in the appendix to help you get started. Please note that these advertisements should be edited to include the details of your program.

- **... And more modern ways.** We live in an era of technology and should use social media to our advantage. Promote the program on your Community League's website, Facebook, and Twitter or start a Facebook or Twitter page just for your walking group. Once your program has started, you should post updates on your walks, share photos and videos from your outings, and stay connected with members between walks. However, ensure participants provide written consent for photos and videos to be used to advertise the program. A photo release form is available in the appendix.
- **Start a meetup.** [Meetup](#) is a way to bring people together who share the same passion. Create a meetup page for your walking program. You can even have a meetup event to allow participants to contribute to the program planning process.



EdmCommunityLeagues @EFCL · Feb 6

#WinterWalkDay is a great day to get out and meet your neighbours. Form a community walking group and add some Urban Poles! However you choose to spend the day walking on Feb 7, we want to hear about it! Tag us and use the hashtag #yegCLs!

#yegwinter #yegcommunity

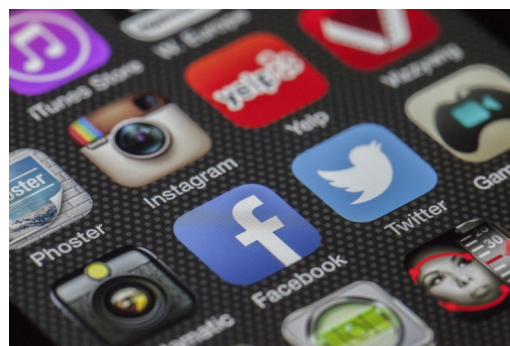


WinterCity Edmonton, Winter Walk Day, Urban Poling Alberta and 4 others



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- **Create business cards.** Business cards are an inexpensive way to promote your program. Use your Master Trainer’s card as an example and download the Urban Poling logo from the [instructor website](#). Be prepared when people ask you about your sessions and how they can join in. Stash cards in all your jacket pockets and store cards near your poles so you can grab some each time you grab your poles.
- **Be creative.** Create a fun slogan to promote the program and garner interest from potential walkers. Possible slogans include:
 - . . . find fitness, friends and fun!
 - . . . walk your way to better health!
 - . . . take the first step!
 - . . . walk yourself to a healthier, happier you!
 - . . . enjoy the social side of walking!
 - . . . walking is cheaper than therapy!
- **Organize a kickoff event.** Celebrate the launch of your walking program at your Community League hall, a nearby park, or your house. The event is an opportunity for you to learn more about your participants, including why they joined the program. Use these learnings to develop goals and outcomes for the program.



Stage 3: Engage (More) Participants

The program has started and several Community League members are participating. Now you have to keep them motivated! Use the following strategies to increase participant engagement and grow your program.

- **Carefully plan walking routes.** Planning routes that are an appropriate level of challenge for all participants is critical to their engagement. Routes that are circular allow faster walkers to loop around slower walkers and for you to collect the slower walkers on the return portion of the walk. You should also consider routes where participants have access to water fountains, restrooms, and rest stops. Keep in mind, though, that participants might get bored from walking the same route often. If you require support in planning routes, reach out to other leaders, your Master Trainer, or the EFCL.
- **Adapt the program for different seasons.** The program does not have to stop as soon as the snow falls. We live in a winter city and it is time to embrace it! Here is a great [video resource](#) for winter walking leaders. For those who lead urban pole walking sessions, attach snow baskets on your urban poles and strap on your snowshoes to continue walking throughout the winter months. If inclement weather is in the forecast, temporarily bring your program indoors by walking on a track at a recreation centre in your community or a nearby mall. Community Leagues near the River Valley should check out the list of [winter pavilions](#) where participants can warm up!
- **Participate in city-wide events.** [Walk Edmonton](#) hosts annual events to promote the health benefits of walking year round including Winter Walk Day and Jane's Walk. Combine one of your walking sessions with a community event in order for participants to experience walking other areas of the city.
- **Add a social element to the program.** End the walk at your Community League hall or a local café so participants have the opportunity to socialize and get to know one another better.



Photo Credit: Urban Poling Inc.

- **Start a step challenge for your group.** Use a tool to track your steps and stay motivated. [UWALK](#) provides select [Edmonton Public Libraries](#) with pedometers to be loaned out to encourage people to be active through walking. Steps can also be tracked with a Fitbit or an app.
- **Invite special guests.** Ask a local politician, expert, or celebrity to participate in one of your walking sessions to mix it up and enable participants to walk and learn about a particular topic.
- **Combine community programs.** Incorporate the Community League Walking Program into an existing program offered by your League that members already participate in. For example, go for a walk before or after a yoga or fitness session.
- **Provide incentives for participation.** Negotiate discounts on food and beverage purchases, clothing, spa services, and more for community walking members with businesses in your neighbourhood. You can also find businesses in your community that are willing to donate items that would be useful for your walking group, such as water bottles and pedometers, in exchange for advertising their name and logo on your website and in your online promotions.
- **Take advantage of available resources.** Visit the Urban Poling [private instructor website](#), which will link you to a national network of 3,000+ Urban Poling instructors. Here you will find marketing ideas, resources, videos, posters, and more to help you build your knowledge and program.



Program Evaluation

Why and What to Evaluate

It is important to evaluate your Community League Walking Program to determine what went well and how it can be improved to make it better for your community. To accomplish this, you should consider a variety of factors that may have influenced the efficiency and effectiveness of your program. For example, you might assess the resources used to launch the program, actions taken to deliver the program, and outcomes of the program. Assessing a combination of these factors can provide insight into your ability to maintain the program and its effects over time. The following are different factors to consider:

- Amount of money invested by your Community League to purchase urban poles
- Number of hours volunteered
- How the program was promoted
- Dates and times chosen for walking sessions
- Duration of walks
- Number and quality of routes planned
- Opportunities for social interaction
- Number and type of incentives provided for participants
- Participant attendance
- Levels of satisfaction with the program
- Changes in walking behaviour
- Perceived changes in physical and psychological health
- Strength of social connections

How to Evaluate

Once you determine which factors to evaluate, you will need to decide how to collect information about them. Keep in mind that the method(s) you choose will affect how individuals involved in the program are able to express their thoughts and opinions. On the next page are some common methods for gathering information, each with their own advantages and disadvantages.



Method	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Questionnaire	A set of written questions, often with a choice of answers. Can be used to survey participants about their thoughts, opinions, and behaviours related to the walking program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides breadth of information • Structured format allows for easy comparison between responses • People can be anonymous, which may result in more honest responses • Quick and easy to administer to large numbers of people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be short and simple for people to complete • Questions can be misinterpreted if too complex or poorly worded • Responses are limited to the questions asked
Individual Interview	A formal conversation with a person that is guided by a written set of questions. Can be used to learn about a participant's experience in the walking program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides depth of information • The person can ask for clarification on a question • Flexible responses can be given to questions • Allows you to probe the person for more information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must interview one person at a time • Need to build rapport with each person so they feel comfortable enough to share their experiences • Can be difficult to take notes during the interview unless it is audio recorded
Focus Group	An interview focused on a particular topic that involves a group of people with common experiences. Can be used to understand participants' perspectives on the walking program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides depth of information • A single interview can be conducted with all people • Group members can stimulate new thoughts for each other, which may not have otherwise occurred • The group can provide insight about their shared perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be difficult to manage the group and allow all people to provide input • Some people may not feel comfortable sharing their perspectives with others present • Some people may be persuaded by others' responses

What to Do with the Information

You must examine the information collected about the program to find relationships, patterns, trends, and the like. Depending on the method(s) you chose, the information will be in the form of numbers or text. Numerical information can provide easy to understand results such as counts and percentages. Textual information, on the other hand, is more descriptive and provides detailed accounts of participants' experiences in the program. This information can sometimes be changed into numbers by counting the number of times a specific issue was talked about. When this cannot be done, interpretation is needed to decipher the importance of what participants discussed. Your analysis of the information should be used to inform changes to the program.

Program Sustainability

Organizational Support

An efficient and effective program may not be sustainable in and of itself. As a program leader, you should strengthen the structures and processes that exist within your program to improve its capacity for sustainability. Having the support of your Community League board will be critical to your ability to successfully maintain the program. You should ensure that you have access to adequate funding and resources such as urban poling equipment for members to participate. Your board can also be your crutch when program challenges come your way or changes to the neighbourhood that affect your program.

Social Support

Cultivating relationships with program leaders in other communities can strengthen your program as well. Hearing about other Community League Walking Programs may provide the insight needed to adapt the program to meet your participants' needs and interests. Participating in the annual refresher session organized by the EFCL is a great way to meet others and receive social support. It is also an opportunity to re-learn the technical knowledge and skills associated with urban poling so you feel more confident and competent when leading walking sessions in your community.

EFCL Support

The EFCL recognizes a refresher session once per year is not enough to contribute to your program's sustainability. Therefore, we have put additional resources in place to assist you in the meantime. To achieve the health benefits of urban poling, participants need to have good walking technique. In the appendix are three resources that outline techniques and tips when using the fitness and activator poles. You can use these resources to teach your participants how to properly walk with their poles.

The EFCL has partnered with Susan Yackulic, a local Urban Poling Master Trainer, who can provide on-site support for Community Leagues. If you are a new program leader, you may want this support to help you apply all that you learned during the urban poling leadership training session in your community. If you have led urban pole walking sessions in your community before, you may look to Susan to provide feedback on how to make your program more fun or challenging for participants. Program leaders interested in this support should refer to the contractor agreement in the appendix to find an overview of the support Susan can provide, her rate per hour, and contact information. The EFCL strongly recommends the agreement be used so both parties understand the terms and conditions.

Participant Appreciation

Take the time to show appreciation for those who participated in your walking sessions. Celebrate their successes by throwing a party or acknowledging them on your Community League's social media. After all, you would not have a program without them!

Appendix

Letter of Commitment

I understand that I will work with and represent the _____ Community League (hereinafter called “the Community League”) as a Community Walking/Urban Poling Leader. I recognize that this role is a significant responsibility and will strive to make it a priority through my commitment to the following:

- Support the vision, mission, values, and goals of the Community League as a leader of the Community League Walking Program.
- Volunteer my time as a leader of the Community League Walking Program for the Community League.
- Commit to leading walking sessions for _____ months of the year.
- Attend the EFCL’s urban poling leadership training, prior to starting urban pole walking sessions.
- Work with the Community League to promote the Community League Walking Program to its members.
- Ensure that every participant is a Community League member.
- Plan interesting walking routes each week with the assistance of the resources at my disposal, including the City of Edmonton’s community walking maps.
- Always be mindful of participants’ abilities when planning walking routes.
- Respond to requests for my assistance to ensure the success of the program for the Community League and the participants of the Community League Walking Program.
- Provide feedback about the program to the EFCL when requested to support ongoing funding efforts.
- I accept that should there be any unforeseen reason why I must relinquish my role as a leader of the Community League Walking Program, that I will notify the Community League immediately in order for a new leader to be identified and trained.

I have read and fully agree to this letter of commitment and look forward to representing the Community League as a leader of the Community League Walking Program.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Community League Board Member Witness _____

Participant Agreement, Release, and Assumption of Risk Outdoor Walking

In consideration of the services of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, _____ Community League (hereinafter called "the Community League"), Urban Poling Inc., Edmonton Sport Council, Government of Alberta, its agents, owners, officers, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf, I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge these organizations, on behalf of myself, my spouse, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that urban poling entails known and unanticipated risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties. I understand that such risks simply cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.
2. The risks include, among other things: the hazards of walking on uneven terrain; slips and falls; the forces of nature, including lightning and rapid weather changes; the risk of exposure to insect bites; the risk of cold including hypothermia; my own physical condition, and the physical exertion associated with this activity.
3. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.
4. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, the Community League, Urban Poling Inc., Edmonton Sport Council, and Government of Alberta from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of the Community League equipment or facilities, including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions.
5. Should the organizations or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.
6. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition I may have.
7. In the event that I file a lawsuit against any of the organizations mentioned in this agreement, I agree to do so solely in the province of Alberta, and I further agree that the substantive law of Alberta shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that province. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining document shall remain in full force and effect.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against all organizations listed above on the basis of any claim from which I have released it herein.

I have had sufficient opportunity to read this document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.

Name of Participant _____ Signature of Participant _____

Phone _____ Date _____

Name of Witness _____ Signature of Witness _____

A parent or guardian must sign if the participant is under 18 years of age.

Name of Parent/Guardian _____ Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Phone _____ Date _____

Photo Release Form

I consent to the use of my name, portrait, picture, or photograph being used by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and _____ Community League (hereinafter called "the Community League") for the Community League Walking Program.

I understand that this material may be used for future promotions, advertisement, social media, presentations, and/or video and in other media forms and will be made available online at efcl.org or the Community League's website in print format/video/other, as applicable.

I agree that I shall have no claim against the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Community League, its membership, or against anyone accessing this communications product, whether online, in print, or by any other means.

I confirm that I am over *18 years of age and that I have not given anyone the exclusive right to use my name, portrait, picture, or photograph.

*If under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must sign the consent form.

Signed,

_____ Age: _____

Name (please print): _____

Date: _____

Parent or Guardian if applicable

Signed by: _____ for

Dependant's name (please print): _____ Age: _____

Parent or Guardian Name (please print): _____

Parent or Guardian Contact Information

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date: _____



Sign-In Sheet

League Name: _____ Date: _____

[illegible]

Sample Advertisements

Poster or Flyer



Join us!

WEDNESDAYS

9-10 AM

STARTING
NOVEMBER 7, 2018

WALK YOURSELF TO A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU!

- Urban poles will be provided to members on a first come first served basis.
- Walking sessions will be cancelled if the temperature is below -20 C.
- Open to all community league members.

For more information, contact info@efcl.org

COMMUNITY LEAGUES...WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET AND GREAT THINGS HAPPEN!

Poster or Flyer



Join us!

**TUESDAYS +
THURSDAYS
6:30 - 7:30 PM**

**STARTING
MAY 15, 2018**

WE WILL WALK RAIN OR SHINE!

- Walk with or without poles!
- Urban poles will be available on a first come, first served basis.
- Open to all children, youth and adults of the community league.

For more information, contact info@efcl.org

COMMUNITY LEAGUES...WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET AND GREAT THINGS HAPPEN!

Social Media Graphics and Posts

Sample Facebook Posts



The graphic features a background image of two people walking away on a snowy path in a wooded area. A white rectangular box with an orange border is centered over the image, containing the text "COMMUNITY LEAGUE WALKING PROGRAM" in blue and orange. Below this, a dark blue box contains the text "Join us! WEDNESDAYS 9-10 AM STARTING NOVEMBER 7, 2018". To the right of this box, white text reads "WALK YOURSELF TO A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU!" followed by a bulleted list of details and contact information. At the bottom, a yellow banner contains the text "COMMUNITY LEAGUES...WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET AND GREAT THINGS HAPPEN!"

COMMUNITY LEAGUE
WALKING
PROGRAM

Join us!
WEDNESDAYS
9-10 AM
STARTING
NOVEMBER 7, 2018

WALK YOURSELF TO A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU!

- Urban poles will be provided to members on a first come first served basis.
- Walking sessions will be cancelled if the temperature is below -20 C.
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For more information, contact info@efcl.org

COMMUNITY LEAGUES...WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET AND GREAT THINGS HAPPEN!

WALK YOURSELF TO A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER YOU!

Starting November 7, join us every Wednesday morning from 9 to 10am for our Community League Walking Program.

- Urban poles will be provided to members on a first come, first served basis.
- Walking sessions will be cancelled if the temperature is below -20 C.
- Open to all Community League members.

For more information, contact info@efcl.org.

JOIN US FOR OUR COMMUNITY LEAGUE WALKING PROGRAM!
Meet your neighbours and enjoy some physical activity right in the community! Starting May 15, we will be walking every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 to 7:30pm. Community League members can walk with or without urban poles. The League will provide poles on a first come, first served basis.

For more information, contact info@efcl.org.



The graphic features a background image of two people walking away on a paved path, using walking poles. A white rectangular box with an orange border is centered over the image, containing the text "COMMUNITY LEAGUE WALKING PROGRAM" in blue and orange. Below this, a dark blue box contains the text "Join us! TUESDAYS + THURSDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM STARTING MAY 15, 2018". To the right of this box, white text reads "WE WILL WALK RAIN OR SHINE!" followed by a bulleted list of details and contact information. At the bottom, a yellow banner contains the text "COMMUNITY LEAGUES...WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET AND GREAT THINGS HAPPEN!"

COMMUNITY LEAGUE
WALKING
PROGRAM

Join us!
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- Open to all children, youth and adults of the community league.

For more information, contact info@efcl.org

COMMUNITY LEAGUES...WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET AND GREAT THINGS HAPPEN!

Social Media Graphics and Posts



Sample Twitter Posts

Meet your neighbours and explore your neighbourhood by joining the Community League Walking Program! We will be walking Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30pm. For more information, comment below or contact info@efcl.org. #yegCLS #urbanpoling #leaguewalk

Our League Walking program has started! Join us every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6:30 to 7:30pm for a walk around our neighbourhood. Open to all children, youth, and adults of our Community League! #yegCLS #urbanpoling #leaguewalk

Want to exercise outdoors? Join our Community League Walking Program! Starting November 7, we will be walking every Wednesday morning from 9 to 10am. Open to all #yegCLS members! #urbanpoling #leaguewalk

Going away this winter and want to get in shape? Join us Wednesday mornings from 9 to 10am for a walk around our neighbourhood. Open to all members of the Community League! #urbanpoling #leaguewalk

Did you know walking is a low risk and affordable way to exercise? Join our Community League Walking Program every Wednesday morning from 9-10! #yegCLS #urbanpoling #leaguewalk

What was your highlight from our recent Community League walk? We would love to hear it! #yegCLS #leaguewalk #yegwalk

Who would you like to see join our next walking session? #yegCLS #leaguewalk #yegwalk

Know a great coffee shop in our neighbourhood to chat after our next walking session? Leave a comment! #yegCLS #leaguewalk

Proper Technique for Fitness Poles

Urban poling is a fun and easy activity for people of all ages. As with any new pursuit, you need to master the proper technique to become a proficient poler. Since we have all mastered regular walking, all that is left to learn is how to coordinate the poles with our leg movements. It is not uncommon for people to feel uncoordinated at first, but with a little practice, walking with poles will become second nature.

To begin, start without the poles. Take a few steps and notice that your right arm swings forward as your left foot steps forward. Now, exaggerate the arm movement slightly by swinging your arms higher as you step. Once you have mastered this, pick up your poles. With a pole in each hand, start walking and dragging the poles behind you. Let your arms swing naturally with your arms moving in rhythm with your legs. Now you are ready to start working with the poles and incorporating the 3 Ps: plant, push, propel.

- o **Plant:** As you swing your arm forward plant the pole at a 45 degree angle; keep your arm straight.
- o **Push:** Now apply some pressure to the base of the handle with the outside edge of your hand.
- o **Propel:** From the pushing phase you are ready to propel yourself forward. Push down and step forward; feel yourself being propelled by your upper body.

Start slowly at first and pay attention to your technique. If you become confused, stop and begin again. Remember, as with any new endeavor, practice makes perfect and patience is a virtue.



Photo Credit: Urban Poling Inc.

Important Technique Points to Consider

- **Watch your posture.** The poles actually assist with maintaining proper posture, but you may find yourself leaning forward. Keep your spine erect, tummy tucked in, eyes forward, chin tucked in, and shoulders relaxed.
- **Relax your grip.** Keep your grip loose; only press on the base of the handle during the push phase.
- **Watch your pace.** As you get used to the technique, you may find yourself walking faster than your arms can keep up. This will throw your technique off. Only walk as fast as your arms can move.
- **Plant with purpose.** When planting your poles, ensure that you plant them rather than slamming them into the ground. Slamming the poles causes more vibrations through the poles, and over the long-term it may aggravate your joints.
- **Do not “tip toe” the poles.** This happens when you keep the tips of the poles too far forward and land on just the tips of the boots. Go back to the swing phase and practice keeping the boot tips behind you and planting your poles at a 45 degree angle.
- **Be aware of uncoordinated arm and leg movements.** You may find yourself planting the left pole as the left leg steps forward. This is not how we naturally walk, but it can happen when we over-think the movement. Stop and start over by dragging the poles and gradually ease into the proper technique.
- **Have fun!** The most important aspect of urban poling is to enjoy yourself. Eventually the technique falls into place and you will feel more confident and efficient.

For more information on how to use urban poles, visit the [Urban Poling website](#) to read additional content and watch instructional videos.

Activator Poles Tips Sheet

The activator poles are ideal for adults with poor balance and stability. The poles were designed in consultation with occupational therapists and physiotherapists who work with older adults, individuals with chronic conditions, and rehabilitation patients. These poles allow for greater weight bearing and stability, promote good posture, minimize stress on joints, promote a functional walking pattern, and increase core strength.

Below are a few tips to keep in mind while walking with activator poles.

- o Use the rubber bell-shaped tips indoors or on dry sidewalks and asphalt. Take the rubber tips off for uneven terrain to expose the carbide tip and increase traction.
- o Hold poles in the proper hands with an easy grip, not tightly. Your hands should go all the way around the handle.
- o Stand tall with your elbows at your sides at a 90 degree angle. The poles should be vertical. Adjust the length of your poles if needed to ensure you are standing upright. The button should click into place when you adjust the poles.
- o Step forward with the poles as you would for regular walking (e.g., swing right arm forward and lift right pole as your left foot steps forward). Remember to keep the poles in front of your body as you walk and your elbows at a 90 degree angle. Swing your arms forward from your shoulders, not your elbows.
- o Push down on the base of the handle for greater off loading of weight onto the poles. This will help increase your balance and stability, and intensify your walking workout.
- o Start slowly at first and pay attention to your urban poling technique. If you become confused, stop and begin again.

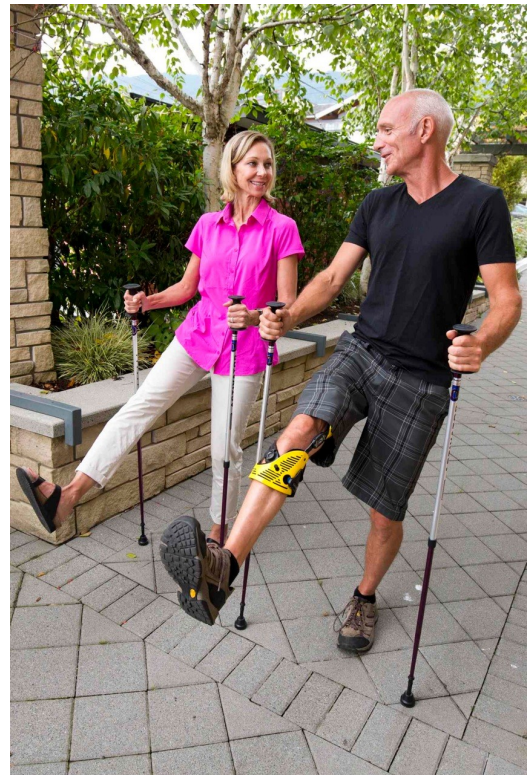


Photo Credit: Urban Poling Inc.

To learn more about how to use activator poles or watch an instructional video, visit the [Urban Poling website](https://www.urbanpoling.com/).

Contractor Agreement

The contractor agreement is made this ____ day of _____, 20____ and is in effect until the ____ day of _____, 20____.

Between _____ Community League and Contractor, Susan Yackulic.

Contractor Duties

On-Site Support

The contractor will accompany the program leader(s) and participants on a walk at their Community League site or a mutually designated site to be announced. The contractor will also work with leader(s) on an individual basis.

Walking Technique Support

The contractor will support the program leader(s) with helping participants learn proper urban poling/Nordic walking technique to get the most benefit from the activity. Both the fitness and activator walking techniques will be taught.

Additional Instruction and Guidance

Program leaders may request specific resources and guidance on any of the following.

- How to promote the urban poling/Nordic walking program to attract Community League members.
- How to best design a weekly instructional plan or teach participants on a drop-in basis. Instructional tips provided will include programming for all ages. For example: The run, jump, throw activities may appeal to younger participants and the longer walks throughout the neighbourhood may appeal to regular walkers.
- Teaching techniques for small or large groups.
- Teaching tips for hill walking, snowshoeing, and walking on different terrains.
- Teaching tips for what to wear for cold or really warm weather (e.g., clothing, footwear, etc.).
- How to engage participants, find easier or more challenging walking routes, and accommodate members with certain needs that may require extra assistance.
- Safety tips for working with specific populations such as exceptionally slow or fast walkers, seniors with balance issues, people with Parkinson's disease, and those who want to walk with their dogs.
- Pamphlets and brochures to meet the needs of participants in particular Community Leagues: arthritis, pre/post knee surgery, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, acquired brain injury, cerebrovascular accident, post spinal stenosis surgery, vestibular conditions, healthy aging, and more.

Liability: The contractor acknowledges that urban poling/Nordic walking entails known and unanticipated risks. She voluntarily agrees to release, forever discharge, indemnify, and hold harmless the Community League from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with her participation in the walking program or use of the Community League equipment or facilities, including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions.

Remuneration: The contractor will be paid \$50/hour for the above duties.

Executed ____ day of _____, 20____ by an authorized member of _____ Community League.

Community League Board Member

Phone:

Email:

Susan Yackulic

Urban Poling Master Trainer

Phone: 780.268.3488

Email: get_fit@telus.net

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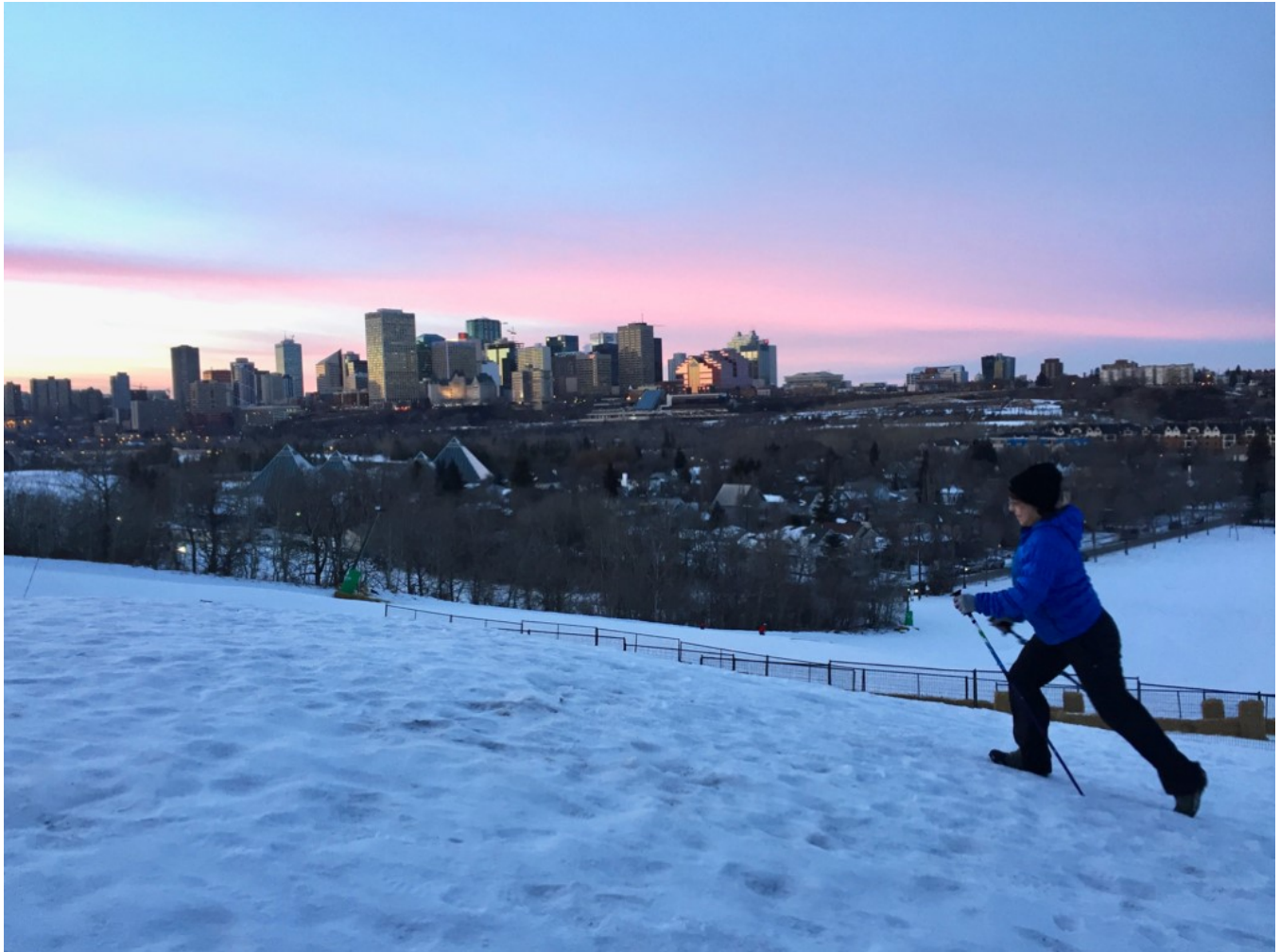


Photo Credit: Mandy Johnson

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**WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET
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EDMONTON FEDERATION of COMMUNITY LEAGUES