

## Case Study: Social Leisure Youth Program (SLYP-Out)

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### Fast Facts: About the Social Leisure Youth Program (SLYP- Out):

The program is offered to youth with a disability aged 17 to 22.

In 2010—2011, 37 youth participated in the SLYP-Out program.

**Forecast SROI: \$7.23:\$1.00**

- 24 volunteers dedicated a total of 375 hours
- 73% of youth reported feeling more independent
- 93% of youth reported having developed new friendships as a result of the SLYP-Out program
- 67% of youth report an increase in self-confidence; Further developed social skills have been observed by parents / caregivers, program staff, volunteers, and school representatives
- 53% of youth report being more comfortable accessing public transit
- All parent / caregiver respondents expressed that the SLYP-Out program provides brief periods of respite
- 93% of participants report feeling like an important part of the SLYP-Out group
- 73% of parents report that accessible transportation provided by SAC eliminates a barrier for families

"Our son gained some very valuable experiences with his peers. Spending time in the community with them is so important to him, as well as crucial to his social development. A program like this in our community... is VERY much needed." - Parent of youth participant

### Program Background:

The Social Leisure Youth Program (SLYP-Out) provides structured, recreational activities for youth (ages 17-22) with disabilities. The program is designed to eliminate common barriers to recreation by arranging activities and providing transportation to and from the event. The 2012 SLYP-Out program will run from January to December and is divided into four sessions: Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

The program is offered to a maximum of 25 individuals, which are divided into groups of approximately 6-9 participants. Participants are accepted on a 'first come first declared eligible' basis. All participants have input into the type of activities offered through their application process and then by way of the first group session.

The SLYP-Out program was developed to provide an opportunity for youth with disabilities to take part in social, leisure, recreational, and cultural activities that he/she may not have otherwise had access to. This program is intended to promote inclusion of youth with disabilities and create a greater degree of acceptance and support in the community.

### Theory of Change

If youth with disabilities have access to supported social, recreational, and cultural activities in the community, they will become more independent, expand their social networks, gain awareness of community resources, and foster full citizenship through participation —thereby reducing social isolation and promoting community cohesion.

All participants and parents of the SLYP-Out program were invited to take part in the study. Their input was essential in determining where social value was created and the impact of the program.

As transportation is frequently identified as a barrier for many individuals with physical disabilities, the Saskatchewan Abilities Council purchased a para-transit-style bus which is used to transport youth to and from SLYP-Out activities.

### Mission

The Saskatchewan Abilities Council works with people of varying abilities to enhance their independence and participation in the community through vocational, rehabilitation, and recreational services.

### Value Statements

Our programs and services are: Client Centered, Goal Oriented, & Accountable

We treat people with: Respect, Honesty, & Compassion



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Participant A, Susan\*, is an 18 year old female. She currently attends high school; however, this support will soon be discontinued as she nears graduation and her subsequent transition to adulthood. Susan resides with her family, who do not have a means of accessible transportation. As a result, Susan is unable to attend many local community events, and finds it difficult to participate in clubs, activities of interest, or interact with friends out in the community. As a result of this, Susan is largely restricted to activities and hobbies that she can do within her home. She spends the majority of her time with family members, as they provide her with supervision, as well as physical assistance.

Having had limited involvement in the community, Susan has a great deal of difficulty accessing public transit on her own. She is generally accompanied by family members who provide her with necessary supports when she is out in the community, and has been unable to independently attend activities without the immediate supervision of family members or teachers. Susan withdrew when presented with unfamiliar environments, or situations in which she did not have supports nearby.

Susan was initially referred to the SLYP-Out program in 2010. The paratransit van operated by the SLYP-Out Coordinator eliminated Susan's transportation barrier and allowed her the opportunity to visit numerous local stores, restaurants, and community events that she would not otherwise have been able

to attend. This multitude of new experiences has given Susan a greater degree of freedom, by eliminating barriers which restrict her ability to participate, allowing her to choose the activities she would like to take part in.

By taking part in the SLYP-Out program, Susan has developed friendships with other youth with disabilities, and has built relationships with volunteers in her age range, as well as the program support staff.

SLYP-Out support staff have observed significant changes to Susan's level of confidence in social environments. She communicates her needs well, and is now able to request assistance from those around her, not feeling limited to having support from her parents.

*"Susan was extremely shy when she began the program. I have seen such a change in her; she has really come out of her shell. It is so nice to see her chat and smile with everyone."* - SLYP-Out Coordinator

Every two weeks, Susan looks forward to blasting the music with friends and cruising to their destination. She goes on regular shopping trips, enjoys coffee with friends, and attends sporting events as a valued member of the SLYP-Out group.

Now, instead of perceiving new experiences with uncertainty or hesitation, Susan takes on each adventure with a smile.

## Social Value of SLYP-Out program: 37 youth participants

| SROI Outcomes Included:  | Quantity | Financial Proxy<br>(see impact map for calculations) | Total Impact (Year 1) (after deduction of attribution, deadweight, & displacement) |
|--|----------|--|--|
| Gained social awareness and have further developed their social skills, reducing need for case management support  | 25       | \$3097   | \$42,584   |
| Participants have developed new friendships and expanded social networks, requiring less one-on-one support in school setting  | 12       | \$503  | \$3,320  |
| Participants become more independent in carrying out everyday living tasks, and decision-making, reducing future need for training to develop independent living skills and/or work readiness training | 20       | \$5640   | \$62,040   |
| Decreased risk of caregiver burnout  | 37       | \$3600   | \$69,264   |
| Respite leads to increased 1-on-1 time with other family members; therefore improved relationships with other family members   | 22       | \$842  | \$9,632  |
| Educational opportunity for volunteers; Connecting with peers and learning about various disabilities  | 24       | \$234  | \$2,246  |

Overall consensus between teachers and parents suggest that they have observed significant improvement in the youth's social skills and a broadening in their social networks. These respondents indicated that the youth who partake in the SLYP-Out program demonstrate improved self-confidence, as well as greater interest and engagement in school-related and community activities since being connected to the program. School representatives also confirmed that the SLYP-Out program has the potential to increase community awareness and inclusion of individuals with disabilities.

Participants reported that they are more confident in meeting new people, and have developed new friendships and built on existing relationships as a result of the SLYP-Out program. Youth also reported that they are more comfortable accessing public transportation as a result of regularly utilizing the SAC accessible bus. This is anticipated to reduce social isolation during the course of the SLYP-Out program, as well as have a lasting impact on the individual in their future endeavours. Becoming more confident in taking public transit allows youth greater independence to participate in community activities; as well it will be a valuable daily living skill during one's transi-

tion from high school to the world-of-work. Regular respite provides parents with free time to focus on other important matters, or spend valuable time with their spouse or other children. This can foster positive health benefits in parents / caregivers, as well as families as a whole. Even a short break from the role as caregiver can leave a parent feeling better able to manage their multiple roles, while also caring for their personal well-being. All parent / caregiver respondents indicated that the SLYP-Out program provides brief periods of respite for parents, caregivers, and families of youth with disabilities.

A primary objective of the SLYP-Out program is to reduce social exclusion and provide community-building activities which include individuals of varying abilities. This notion of bringing together the community works within the Quality of Life framework, which emphasizes the individual's need for a sense of belonging. Socially inclusive activities help to bridge the gaps between marginalized groups, and minimize the impact of social and environmental barriers which prevent active participation.

### Social Return Calculation and Ratio

#### Social Return Calculation and Ratio (Forecast over 3 years; See impact map & report for calculations)

Based on the calculations of impact that we have identified, the total impact of the SLYP-Out program over the course of 3 years is at \$349,713. This takes into consideration the lasting outcomes which remain beyond completion of the program.

\$349,713 (3 years of impact)

—————  
\$48,398 (total investment)

It is forecasted that the SLYP-Out program will create a Social Return on Investment ratio of \$7.23:\$1.00.

This means that for each dollar invested in the SLYP-Out program the funder will receive \$7.23 in social value.

*“SLYP-Out helped her to understand that she can have a good time with new people, doing new things that she may never have thought of before. She really did grow as a result of the program.” - Parent of youth participant*

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