



Step Into Action! Community Based Program



What is *pahl*?

pahl (Physical Activity and Healthy Living) is an initiative created to promote healthy active living to individuals with an intellectual disability (ID). Like every Canadian, people with an ID need to take `action` to become healthier and more physically fit.

The primary goal of *pahl* is to enhance the ability of athletes to train and compete, and empower people with an ID to invest in their overall health and wellbeing.

To achieve this goal, *pahl* offers a variety programs and resources catering to the Physical Activity and Healthy Living needs of all our stakeholders (i.e., athletes, students, coaches, teachers, parents, volunteers, and care-givers).). One program that *pahl* is excited to offer is **Step Into Action!**

What is Step Into Action?

Step Into Action is a program designed to increase the physical activity levels of athletes by taking a 'Step' challenge. The 'Step' component of the program includes any type of activity that can be measured by a pedometer, such as: walking, jogging, running, participating in sports and dancing.

On the **Step Into Action** website (step.specialolympicsontario.com):

- **Athletes** can track their steps, track their nutrition and visually see their progress over time!
- **Coaches, volunteers, parents or care-givers** can download nutrition and physical activity resources, and also, track the progress of all participating athletes!

The **Step Into Action** program supplies pedometers and resources for coaches, volunteers, parents or caregivers to download online. These resources are designed to educate the participants about goal setting, nutrition and physical fitness; with the ultimate goal of helping them along the path of living an active and healthy lifestyle.

Finally, **Step Into Action** aims to develop the participants skills in the areas of: goal setting, goal achievement, responsibility, accountability, and computer literacy.



Step Into Action in the Community

Community Programs – Special Olympics Sport Clubs and teams, Community Agencies servicing those with an ID – are invited to participate in the Step Into Action. By visiting the website step.specialolympicsontario.com the Program Leader can create a challenge according to the ability levels of his/her athletes or community members.

Step Into Action offers Pedometers so participants can track their steps per session and monitor their improvement. Encouraging the participants to track their progress during any physical activity will help them be more aware of their bodies and bodily changes. Because of the ease at which this program can be modified it can be done on one-on-one with a coach, volunteer, care-giver and peer or in a large group. Coaches should feel free to take the foundational pieces of each session (stretch, warm up, health tip, activity) and integrate the activities in the most useful way to benefit you and your athletes or community members.

Role of SOO Coaches, Parents, Volunteers and Care Givers

A. Program Leaders

For the purpose of this program, the person who creates a Step Program for their athletes is called a **Program Leader**. A **Program Leader** can a SOO coach, parent, volunteer or care giver. This individual is responsible for:

1. Creating a Step Challenge for his or her athletes
2. Ensuring his or her athletes keep track of their steps online
3. Encouraging and motivating his or her athletes to achieve their personalized physical activity and nutrition goals.

B. How to Register and Create a Step Program

Start by visiting the Step Into Action website step.specialolympicsontario.com. Once on the home page, follow the steps below:

1. To register and create a Step Program for your athletes, click on the Blue button— Create A Program,
 - Once the program is created, a link to that specific program is given to you (the Program Leader)
 - The link can then be sent to each of your athletes
 - The athletes can then simply click on that link and register themselves on their own or with the assistance from another coach, parent or care-giver
2. To download available Step Into Action Resources, click on the Red button— Resources.

Role of Athletes

A. Athletes / Step Participants

A **Step Participant** can be a SOO athlete or a community member (SOO athlete or not) with an ID. These Step Participants are responsible to `step into action` and record their steps and nutrition each day.

B. How to Register

1. An Athlete can be registered in two ways:
 - i. Send the athlete the link for the Step Program the Program Leader created, OR
 - ii. Have the athlete visit step.specialolympicsontario.com and click on the Green Button—
Track Your Steps
 - i. If the athletes uses this way to register, they will have to choose the program created by his or her Program Leader
2. Once registered, the athlete can track their steps every day and view their progress!

C. Step Recommendations

In order for the participants to receive maximum benefits from this program, it is suggested the participant is `stepping` for 30 minutes per day, increasing the duration or intensity on a weekly basis. This time allotment is only a recommendation as each participant's needs, abilities and progress will vary from participant to participant.



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or

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