

# After school initiatives worth the time <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Dunnville Chronicle

**Source:** Dunnville Chronicle

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 14 Oct 2009

## EXCERPTS

The Ontario Task Group on Affordable Access to Recreation congratulates the Government of Ontario for investing in the After-School Initiative that will benefit children and youth in at-risk communities across Ontario.

This investment comes at a crucial time. Canada ranked last out of fourteen western nations for spending on early childhood learning and care, according to a 2006 report by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development).

Through the Initiative, the Government will fund programs at 270 sites in priority neighbourhoods, reaching over 15,000 children and youth. The Initiative is an important part of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy and also supports the recommendations in the Review of the Roots of Youth Violence.

"Research shows us that investing in quality experiences, such as recreation, combined with healthy eating and physical activity will benefit both the child and the family," says Task Group Chair Howie Dayton, also Director of Recreation and Culture for the Town of Ajax.

"By working together, schools, recreation providers, community groups and government can create places where children will flourish." Dayton also notes that this Initiative supports the Task Group's Provincial Policy Framework on Affordable Access to Recreation.

The Framework sets out a bold vision: Everyone in Ontario has access to affordable recreation in their community in order to enjoy the health and social benefits and to improve their prospects for a better future.

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- reprinted from the Dunnville Chronicle

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