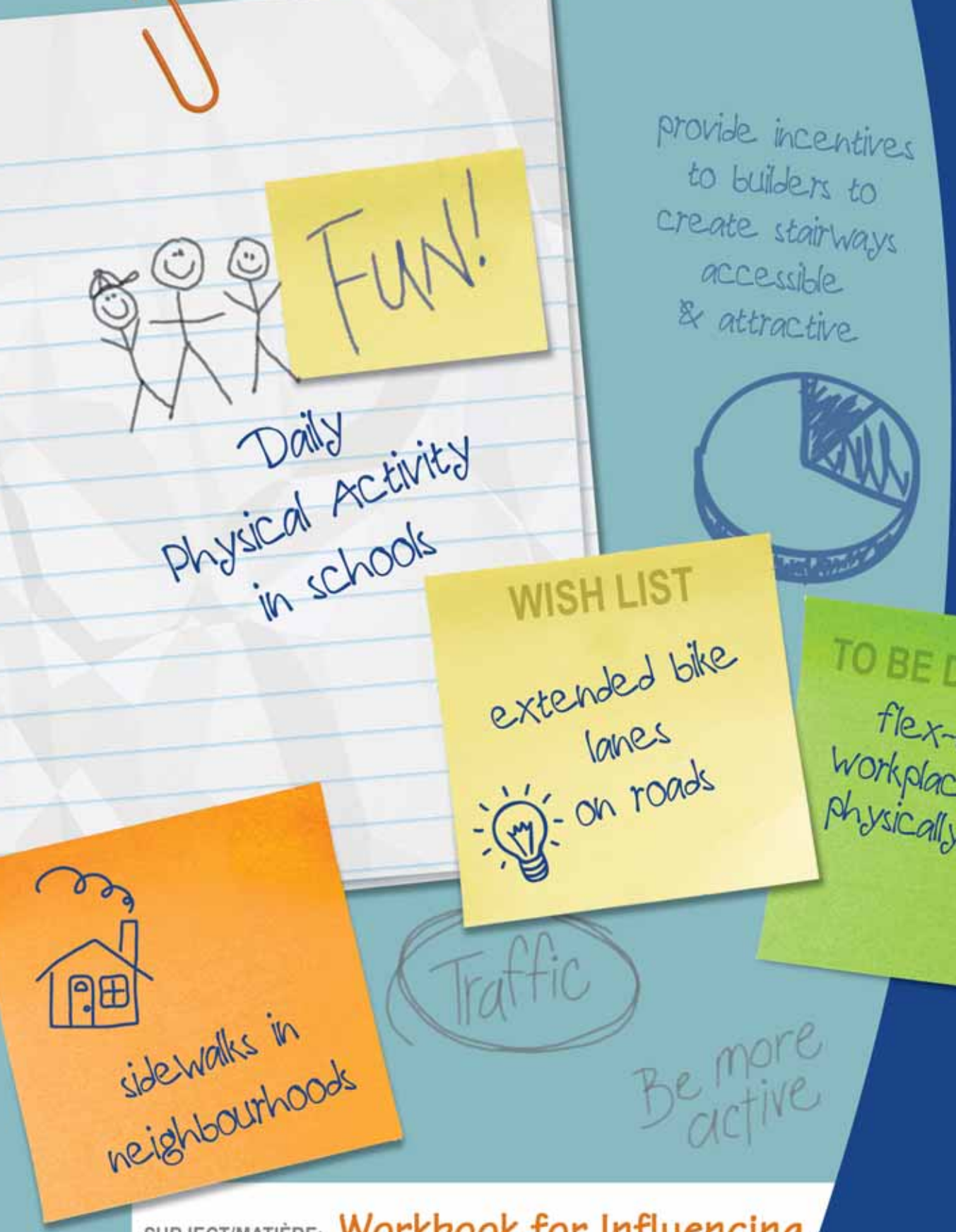

SUBJECT/MATIÈRE: **Workbook for Influencing Physical Activity Policy**

NAME/NOM: _____

PARC
Physical Activity Resource Centre

This resource was developed by
The Health Communication Unit (THCU)
for the **Physical Activity Resource Centre** (PARC).
THCU and PARC are members of the
Ontario Health Promotion Resource System (OHPRS),
funded by the **Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion**.

Disclaimer

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INTRODUCTION

Why policy?

For many years health promoters have focused their efforts on telling individuals how and why to increase their level of physical activity. However, research shows the most effective health promotion strategies include a policy component. By influencing policy, the social and/or built environment is changed to support physical activity over time.

What is policy?

In this workbook, policy refers to the positions or guidelines of organizations and governments which define and support particular values and behaviours. There are various types and forms of policy. **This workbook focuses on:**

- broad policy which puts forward government-wide direction; and
- more specific policy which may be developed for a particular setting (e.g., schools, workplaces, communities) or issue-area (e.g., physical activity).

Government policy typically takes form as legislation, regulations, and programs. These are often referred to as policy instruments.

What is policy development?

The activity of developing policy generally involves research, analysis, consultation and synthesis of information to produce policy options. It should also involve an assessment of the options against a set of criteria (e.g., goal, objectives, resources, readiness).

How does good policy work?

The Daily Physical Activity (DPA) legislation that governs school policies in Canada is an excellent example of a good policy instrument.

The goal of DPA is to increase students' physical activity levels. It is based on the belief that healthy students are better able to learn and that school environments can help students develop positive lifestyle habits.

Daily Physical Activity ensures that all students in grades 1 to 8 get a minimum of 20 minutes of sustained moderate to vigorous physical activity each school day during instructional time (not during lunch, recess, or breaks).

This policy instrument has changed the school environment to make it easier for students to be active. In fact, it makes it difficult for them to *not* be active!

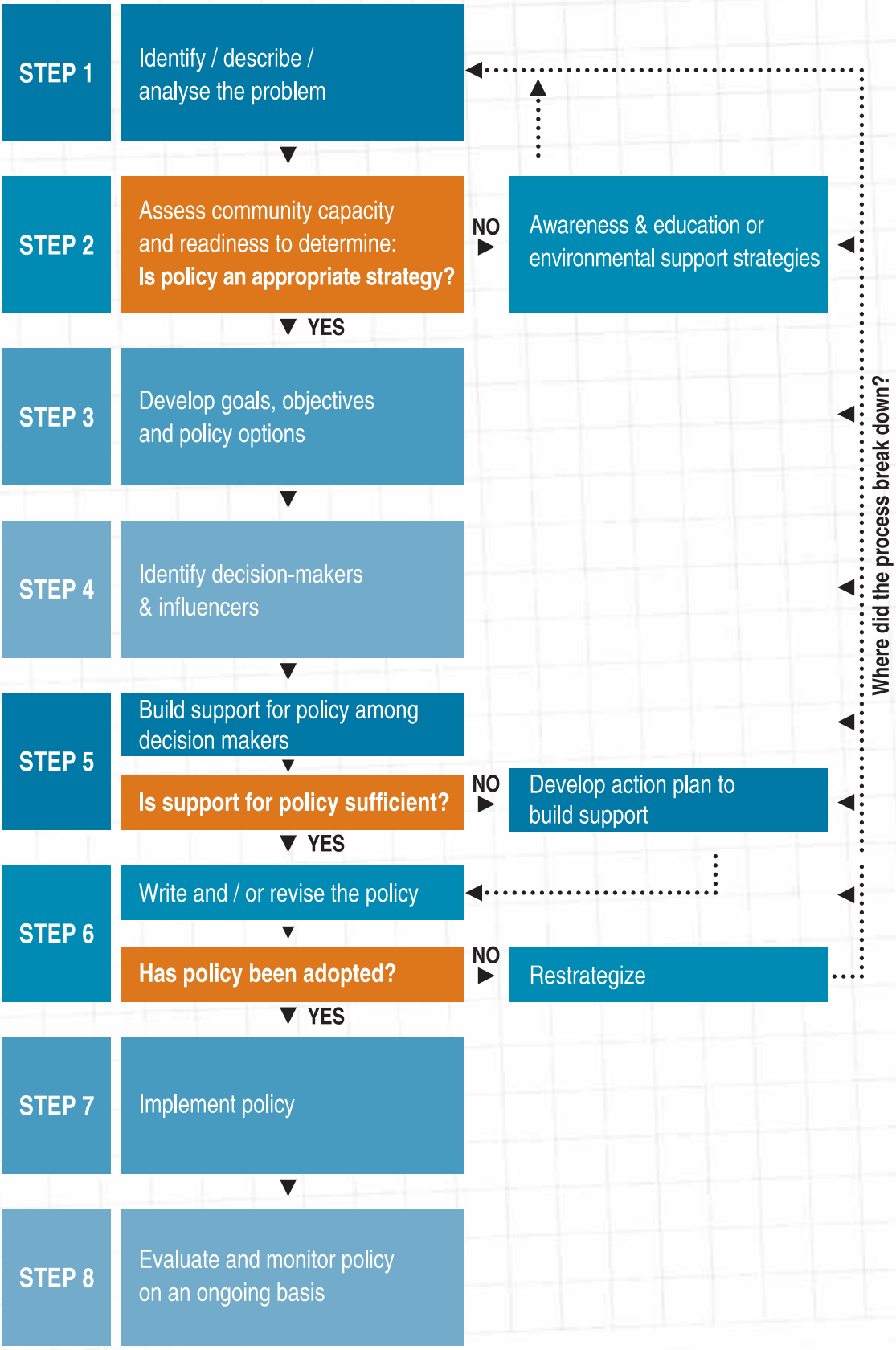
Please see **www.ophea.net/dpa** for more information on DPA and for details on Ophea's available DPA support.

About the workbook

This workbook is for anyone venturing to create a physical activity policy within their community, school or workplace. It is suitable for all levels of experience or comfort with policy development.

This workbook follows The Health Communication Unit's (THCU) eight-step policy development model. Although policy development is often resource intensive, this systematic approach can make it easier. As described above through the DPA example, the long-term benefits of policy make it a worthwhile investment. For a more comprehensive look at policy development, please see PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy at **www.ophea.net/parc/policy.cfm.**

THE THCU ROADMAP TO POLICY DEVELOPMENT



Access a PDF of the roadmap at **www.thcu.ca/infoandresources/roadmap.htm**

Step One — Describe the Problem of Physical Inactivity

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is to obtain a detailed understanding of the specific problem related to physical inactivity. Answers to the following questions will help provide a thorough understanding.

Causes of the problem

- What is the origin or cause of the problem?
- What has contributed to the development of the problem?

Impact of the problem

- What is the extent of the problem in your community?
- What is the cost of this problem?
- Is this problem a crisis? Why or why not?
- What would happen if this problem was NOT dealt with?

Perception of the problem

- Who else thinks it is a problem?
- Who thinks it is not a problem?

Possible solutions

- What has been done to try and resolve the problem?
- How have other communities addressed this problem?
- What are potential solutions to this problem?
- Is there more than one possible policy solution to the problem?
- What are the costs and benefits of various possible solutions to the problem?

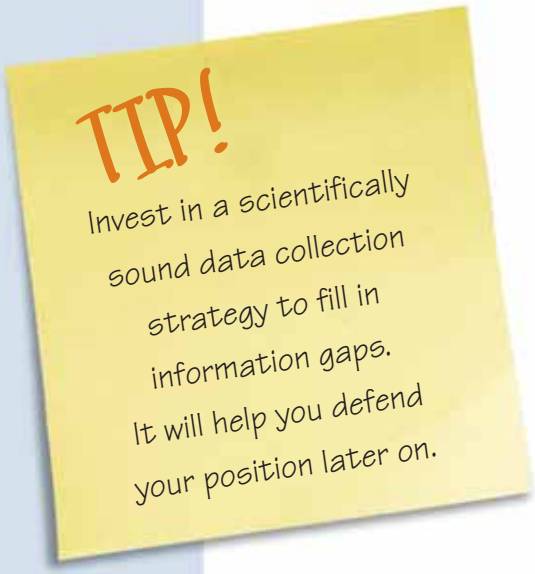
How to do this step

Here are some types and sources of information that may help you answer the questions above.

TYPE OF INFORMATION	
• Quantitative opinion, values data	• Socio-demographic data
• Community health status indicators	• Community stories/testimonials
• Evaluation findings	• Research findings
• Cost-benefit effectiveness data	• "Best practices" synthesis and guidelines
• Organizational mandates	• History of approach to the problem

POSSIBLE SOURCES

- Journals, magazines, books
- Consultants, private sector
- Resource/Research centres. For example:
  - The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute **www.cflri.ca** offers survey and research data much of which has been broken down at the provincial level.
  - Statistics Canada **www.statscan.ca** conducts The Canadian Community Health Survey to provide cross-sectional estimates of health determinants, health status and health system utilization for 133 health regions.
  - The Coalition for Active Living (CAL) **www.activeliving.ca** website has a wealth of facts and figures related to schools, active transportation, and the Pan-Canadian Physical Activity Strategy.
- Government departments – local, provincial, national
  - Most municipalities and regions have recreation departments.
- Local health unit
  - Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System Data **www.myhamilton.ca** (search: rapid risk factor)
  - Community Health Status Reports
- Local, provincial, national non-governmental groups such as:
  - The Physical Activity Resource Centre **www.ophea.net/parc**
  - Local YMCA's **www.ymca.ca**
  - Pan-Canadian Physical Activity Strategy **www.activeliving.ca**
  - The Alberta Centre for Active Living **www.centre4activeliving.ca**
  - Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada **www.cdpac.ca**
  - Active 2010 **www.active2010.ca**
  - Active Living by Design **www.activelivingbydesign.ca**



Ideally, once you have answered the questions, you will be able to explain, in one succinct sentence, with a few concise supporting paragraphs:

- the impact of the problem;
- the root causes;
- community perceptions about the problem; and
- possible solutions.

Why this step is important

Having a thorough understanding of the problem is important because it will help you:

- develop clear policy goals;
- assess various policy options; and
- eventually build support for the policy among decision-makers.

A one-sentence explanation of the problem, with a few brief, supporting paragraphs can serve as a useful communication tool for all stakeholders. This short explanation can also serve as a benchmark or baseline on which to measure progress.

Example

Slightly over half of the adult population in Ontario is physically inactive.

Research has shown that the built environment of a community correlates with the activity level of its community members. We know that 1.5 million people live in rural communities in Ontario and many of these communities do not have sidewalks.

Ensuring sidewalks are a part of a rural community's development plan will create a supportive built environment and help increase physical activity levels in adults.

For further discussion about Step One please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Two

Assess Readiness for Physical Activity Policy Development

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is to determine whether or not to proceed with a specific policy development strategy. This decision should be based on whether:

- your *community* is ready for a specific policy development strategy; and
- your *organization* is ready to lead the policy development process.

Questions that should be answered to assess readiness are outlined below.

Community readiness

- Which community leaders, elected officials, citizens or groups will be supportive or unsupportive of this policy change initiative?
- What is public opinion on the issue and/or policy?
- If the policy you are seeking was put into place today, who would care? Who would be affected? In what way?
- What reasons to oppose this policy will be put forward by those affected? Are they contestable? Are they true? How can you refute these arguments?
- Are there educational and awareness programs in your community that focus on your problem? How long have they been running? How successful have they been? How popular are they?
- Has the problem been a recent focus in the media?

Organizational readiness

- Is the policy and the policy development process a fit with the mandate of your organization?
- How much time/resources do you have/does your organization have to support the policy development process over an extended period of time?
- Which individuals or groups can and will offer human or financial resource support to assist with the policy development process?

The answers to these questions will help you decide whether the time is right in your community and your organization to lead a physical activity policy development initiative.

Sometimes different kinds of strategies must be employed before embarking on policy development. For example, it may be necessary to focus on data collection about community attitudes, education and persuasion efforts, or finding additional resources, before moving forward with policy development.

There are also different roles in the policy development process. If the community is ready, but your organization is not, you may choose to support policy development in various ways, but not lead the process.

TIP!

The Force Field Analysis may be different for different policy options.

How to do this step

Ideas for types of information and possible sources of information to answer the questions posed above were presented in Step One.

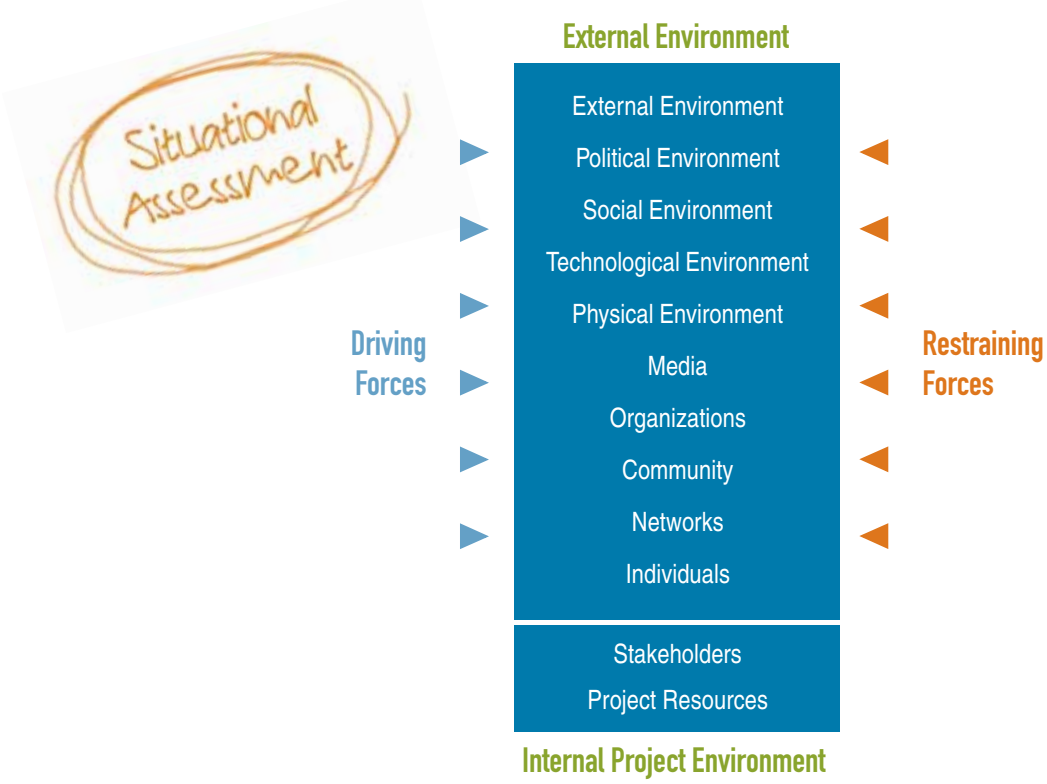
The data collected can be shaped into a Force Field Analysis. This is a graphic depiction of the "forces" out in the community and within your organization that will "drive" or "restrain" a policy development process. A visual provides a quick snapshot of the environment and can help with the decision-making process.

A Force Field Analysis can be done as part of an situational assessment that includes both the external (e.g., social, political, technical) and internal (e.g., resources for policy change) environment impacting on a problem or issue.

Why this step is important

Policy development initiatives require careful timing and may need substantial human resources over an extended period of time. Starting at a time when public opinion is strongly against the initiative or adequate resources are not in place to see the job through, may result in failure and reduced credibility of your organization. This may affect community perception of other current and future activities that your organization is involved with.

Example



For further discussion about Step Two please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Three — Develop Goals, Objectives and Policy Options

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is:

- to define clear goals and objectives for the policy development initiative; and
- to generate a list of policy options that you want decision-makers to consider.

A **goal** is a broad statement summarizing the ultimate direction or desired achievement of your policy (e.g., to promote physical activity among low-income families or to reduce the incidence of obesity among young people).

An **objective** is a brief statement specifying the desired impact or effect of a policy that is, how much of what should happen to whom by when. For example:

- fifty-five percent of Ontario adults will be physically active by 2010; or
- the rate of obesity in young people will drop by eleven percent by 2010.

Policy **options** are choices regarding the types of policies that can be put in place to address health issues. Some examples of policy options[1] to address student levels of physical activity through schools may include:

1. Require every student to participate in daily physical education for the entire school year, including students with disabling conditions and those in alternative education programs. Students in the elementary grades shall participate in physical education for at least 150 minutes during each school week, and students in middle schools and high schools shall participate for at least 225 minutes per week.
2. Require certified physical education teachers teach all physical education courses.
3. Require schools to provide and implement a sequential, developmentally appropriate curriculum in physical education.
4. Require schools to provide daily physical activity breaks for all elementary school students.

[1] taken from Physical Activity for Youth Policy Initiative of the US National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity http://www.ncppa.org

How to do this step

Most policies have one or two goals, and multiple objectives.

Objectives are building blocks towards the achievement of your physical activity policy goals. Good objectives are SMART.

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ttainable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime limited

Objectives should also be aligned with:

- how your group/organization defines the problem of physical inactivity;
- organizational mandate, resources and commitment; and
- community opinion and readiness.

All physical activity policy options, including those you generated in Steps One and Two, should be assessed to determine fit with goals and objectives. Of the ones that fit, a shortlist of choices should be drawn after considering community and organizational readiness for each option, as discussed in Step Two. This shortlist comprises the policy options that will be presented to decision-makers.

Why this step is important

There may be multiple solutions to a given problem. Putting forward more than one option for consideration shows stakeholders you are flexible and willing to negotiate. Assessing numerous options prepares you to explain why there are certain ones you will not support.

Clear goals and objectives provide a way to link policy options with the desired impact. Without clear goals and objectives, there is a higher risk of going "off course" when negotiating more politically acceptable, or less resource-intensive options.

For further discussion about Step Three please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Four — Identify Decision-Makers and Influencers

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is to decide which decision-makers will be the focus of your support-building efforts.

How to do this step

- Ask city clerks or other government officials who would be best to approach and how to approach them. Don't assume you already know the best person.
- Consider starting with someone lower on the hierarchy, rather than heading straight for the top.
- Start with more sympathetic and supportive individuals rather than pouring your energy into the "toughest nut".
- Find out as much as you can about how your decision makers make decisions. For example, consider whether they are most driven by:
    - ▲ media coverage;
    - ▲ their own strong beliefs and values;
    - ▲ the needs of their clients or constituency; and/or
    - ▲ other influential people or groups.

Why this step is important

Choosing the people who will exert the most influence in a policy development effort is both an art and a science. Choosing the wrong people can result in wasted resources and may even jeopardize future policy development strategies.

Example

In a school setting, some policies can be approved by a principal, others need to be vetted through a School Council, while yet others need to go to senior administration at the School Board or even the elected trustees. Often there are also other people whose support is required such as the media, parents, or students themselves.

For further discussion about Step Four please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Five — Build Support for a Physical Activity Policy

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is:

- to choose the communication channels and vehicles through which you will try to persuade decision-makers to proceed with policy development; and
- to develop the content, or messages that are put forth using those communication methods.

How to do this step

Communication channel and vehicle selection

A variety of interpersonal, media and event options are available to help advance a physical activity policy agenda. Communication vehicles vary in their level of profile. Some options are presented below.

LOW PROFILE	MEDIUM PROFILE	HIGH PROFILE
Largely phone or face-to-face		Largely mass media, presentations, print
• Quiet negotiation • Meet civil servants • Share information • Non-public briefs	• Continued negotiation • Meet civil servants • Public briefs • "Feed" supporters information • Appear at committees • MPP visitations • Alliances with other groups • Letters to newspapers • Letters to MPPs	• Public criticism • P.R. and ad campaigns • Work opposition • Release information • Letter writing • Demonstrating at rallies

Communication message development

The content delivered to decision-makers should focus on the following:

- the links between the policy and a compelling issue or problem related to physical inactivity;
- simple descriptions of the proposed solutions; and
- signs within the community that change is warranted and desired (e.g., public opinion, discussion and debate in among community groups, media coverage).

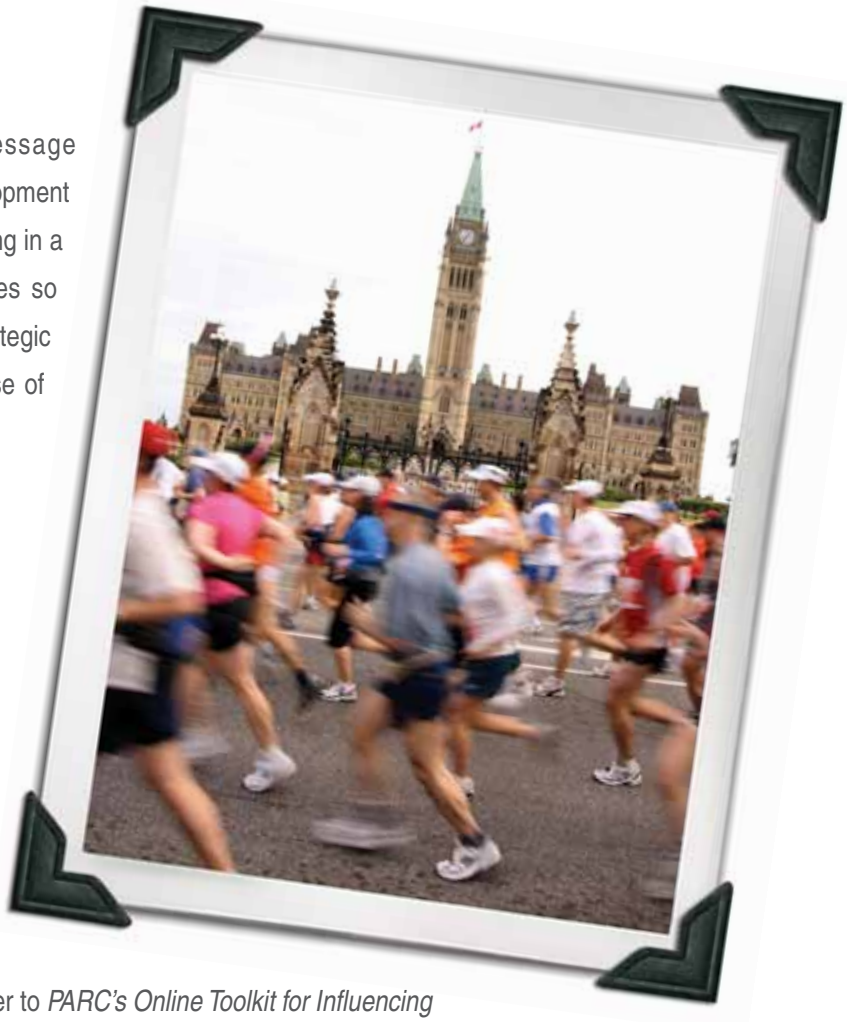
The messages should either directly address, or you should be prepared to address counter arguments, such as:

- the proposed change is too costly;
- increased regulations restrict individual freedoms;
- there is an alternative (non-policy) solution to the problem; and
- there is still debate about the origin of, and therefore the best solution to, the problem.

In physical activity policy development, many different approaches must be applied and constantly adapted over time, as the public opinion, media, and decision-maker landscapes change. It is important to continually scan the community for opportunities to get your message out. It is equally important to be strategic in every vehicle and word choice.

Why this step is important

Communication vehicle selection and message development is often the phase of policy development where battles are won or lost. Because responding in a sustained way to an ever-moving target requires so much time and energy it is important to be strategic with every interaction, thus making maximum use of available resources.



For further discussion about Step Five please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Six — Write and/or Revise the Policy

Purpose of this step

This step is the policy-writing phase and involves defining the specific logistical and often legal details about a policy.

How to do this step

All policies should include the following:

- a preface or preamble describing the purpose of the policy;
- policy goals and objectives;
- a description of the activities, regulations, and sanctions, that constitute the "meat" of the policy;
- procedures for dealing with failure to comply with the policy;
- a plan for promoting and disseminating the policy; and
- a plan for monitoring and evaluating the policy.

As "seeing it in writing" will often re-ignite opposing forces, many revisions may be required.

Stakeholder consultations are an important part of this phase of policy development. People responsible for funding, implementing and otherwise acting upon the policy should be consulted throughout the writing and revision process. Community consultations are often a part of this process. A legal opinion is frequently required. Every draft should also be reviewed to ensure the policy goals and objectives will be met.

Why this step is important

By the time a policy reaches the writing phase, it may seem that the battle is won. However, the precise wording of a policy often dictates whether or not it is passed.

Example

Please see the following example entitled "Physical Activity for Youth Policy Initiative" presented by the National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity for a full example of a written policy:
www.ncppa.org (Click on Public Affairs & Policy on the right menu)

For further discussion about Step Six please refer to P*ARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Seven — Implement the Policy

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is to ensure all pre-requisites are in place for policy implementation, and then implement the policy.

How to do this step

A policy is ready for implementation if the following conditions are met:

- the policy meets stated goals and objectives;
- objectives are measurable;
- approval of key decision-makers and stakeholders has been obtained;
- an accurate estimate of the resources (time, money, person power and expertise) needed to implement and monitor your policy has been developed;
- the timeline for implementation is realistic and appropriate;
- the policy specifies who is responsible for what; and
- implementation barriers have been considered and a plan is in place for dealing with them.

Stakeholder consultations are also an important part of this phase of policy development. People responsible for funding, implementing and otherwise acting upon the policy should be consulted as implementation is considered.

Why this step is important

Many policies have been retracted upon realizing that implementation is impractical, too costly, too controversial or progress toward the ultimate goal cannot be demonstrated. Involving the full range of stakeholders can help ensure that all possible circumstances, loopholes and implications have been considered.

For further discussion about Step Seven please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step Eight | Evaluate and Monitor the Policy on An Ongoing Basis

Purpose of this step

The purpose of this step is to develop and manage an ongoing system for evaluating the long-term effectiveness, feasibility and support for a policy.

How to do this step

A policy evaluation should seek to answer the following questions:

- *Is the situation better than it was before the policy was implemented?*
- *If the policy was not as effective as anticipated, why not?*
- *Are people who were involved in the policy development and implementation process happy with the results of their efforts?*
- *Do the people affected have a favourable view of the policy? If not, what can be done to address their concerns?*
- *Are there foreseeable developments that may affect the policy?*

Indicators that can help answer these questions include:

- behaviours or health status of community members;
- number of infractions;
- mass media coverage of the policy; and
- resources allocated to implementing the policy.

Why this step is important

To be effective, a policy must be responsive to changing circumstances and unintended consequences. Early identification of problems and timely policy amendments may help avoid full retraction of a policy when implementation presents challenges. A thorough evaluation will also help to:

- collect evidence of effectiveness;
- demonstrate accountability to stakeholders; and
- improve implementation processes, thus reducing implementation costs.

For further discussion about Step Eight please refer to *PARC's Online Toolkit for Influencing Physical Activity Policy,* **www.ophea.net/parc.**

Step One

Describe the Problem

Worksheet 1a: *Problem definition source notes*

Brainstorm possible sources of information to answer the questions in the left-hand column. Consult the list of types and sources on ***page 4/5*** *of the workbook for ideas.*

	POSSIBLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION
CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM	
What is the origin or cause of the problem?	
What has contributed to the development of the problem?	
IMPACT OF THE PROBLEM	
What is the extent of the problem in your community?	
What is the cost of this problem?	
Is this problem a crisis? Why or why not?	
What would happen if this was NOT dealt with?	
PERCEPTION OF THE PROBLEM	
Who else thinks it is a problem?	
Who thinks it is NOT a problem?	
POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	
What has been done to try and resolve the problem?	
How have other communities addressed this problem?	
What are potential policy and non-policy solutions to this problem?	
What are the costs and benefits of various possible solutions?	

Step One

Describe the Problem

Worksheet 1b: *Problem description outline*

In the table below, outline the key points you would like to make in your executive brief describing the problem.

SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS
The impact of the problem • • •
The root cause • • •
The community perception of the problem • • •
The possible solutions • • •

ONE-SENTENCE EXPLANATION OF THE PROBLEM
• • •

Step Two

Assess Readiness for Policy Development

Worksheet 2a: *Readiness source notes*

Use the following table to brainstorm sources of information that will provide a complete picture about community and organizational readiness for policy development and clarify where there are information gaps. Specific questions to consider are shown in the left-hand column. Use the list of information types and sources on ***page 4/5*** *of the workbook for ideas.*

	POSSIBLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION
COMMUNITY READINESS	
Which community leaders, elected officials, citizens or groups will be supportive or unsupportive?	
What is public opinion on the issue and/or policy?	
If the policy you are seeking was put into place today, who would care? Who would be affected? In what way?	
What reasons to oppose this policy will be put forward by those affected? Are they true? How can you refute them?	
Are there educational and awareness programs in your community that focus on your problem? How long have they been running? How successful have they been? How popular are they?	
Has the problem been a recent focus in the media?	
ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS	
Is the policy and the policy development process a fit with your mandate?	
How much time/resources do you have/does your organization have to support the policy development process over an extended period of time?	
Which individuals or groups can and will offer human or financial resource support to assist with the policy development process?	

Step Two

Assess Readiness for Policy Development

Worksheet 2b: *Force field analysis*

Use the space beside the arrows to note some of the key forces or factors that will help or hinder your policy efforts. Consider the external and internal environments outlined in the centre when noting the forces. Please see ***page 8*** *in the workbook for examples for driving and restraining forces.*

E.G.: POLICY OPTION BEING CONSIDERED:
RETRO-FITTING A NUMBER OF YOUNG, FAMILY COMMUNITIES WITH SIDEWALKS, WHERE PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE

DRIVING FORCES		EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:		RESTRAINING FORCES
	E.g.: Currently, community obesity levels in children is a hot topic among council members, with one council member in particular having taken the topic on as his personal cause.	▶ Political Environment ◀	E.g.: There are other community infrastructure development options on the table that would be funded from the same budget, for which there is strong community support right now.	
	E.g.: Over the past year, the local media has written several extensive pieces on the fact that certain areas of the town are designed in ways that significantly restrict physical activity opportunities.	▶ Economic Environment ◀	E.g.: This is a difficult undertaking that would cause significant disruption to many families for an extended period, possibly even causing temporary safety issues as construction was undertaken.	
	E.g.: There are three substantial community grant opportunities available that could financially support the community in undertaking this process.	▶ Social Environment ◀		
		▶ Technological Environment ◀		
		▶ Physical Environment ◀		
		▶ Media ◀		
		▶ Organizations ◀		
		▶ Community ◀		
		▶ Networks ◀		
		▶ Individuals ◀		

DRIVING FORCES		INTERNAL PROJECT ENVIRONMENT:		RESTRAINING FORCES
	E.g.: There is currently no budget to support a staff-person to oversee the process of advocating for such a venture to appropriate stakeholders.	▶	◀ E.g.: Several prominent, long-term members of our Walkable Community Coalition feel our efforts would be better spent elsewhere.	
		Stakeholders		
		▶	◀	
		Project Resources		

CONCLUSIONS:

POLICY OPTION BEING CONSIDERED:

DRIVING FORCES

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:

Political Environment

Economic Environment

Social Environment

Technological Environment

Physical Environment

Media

Organizations

Community

Networks

Individuals

INTERNAL PROJECT ENVIRONMENT:

Stakeholders

Project Resources

RESTRAINING FORCES

CONCLUSIONS:

Step Three

Develop Goals, Objectives and Policy Options

Worksheet 3b: *Goals and objectives*

Use the bullet points in the space below to brainstorm goal and objective possibilities and work toward final goals and objectives. Use the checklist on the right from Step 3 of the workbook to ensure you have written quality objectives.

GOAL: A broad statement that summarizes what you are ultimately trying to change with your policy.

E.g.: To reduce the incidence of obesity among young people.

-
-
-

Final goal _____

OUTCOME OBJECTIVES: Specific statements that describe what should happen to whom, by when, to achieve the goal.

E.g.: Fifty-five percent of Ontario school-age children will meet Canada's Physical Activity guidelines by 2010.

-
-
-

Objective 1 _____

-
-
-

Objective 2 _____

-
-
-

Objective 3 _____

Is the objective:

- ☐ S-Specific enough to know when we will have met it?
- ☐ M- Measurable?
- ☐ AR-Attainable and realistic (given available resources and current community and organizational readiness)?
- ☐ T- Time-limited?
- ☐ A building block toward our goal?
- ☐ Aligned with how our organization defines the problem?
- ☐ Aligned with our mandate?

Step Three

Develop Goals, Objectives and Policy Options

Worksheet 3b: *Policy option alignment with objectives*

Use the space below to list the policy options that you are considering. To ensure alignment with your objectives, write your final objectives in the space provided. Then draw lines connecting each policy option to the objective/s on which it will impact. This will help guide decisions about the most effective use of resources, when it is not possible to pursue all policy options at once.

Example:

POLICY OPTIONS	OBJECTIVES
1. Require schools to provide daily physical activity breaks for all elementary school students.	1. Sixty percent of school-aged children in Ontario will meet the recommended intake of healthy food choices in line with Canada's Food Guide by 2010.
2. Require school cafeterias to meet the Eat Smart! School program recommendations.	2. Sixty percent of young people in Ontario aged 4-10 will meet the recommended levels of physical activity as outlined by Canada's Physical Activity guide by 2010.
3. Require a registered dietitian to visit and educate students and teachers about healthy choices.	

POLICY OPTIONS	OBJECTIVES

Step Four

Identify Decision-Makers and Influencers

Worksheet 4a: *Understanding decision-makers and influencers*

Using the table below, list key decision-makers and influencers related to the policy you are planning to purse. Make a list of what you know about the person or organization, including what you know and don't know about: their level of influence, position within their organization, how they make decisions, where they stand on the issue, community connection to and perception about this person/organization, approach to similar or related issues in the past, etc. This information will help you identify gaps and select while individuals/organizations you will approach for support as a part of the policy development process.

NAME/ORGANIZATION	WHAT WE KNOW	WHAT WE DON'T KNOW (AND NEED TO FIND OUT)	TEAM CONCLUSIONS ABOUT HOW TO INVOLVE THIS PERSON/ORGANIZATION
E.g.: *John Person, principal of local high school*	*Known to speak regularly with media, in support of sports in community* *Has a family, 2 girls in high school,* *Been in position for 7 yrs*	*Not sure of community perception of credibility* *Not sure about position on school cafeteria food policy issue*	*Unsure until further research collected*
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Step Five

Build Support for a Policy

Worksheet 5a: *Communication channels and vehicles*

Building on the menu on ***page 12*** *of the workbook, identify specific local communication opportunities. Consider a combination of channels – both one on one interactions and mass media. In the columns available, note human and financial resources required, as well as appropriateness for this stage of the policy development process. This will help you decide whether to make use of the opportunity soon, in the future, or not at all.*

COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITY/ VEHICLES	HUMAN RESOURCES REQUIRED	FINANCIAL RESOURCES REQUIRED	APPROPRIATENESS FOR STAGE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	DECISION (USE NOW, LATER, NOT AT ALL)
E.g.: *Letters to newspapers*	*Staff to monitor media for opportunities to comment/react* *Staff available to clear time in schedule to pull together timely, communication*	*None*	*Useful at all stages, as a tool for directing public opinion*	

Step Five

Build Support for a Policy

Worksheet 5b: *Message content*

Use the worksheet below to outline how you will address each of the key parts of a message supporting policy and counter arguments against the policy. Use separate worksheets for each vehicle. A great deal of the content will likely overlap between communication vehicles.

Communication Vehicle: _____

KEY POINTS TO MAKE IN MESSAGE	
CORE SUPPORTIVE CONTENT	
The links between the policy and a compelling issue or problem related to physical inactivity.	
Simple descriptions of the proposed solutions.	
Signs within the community that change is warranted and desired (e.g., public opinion, discussion and debate in among community groups, media coverage).	
Other:	
COUNTER ARGUMENTS	
The proposed change is too costly.	
Increased regulations restrict individual freedoms.	
There is an alternative (non-policy) solution to the problem.	
There is still debate about the origin of, and therefore the best solution to, the problem.	
Other:	

Step Six

Write and/or Revise the Policy

Worksheet 6a: *Policy development workplan*

For each part of the policy, indicate in the table below, who will lead development and who should be consulted to review it (e.g., community consultation, legal department, etc.). Some parts of the policy may be subdivided, if appropriate.

POLICY SECTION – DRAFT DEVELOPMENT	LEAD	WHO SHOULD REVIEW THIS
1. Preface or preamble describing the purpose of the policy. • • •		
2. Policy goals and objectives. • • •		
3. Description of the activities, regulations and sanctions; the "meat" of the policy. • • •		
4. Procedures for dealing with failure to comply with the policy. • • •		
5. Plan for promoting and disseminating the policy. • • •		
6. Plan for monitoring and evaluating the policy. • • •		

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Conclusion

Physical activity policy is an effective option that has the capacity to bring about far-reaching change. One of the inherent challenges of the policy development process is that the eight steps can sometimes take years to complete. However, the rewards and benefits often outweigh these challenges. Developing physical activity policies in your schools, workplaces and communities can transform these settings over time to become supportive environments for physical activity.

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