



## RECREATION SERVICES MEMORANDUM

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**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: S. LEE YOUNG, MANAGER OF RECREATION SERVICES**

**NOTED: B. ROTH, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION SERVICES**

**D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

**M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**RE: HIGH FIVE ACCREDITATION**

**DATE: APRIL 8, 2019**

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HIGH FIVE® is Canada's only comprehensive quality standard for children's recreation programs. Developed by Parks and Recreation Ontario, HIGH FIVE was designed to address the need for an innovative approach to help organizations enhance program quality and provide positive experiences for children aged 6-12 as this is a very crucial time in their life for development.

In 2016, the City committed to achieving HIGH FIVE Accreditation; the highest level of recognition a municipality can reach within HIGH FIVE. The accreditation process involved a two-year obligation spanning 2017 and 2018 that took an in-depth evaluation of our programs based on the four key components of the HIGH FIVE model:

- Training and Development
- Program Assessments
- Policies and Procedures
- Awareness of HIGH FIVE

### **Training and Development**

HIGH FIVE provides multiple training opportunities to help better prepare leaders to manage their programs effectively. The pillars of this training focus on **child development principles** and **program planning guidelines**. HIGH FIVE's 5 Principles of Healthy Child Development need to be present in all programs to ensure a positive experience for all children. These include programs being led by **a caring adult** while providing the opportunities to make **friends, play, master skills**, and to **participate**. HIGH FIVE's design guidelines for recreational programs ensures they are **welcoming of diversity and uniqueness, safe, and developmentally appropriate**. These principles and guidelines are symbolized in the graphic on the next page.

Recreation Services conducted ongoing training to ensure a minimum of 85% of our staff and volunteers who work with children were trained in the HIGH FIVE Principles of Healthy Child Development. Staff were also trained in how to use HIGH FIVE's "Quest 1" evaluation tool to review policies and procedures. This evaluation ensured we follow industry best practices to maximize program quality and manage risk. Further training was provided to staff in using the "Quest 2" program evaluation tool. Over the 24 months, approximately 300 program evaluations were conducted using this assessment tool. The findings allowed us to address any issues, identify trends, and adjust our staff training accordingly to improve the quality of our programming.



### Program Assessments

We evaluate our programs internally using the HIGH FIVE Quest 2 Program Assessment Tool looking for Quality Indicators in the following sections:

- Leader-Child Interactions
- Supervision and Safety
- Child to Child Interactions
- Leader Behaviour and Interactions
- Program Characteristics and Supports.

This proactive approach using standardized evaluation techniques allows us to flag potential concerns before they become issues or customer complaints. It also serves as a performance benchmarking tool to compare our scores to similar municipalities. Ongoing Quest 2 assessments identifies trends in program quality that can be addressed through staff training.

### Policies and Procedures

By utilizing the Quest 1 Tool we are able to adjust and improve our procedures to align with best practices in order to mitigate our risk. As part of the accreditation process, our Programming Procedures manual was reviewed, evaluated, and updated to ensure quality standards were being met.

### Awareness

Both HIGH FIVE and the Recreation Services Department are committed to spreading the word about our involvement in this quality standards program. We promote HIGH FIVE to our customers and the general public in our Rec Guides and website, on our bulletin boards and banners in Rec Centres, and through our innovative Summer Camp Blog. We have ongoing internal communication on HIGH FIVE through staff training, recognition programs, and conversations.

We are very excited to report that after our assessment by the Accreditation and Verification Committee, we are now officially a HIGH FIVE Accredited organization. The City received a formal letter of recognition from the Chair and CEO of Parks and Recreation Ontario and was recognized amongst provincial colleagues at the Parks and Recreation Ontario Awards Night held March 28<sup>th</sup>.

The Accreditation term is for three years at which point we will reapply again. We look forward to continuing to work with HIGH FIVE to ensure our programs are of the highest quality possible. We will continue to be the recreation service provider of choice in our community.

