



## **Bridging the Gap Program Report 2019/2020**

Our Bridging the Gap (BTG) program has created numerous opportunities for individuals living with a physical disability in Saskatchewan in this past fiscal year. There were **14** sport-specific/multi sport Have-A-Go events in Saskatoon & Regina, **one** Learn-To-Play program, **three** development camps, **two** weekly rehab programs at City Hospital in Saskatoon and at Wascana Rehab Centre in Regina, a monthly visit to the Kinsmen Children's Centre, and numerous awareness presentations around the province. In addition, both Coordinators have helped with the development of programs in **three** sports; Wheelchair Rugby Club, Para Athletics, and Sledge Hockey.

### **BTG in Regina**

Two years ago, SWSA secured funding through the City of Regina Grant – Sport & Leisure New Initiative channel to welcome a new member to the team, Jen Wood. Throughout her two years, Jen has been eagerly working hard to develop all areas of BTG in Regina. She has kept consistency to our evening BTG program at Wascana Rehab Centre by welcoming several new individuals whom she meets at various events she attends in the city. Unfortunately, the program was put at a halt in March following the COVID-19 trend. However, her energetic desire to attend awareness events and to build partnerships with key organizations such as First Steps Wellness Centre, Neil Squire, Wascana Rehab Centre (Children's Program specifically), and Spinal Cord Injury Sask has increased our participation numbers tremendously. In Regina, we are seeing a growth in numbers at Have-A-Go Events and an increase in program development. Jen also took on the role as the Head Coach for the Cyclones Athletics Club and has provided multiple Have-A-Go and training camp opportunities for new and existing athletes.

### **BTG in Saskatoon**

The BTG program's main component is the weekly Rehab Programs that occur at City Hospital in Saskatoon and the Wascana Rehab Centre (WRC) in Regina for newly injured patients. Saskatoon's program has had a consistent in flow of new and returning patients with spinal cord injuries. In the past fiscal year, we have seen approximately 5 patients come through our program. Unfortunately, the program has been under review due to a safety incident that occurred in December 2019. Since COVID-19, we have not been able to reach this target audience.

A partnership with the Alvin Buckwold Child Development Program at the Kinsmen Children's Center in Saskatoon was established to reach out to children living with a physical disability. It is where children with disabilities and special needs go for diagnostic and treatment. We are invited by their Social Workers to attend their monthly spinal cord injury clinics throughout the year to introduce children and families to wheelchair sports. We bring adaptive equipment and information so children can try the equipment and have the resources to know how to become involved. This is an essential recruitment opportunity and we are happy to say that 8 children have come through our station during the spinal cord injury clinics. Many families attending these clinics travel from rural communities in Saskatoon so it is great for us to make connections with them to showcase opportunities for their children in their community with our help.

### **Sport Specific/Multi Sport Have-A-Go (Saskatoon & Regina)**

Have-A-Go events were also offered to individuals who had an interest in one or more sports offered in one location. Peer athletes, coaches and volunteers were among the planning and delivery of these events. A total of over 100 participants attended these events. BTG offered the following sport-specific Have-A-Go events in Saskatoon and Regina:

- Have-A-Go Adaptive Kayaking, Saskatoon (July 2019)
- Have-A-Go Wheelchair Tennis, Saskatoon (July 2019)
- Get Rec'D – Wheelchair Rugby, Regina (August 2019)
- Have-A-Go Wheelchair Basketball, Regina (September 2019)
- Mini's Basketball Sundae, Saskatoon (September 2019)
- Have-A-Go Wheelchair Curling, Regina (October 2019)
- Have-A-Go Sledge Hockey, Regina (October 2019)
- Have-A-Go Sledge Hockey, Saskatoon (October 2019)
- 'My Time' Multi Sport Have-A-Go, Regina (October and November 2019)
- Have-A-Go Para Floorball, Saskatoon (December 2019)
- Children's Multi Sport Have-A-Go, Regina (February 2020)
- Have-A-Go Sledge Hockey in partnership with First Steps Wellness Centre, Regina (Feb 2020)
- Have-A-Go Para Athletics, Saskatoon (March 2020)

### **Learn-To-Play Weekly Developmental Programs**

Learn-To-Play programs are aimed to develop fundamental skills for beginner players. The programs are facilitated by professional instructors and are typically 4-6 weeks in length. Here is the following program that was offered in the past fiscal year:

- Learn-To-Play Wheelchair Tennis, bi-weekly (Regina – Sept-Dec 2019)

The BTG program has participated in many awareness presentations at local colleges, long-term health care facilities, and for other organizations. We continue to make contact around the province, seeking individuals looking to participate in active living. The BTG program is growing and we hope to provide more opportunities in the following years.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of both Coordinators,

Chantal Gosselin  
Bridging the Gap Provincial Coordinator