

MOVE, LEARN & CONNECT AT THE LIBRARY

INNOVATION STRATEGY & ROADMAP

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July 12, 2026



What is Move, Learn & Connect at the Library?

A Participatory Adult Wellness Initiative

The Move, Learn & Connect initiative is a participatory adult wellness program at the Toronto Public Library's Ethennonnehawahstihnen' Branch. The initiative promotes physical activity, health literacy, nutrition education, and social connection through participatory programming and community partnerships.

Adults of all ages and fitness levels can join beginner-friendly activities, workshops, and community events that support healthier lifestyles. Weekly programming would include activities such as Zumba, cultural dance, walking groups, yoga, and introductory strength training, complemented by nutrition workshops, healthy cooking demonstrations, and health literacy sessions delivered in partnership with community organizations and health professionals.

Participants will actively shape the program through the Wellness Advisory Circle by sharing feedback, suggesting future topics, and collaborating in the ongoing development of the initiative, reflecting the participatory planning approach described by Stephens (2012).



MOVE

Fun, beginner-friendly physical activities for everyone



LEARN

Practical health and nutrition education to build knowledge



CONNECT

Build relationships and strengthen community



SHAPE

Participants co-create and improve the program

Toronto Public Library's (TPL) Mission and Vision

Why Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Branch?

Shared community hub:

Library | Aquatic Centre | Recreation Centre | Childcare Centre

The indigenous named Ethennonnhawahstihnen' (pronounced etta-nonna-wasti-nuh) means "Where they had a good and beautiful life". Gifted by the Huron-Wendat Nation to honour the historic Moatfield Ossuary and Village, where residents were known to have lived healthy long lives with little injuries (Toronto Public Library, n.d.). This history provides a meaningful setting for a wellness initiative that encourages healthy living and stronger community connections. Rather than introducing a new service because it is trendy, the initiative is intentionally planned around the branch's unique community context and aligns with Stephen's (2004) concept of technoplans over technolust and his emphasis on thoughtful, community-driven innovation (Stephens, 2012).

TPL's Mission

Providing free, equitable access to information and services in a welcoming, supportive space for all Torontonians

TPL's Vision

A world leading library that informs and inspires Toronto's communities, helping people become more resilient, knowledgeable, connected, and successful.

Source:

<https://tpl.ca/about-the-library/mission-vision-values/>



Why This Innovation?

Why Now?

- Adults continue to face barriers to wellness including:
Cost of fitness programs, limited access to reliable health information, social isolation, need for free and inclusive community spaces (Government of Canada, 2026).
- Move, Learn & Connect helps address these barriers by combining wellness education, movement, and community participation in a trusted library setting.

ACTION BRIEF

Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Branch will:



CONVINCE

Adults in the community



THAT BY

participating in Move, Learn & Connect



THEY WILL

learn, share, and apply practical wellness knowledge, discover trusted health resources, and build meaningful social connections



WHICH WILL

empower them to adopt healthier lifestyles and improve their overall well-being



BECAUSE

our library's mission is fostering lifelong learning, equitable access, and strong, connected communities

Image Source:

<https://letsmovelibraries.org/running/>

Inspiration

**Let's Get Healthy, Together
(Let's Move in Libraries)**

<https://letsmovelibraries.org/>

**Nutrition Lab
(Boston Public Library)**

<https://www.bpl.org/nutrition-lab/>

**Yoga, Breathing Techniques, and
Meditation: An Art of Living Program
(Aurora Public Library)**

<https://aurora.bibliocommons.com/events/68ac665224ba50c3154d298a>

**Let it Move You Zumba Jam!
(Oakland Public Library)**

<https://oaklandlibrary.bibliocommons.com/events/6938b38c8b29ea2800c376cb>



Image Source:
<https://letsmovelibraries.org/chair-based-exercise/>

Guidelines & Policies

Move, Learn & Connect provides educational and recreational wellness programming. It does not replace medical advice. Participants are encouraged to consult a healthcare professional before beginning a new exercise program if they have health concerns.



SAFETY & OPERATIONS

- Certified instructors
- Emergency response procedures
- Program room capacity limits
- Equipment responsibilities



PARTNERSHIPS

- Partnership agreements
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Collaboration with Recreation and Public Health
- Regular communication with partners



ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

- Free participation
- Beginner-friendly activities
- Accessible program spaces
- Inclusive and culturally responsive programming



PRIVACY & ETHICS

- Protect participant information
- Obtain consent for photos
- Health information is not collected or stored
- Wellness education is informational, not medical advice

Timeline for Implementation

The Move, Learn & Connect initiative will be introduced as a 12-month pilot program, beginning in January to coincide with the increased interest in health and wellness that often accompanies New Year's resolutions. Launching at this time provides an opportunity to engage adults who are motivated to establish healthier habits while introducing them to the library's wellness resources and community partnerships.



1) PLANNING (SEP-OCT)

- ✓ Assess community needs
- ✓ Secure community partners
- ✓ Develop policies
- ✓ Create program schedule
- ✓ Recruit Wellness Advisory Circle



2) PREPARATION (NOV-DEC)

- ✓ Train staff
- ✓ Finalize instructors
- ✓ Launch marketing and promotion
- ✓ Prepare wellness resource collection
- ✓ Register participants



3) LAUNCH (JANUARY)

- Launch Event: Move, Learn & Connect: New Year, Healthy Habits
- ✓ Wellness Fair
 - ✓ Community partner booths
 - ✓ Mini fitness demonstrations
 - ✓ Nutrition demonstrations
 - ✓ Library wellness book displays



4) PILOT PROGRAM (JAN-DEC)

- ✓ Monthly Wellness programs
- ✓ Quarterly Wellness Advisory Circle meetings
- ✓ Ongoing program review and refinement



5) EVALUATION & FUTURE PLANNING (DECEMBER)

- ✓ Review community feedback
- ✓ Plan improvements
- ✓ Consider expansion to other TPL branches

Marketing & Promotion

Campaign Message:

New Year, Healthy Habits!

Move More, Learn More & Connect More

A FREE wellness program for adults

In the Library

- All staff promote the program verbally to patrons on desk or during roaming duty
- "What's On" flyers will be available at the Adult information desk
- In-library signage near health & nutrition collections and throughout the branch
- Adult librarians promote the program during other adult programs

Community Outreach

- Flyers distributed during community outreach
- BiblioEvents listings of each program session in the series on the TPL website, allowing participants to register for programs that require registration or view drop-in opportunities.
- While the Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Branch does not currently maintain a dedicated social media presence, creating a branch Instagram or Facebook account could provide an additional platform to promote upcoming wellness events and community partnerships.

What's on



New Year, Healthy Habits! Move, Learn & Connect Launch Party

Move, Learn & Connect is a free wellness program for adults that brings our community together through movement, learning, and healthy living. Join us for a fun and energizing afternoon featuring light fitness activities, healthy living tips, and an opportunity to meet our community partners and discover upcoming programs. Whether you're looking to get active, learn something new, or connect with others, this program is for you!

Space is limited, please visit or call
Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Branch at (416) 922-1111

Friday January 8, 2027
1pm - 3pm

We are committed to accessibility. Please call or email
to request an accommodation to participate.

Staff Training & Readiness

Preparing staff will be essential to the successful implementation of Move, Learn & Connect. As the program includes physical wellness activities, all staff at the Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Branch will be encouraged to complete Standard First Aid and Mental Health First Aid training, both of which are currently available through Toronto Public Library. These training opportunities will help staff feel more confident supporting participants and responding appropriately if assistance is required.

Prior to the January launch, the program lead will facilitate a Branch Experience session to introduce the pilot to all branch staff, including pages, circulation staff, and reference staff. The session will provide an overview of the program's goals, schedule, community partnerships, and staff responsibilities, ensuring everyone is prepared to answer questions and promote the initiative.

Library staff will serve as facilitators by welcoming participants, introducing guest instructors, delivering the Land Acknowledgement statement, and connecting participants with library resources. Certified community partners, including fitness instructors and health professionals, will provide the specialized wellness instruction, allowing library staff to focus on creating a welcoming learning environment and supporting community engagement.

TPL Land Acknowledgement Statement

"Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Branch is on Indigenous land. This is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee (ho-den-oh-sho-nee) Confederacy (aka. the Six Nations Confederacy), the Wendat, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Toronto Public Library gratefully acknowledges these Indigenous nations for their guardianship of this land. We'd also like to remind and reaffirm, as Torontonians and Canadians, our accountability to these Indigenous nations, and to all Indigenous peoples and communities living in Toronto".

"This land is also part of the Dish with One Spoon territory, a treaty between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (aka. The Six Nations Confederacy), the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-nah-bek) and allied nations, to peaceably share and care for this land, its waters, and all of the biodiversity in the Great Lakes region. All those who come to live and work here are responsible for honouring this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect".

Source:

<https://tpl.ca/about-the-library/land-acknowledgements/>



Evaluation & Future Expansion

The success of the Move, Learn & Connect pilot will be evaluated using attendance statistics, repeat participation, participant feedback, circulation of wellness-related library materials, and input from the Wellness Advisory Circle. Feedback collected throughout the pilot will be reviewed regularly to identify opportunities for continuous improvement and ensure the program continues to meet community needs, reflecting Stephens' (2012) recommendation that innovation should evolve through ongoing assessment and community participation.

If the pilot demonstrates positive outcomes, the initiative could become a permanent offering at the Ethennonhawahstihnen' Branch. Toronto Public Library's annual Idea Exchange would provide an excellent opportunity to showcase the program to staff from across the system. At this event, branch staff share successful initiatives through interactive displays and presentations, encouraging knowledge sharing and innovation across the organization. Presenting Move, Learn & Connect at Idea Exchange could inspire other branches to adapt the program to meet the unique needs of their own communities, supporting the expansion of participatory wellness programming throughout Toronto Public Library.

Image Source:

<https://tpl.ca/news/city-librarians-report-for-june-2024/>

References

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Reference to Title Image

Image generated from ChatGPT using prompt: Based on the Canva template, create a circular title image that incorporates fitness, healthy eating, and books

THANK
YOU

