

# **The Inter-Municipal Recreation Partnership**

## ***Vision***

Any Tompkins County youth who wants to participate in a recreational program to meet new friends, learn new skills, or have positive new experiences will be able to find a well-supervised, appropriate activity at an affordable price at convenient times and locations.

## ***Mission***

To jointly plan, finance, provide, and coordinate shared, recreational services for youth of all ages and skill levels that supplement and complement those offered by localities and the private sector. By collaborating and pooling resources, the inter-municipal recreation partnership offers a wider and more affordable array of recreational programming than any single local government could offer on its own.

## ***Program Values***

***Safety and Fun:*** All programs sponsored by the Recreation Partnership will enable participants to have fun in ways and settings that protect their health, safety, and emotional well-being.

***High Quality:*** All participants and their families will be treated with courtesy and respect and program services will be provided by capable and caring staff and volunteers who are well trained and supervised.

***Equity & Inclusiveness:*** Children of all abilities and backgrounds will be welcomed, actively included, and supported by caring and respectful staff and volunteers. A wide diversity of programs will be maintained to accommodate the varying needs, interests, requirements, and skills for all interested youth.

***Diversity:*** Programs will be designed to actively foster interaction across differences and to engender greater understanding of and appreciation and respect for children from all of the diverse backgrounds and communities that comprise our multi-cultural County.

***Affordability:*** All children and youth, regardless of income, will be able to participate affordably in a wide range of leisure time, educational, social, and cultural activities. As a publicly supported Partnership, municipal subsidies will be used to lower the cost of selected programs to assure universal affordable access. Lower cost or specialty programs that can pay for themselves should break even. Scholarships will be available to assure no interested youth will be excluded based solely on inability to pay.

***Accessibility:*** Programs will be offered at times and locations that are convenient for working families. The mix of service will need to balance the economies of scale offered by centralized programs with the convenience of decentralized programs offered in partnering facilities.

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### ***Organizational Values:***

***Advocacy:*** Members of the Partnership recognize the importance of well-founded recreation programs to the quality of life in our community. The Partnership intends to advocate for the value of introducing, supporting, and engaging youth in lifelong recreational opportunities. We would like to offer all youth the opportunity to try out new programs that provide fun, educational, and growth opportunities without the pressure of high-level competition or the expense of specialized equipment.

***Good Investment:*** Members of the Partnership recognize the value of the subsidies that they are investing in youth programs. Programs that support the physical and mental health of youth translate into a much larger savings down the road from avoided costs. Children who are kept active in programs that promote not only physical fitness but also good character pose less risk to society in the future. The cost of keeping children healthy and out of trouble is much less expensive than the alternative, therefore a good investment.

***Inter-municipal Cooperation:*** The Partnership's success depends on having well-informed representatives who trust each other and can work together to find creative, collaborative ways of addressing shared interests and concerns.

***Creative Use of Resources:*** All Partners have information and experience with local programs, access to community facilities, informational networks to help with recruitment as well as varying levels of financial resources to contribute to the Partnership. Sharing of information, training, and facility resources will be actively pursued across municipalities and agencies. Recreation Partnership programs will be developed in concert with existing local programs. We will define decentralized program opportunities and reciprocity of common programs across participating communities.

***Contracting with Qualified and Responsive Providers:*** The Partnership was designed to offer supplemental services by contracting with well-qualified, creative, and responsive providers.

***Accountability:*** The Partnership Board needs to be responsible stewards of public funds used to offer community recreation. It will routinely review the costs and benefits of each sponsored program and periodically assess the performance of the Board itself, the contracted providers, and the staff support provided by the Tompkins County Youth Services Department.

***Flexibility:*** Community needs and local governmental circumstances change continually and the Partnership Board needs to be able to respond flexibly to changes in ways that create opportunities out of potential crises.