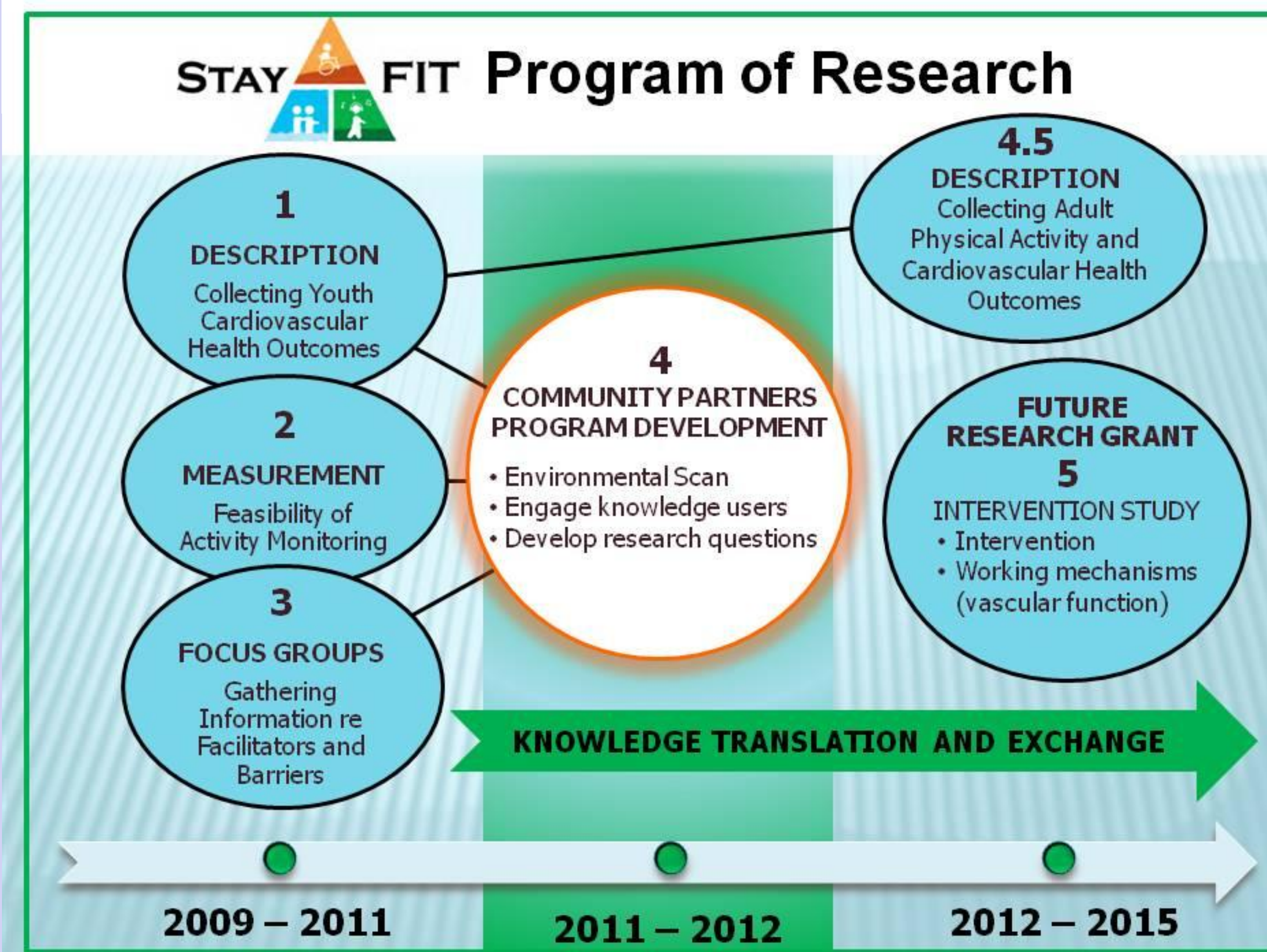


Stay-FIT: Planning a Community-Based Study to Promote Physical Activity in Youth with Cerebral Palsy

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BACKGROUND

- Youth with cerebral palsy (CP) have reduced physical activity (PA), leading to increased risk to develop secondary health problems.
- The Stay-FIT Study team recognizes the need for a comprehensive approach to active lifestyle to optimize and maintain PA.
- Stay-FIT is program of research to identify, understand, and ultimately reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in youth with CP by focusing on novel strategies to promote healthy active living. See figure.

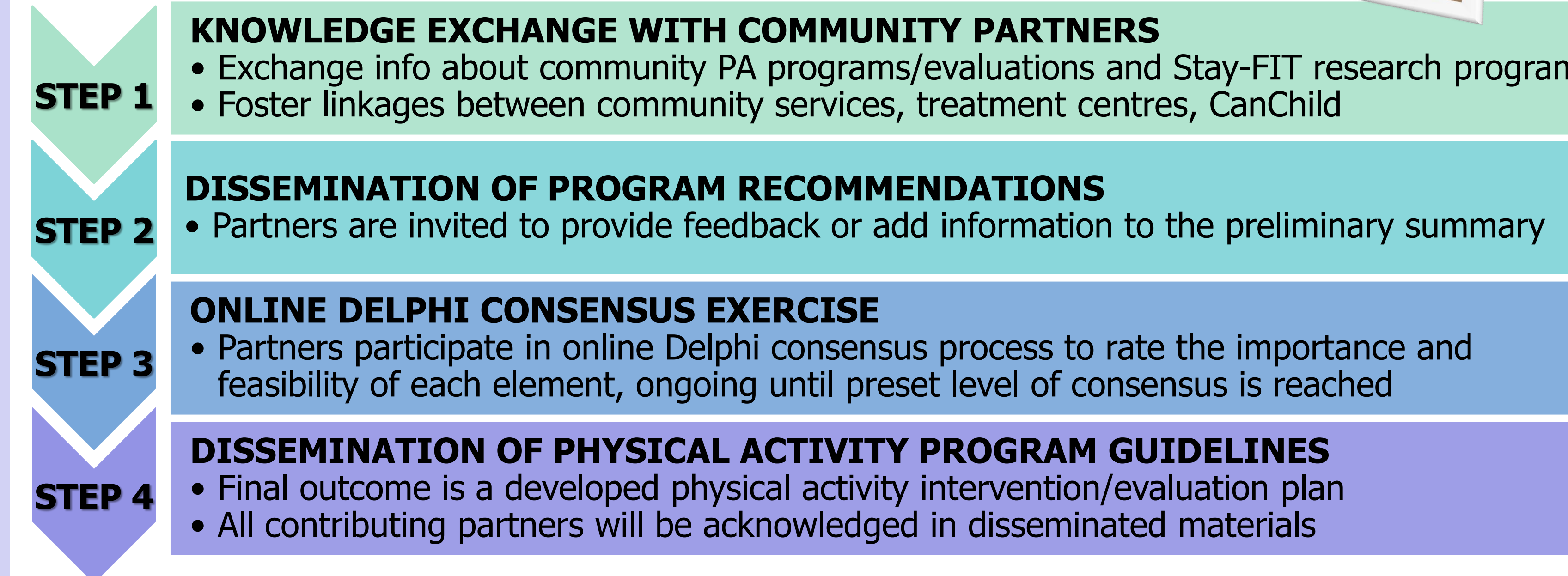


PURPOSE OF 4: COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- The purpose of this part of the program is to develop an innovative approach to promote active lifestyle and community participation, in collaboration with community partners throughout the research process.

METHODS

Six Collaborating Treatment Centres in Ontario and their Community Networks



RESULTS

- Participating OACRS centres hosted regional planning meetings between March and May 2012.
- Over 60 multi-sector partners from OACRS centres, city/municipal staff, researchers and community agencies participated in regional community planning meetings.
- Nearly 50 elements across the five themes emerged during discussions:
 - THEME 1:** Raising awareness of the options and opportunities
 - THEME 2:** Peaking interest and motivating youth to become and stay active
 - THEME 3:** Ensuring community programs are ready for youth with a disability
 - THEME 4:** Being fit, fitting in, and finding the best fit
 - THEME 5:** Exploring the layers of physical activity and how they interact

DISCUSSION

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

- Online Delphi consensus process ongoing among multi-sector partners.
- We welcome others who are interested in participating in the online consensus process. Please email galuppi@mcmaster.ca for details.

ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY LINKED RESEARCH

- Engaging community partners in the research process and knowledge translation activities establishes a strong clinical research network to evaluate the extent to which the proposed programs lead to change.
- Inviting input and incorporating knowledge-users' feedback at every step leads to a more tailored and relevant final product.
- Established by consensus of multi-sector partners, the guidelines for implementation and evaluation of a program to promote physical activity take a multi-level approach to provide strategies at the policy, community, school, family and youth level.

EMERGING IDEAS

- Youth need exposure to possibilities and opportunities to try activities
- Strategies to promote PA should focus on active lifestyle behaviours and on community participation rather than on prescribed exercise.
- In order to promote opportunities to be active, there is a need for centralized local information hubs.
- Overlapping or 'stepping stone' programs facilitate the launch from CTCs to community programs.
- While family education around the value and benefit of PA is important, promoting the fun and social aspects may be a more successful way to engage and sustain interest among youth.

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