

Marathon Family Health Team thrilled to celebrate Marathon's recognition as Ontario's Most Active Community

Marathon, ON, June 27, 2019 – From May 31st to June 16th the community of Marathon “stepped up” their daily physical activity as part of ParticipACTION’s Community Better Challenge, and has been recognized by ParticipACTION as *Ontario’s Most Active Community* in the challenge!

The Community Better Challenge, encouraged communities across Canada to increase their level of physical activity as a way of improving health and building stronger communities. By logging their minutes of physical activity, participating communities competed for monetary prizes and for the title of the “most active community” in their region or in Canada.

Community members, organizations and schools in Marathon and Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (a neighbouring Indigenous community) logged countless physical activity minutes by utilizing the various physical activity opportunities available locally. The Community Better Challenge locally was not only successful at highlighting the many ways in which individuals could choose to be active throughout the year, but it also provided participants with a sense of unity as they worked together to finish the challenge in one of the top ranks. It also gave participants the opportunity to think about ways in which they can purposefully make physical activity part of their day. Community member and challenge participant, Beverlee Burton, says “I love the idea of the community being brought together through physical activity. As individuals, we may pursue any number of interests in our spare time but, making choices that benefit our health is something that all of us strive for at some level”.

Marathon Family Health Team believes that the Community Better Challenge provided Marathon with an opportunity to change the story in northern Ontario communities, because as Dr. Sarah Newbery, local Family Physician states, “here in Northern Ontario, the population has a lower life expectancy than in the rest of the province. We are seen as generally less fit, more sedentary, and as making poorer health choices that lead to a higher burden of chronic illness. We hope Marathon’s recognition as *Ontario’s Most Active Community* in 2019 will help communities across northern Ontario to see themselves in a different way and pursue activity as part of improving health”.

Health promoter, Michèle Lajeunesse noted “Marathon Family Health Team celebrates this recognition for our population, and acknowledges all the communities across Canada that are supporting their citizens to be active and healthy”.

If you would like more information, please contact Michèle Lajeunesse at 807-229-3243, or email healthpromo@mfht.org. You can also visit the ParticipACTION website at <https://community.participaction.com/> for a list of the Community Better Challenge prize recipients.