

Inclusive Program Ideas for your Facility

Beginner programs are key

- If your facility already offers several programs such as youth beginner programs (e.g., Curling 101, Little Rocks, Hit Draw Tap) and learn-to-curl sessions, look into offering a larger range of times when these programs are offered or add more days that may line up with the availability of local community groups. Be considerate, and plan around any cultural festivals or religious holidays that can affect newcomer's attendance at these events. If it is financially feasible, offer some no- or low-cost learn-to-curl sessions, run by existing volunteers to help keep facility expenses at a minimum.
- It is important to try to incorporate a league or learn-to-curl program for adult newcomers, as well as youth curlers. For minority communities that are new to curling and do not yet understand the sport, these programs can break down the basics and demonstrate that there isn't just one type of curler. Consider visible diversity that reflects your local community when recruiting for volunteer positions to help with these leagues or events. Anyone can participate and have fun!
 - For detailed tips and recommendations, check out the [Curling 101 Manual](#).
 - According to the 2018 Curling Canada Facility Survey, 69.4% of facilities across Canada do not have a scheduled rookie or novice league for adult curlers with 0-to-3-years experience.

Offer a shorter season option

- Consider adding options that allow for a shorter season, such as bi-weekly nights and/or spring or summer leagues, that reduce the time commitment and cost. A newcomer to curling can still get the experience of the sport without having to fully commit to an entire season.

Try the buddy system

- A fear of the unknown largely contributes to people's reluctance to try curling, especially those who are not at all familiar with the sport. Make deliberate steps to ease this fear by introducing a new member process that makes them feel welcomed. One idea is to partner new community members with an existing member during learn-to-curl programs or special events that introduce the sport to new groups.

Create events tailored to recognizing new members

- Hosting a community night or bonspiel, that celebrates different minority groups involved in your facility, can encourage a welcoming atmosphere, offer awareness within the facility of the new groups, and create connections with existing members.
 - For example, many curling facilities across Canada have introduced LGBTQ2S+ friendly curling leagues. Check out the leagues and other bonspiels: https://gaycurl.ca/?fbclid=IwAR2FRMfIORiYWjXv8_kvaCzoYHlThbo7_IefFMiG5PKzdQ2oZa2YwtNhKig
- Funds raised from these events could be reinvested into future initiatives that attract new cultures and minorities to the game.

Options to get involved off the ice

- Encourage and recruit new members into leadership positions within your facility. Look to appoint these members to your facility board or membership recruitment committee to add new perspectives and educate. Listen to their opinions and bring them into the decision-making process. They may not be overly knowledgeable about curling itself, but they have outside perspective and ideas that can bring a new view to your facility.
- Open up opportunities to work or volunteer at the facility that extend beyond your members. Get the word out to minority communities of opportunities to work or volunteer for the facility. Use all forms of your facility's communication channels and relationships with local communities to spread the word about opportunities.
- Volunteers from diverse local communities can bring fresh ideas, help meet the needs of different communities, and spread the word that your facility is inclusive and open to everyone. Potential players and parents can look and see people in the facility who look like them, people with whom they can identify.

Beginning with small steps in the right direction, we at the community facility level and Curling Canada as a whole, can welcome a wider demographic into our house. For more resources, information, and the full Diversity & Inclusion Kit visit <https://www.curling.ca/diversity/>



This resource kit was made possible thanks to the World Curling Federation's Development Assistance Programme.