

## What can be claimed and what do I get?

Back in 2008, Swimming Canada's Director of Finance and Administration circulated a memo informing all clubs that the federal government had proposed instituting a "Children's Fitness Tax Credit" and he provided details on how swimmers' parents can claim a tax credit for swim fees paid in the preceding calendar year.

The Government of Canada proposes to allow, starting in 2007, a non-refundable tax credit on eligible amounts of up to \$500 paid by parents to register a child in an eligible program of physical activity.

**The following is information from Canada Revenue Agency, and outlines the procedure for clubs to issue tax receipts:**

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/fitness/>

**Swim Club and swimmers' parents should be aware of the following:**

**\*\*REMEMBER to ask for a receipt**

Starting in 2007, parents should receive, or ask for, a receipt from organizations providing eligible programs of physical activity in which their child is enrolled. The organizations will determine the part of the fee that qualifies for the tax credit.

The parents will need to keep the receipts issued by the organizations that deliver the programs. They will not need to submit receipts when filing their tax return, but must keep them in case the CRA asks for them when verifying the claim. Receipts should be kept for six years.

If you have any questions, please contact the Provincial Office by email or phone.

# **Children's Fitness Tax Credit**

## **Information for organizations providing prescribed programs of physical activity**

Although the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) administers the children's fitness tax credit, organizations are in the best position to determine if the programs they offer qualify as prescribed programs of physical activity for the purposes of the credit. This page contains information that will help you determine whether the programs you offer meet the requirements for the tax credit, and will also help you calculate the amount of eligible fitness expenses.

### **Note**

A receipt does not guarantee the eligibility of a program.

### **Prescribed programs of physical activity**

An eligible fitness expense must be for the cost of registration or membership of an eligible child in a prescribed program of physical activity. Generally, such a program must:

- be ongoing (either a minimum of eight weeks long or, for children's camps, five consecutive days long);
- be supervised;
- be suitable for children; and
- include a significant amount of **physical activity** that contributes to cardio-respiratory endurance, plus one or more of: muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, or balance.

Under the *Income Tax Regulations*, physical activity includes:

- horseback riding; and
- **if the child is eligible for the disability tax credit**, activities that result in movement and in an observable expenditure of energy in a recreational context.

If a child rides on, or in, a motorized vehicle as an essential part of an activity, that activity does not qualify as a physical activity for the children's fitness tax credit.

The [Children's Fitness Tax Credit Eligibility Checklist](#) contains additional information about the types of activities that constitute "physical activity" for purposes of the credit. Reviewing this information and answering the questions in the checklist will help you determine whether a particular program qualifies for the credit.

### **Children's Fitness Tax Credit Eligibility Checklist**

Answering the questions below will help you determine whether or not a program will qualify for purposes of the children's fitness tax credit.

#### **Note:**

Generally, to qualify as physical activity for the children's fitness tax credit, activities must contribute to cardio-respiratory endurance, plus one or more of: muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, or balance. The [Public Health Agency of Canada's Physical Activity Guides for children and youth](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/index.html) ([http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child\\_youth/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/index.html)) list some of the activities that contribute to cardio-respiratory endurance.

In addition to obviously strenuous games like hockey or soccer, activities such as golf lessons, horse-back riding, sailing and bowling (as well as others that require a similar level of physical activity) are considered to be eligible for the credit.

**For a child who is eligible for the disability tax credit**, activities that result in movement and in an observable use of energy in a recreational context qualify as physical activity.

The following activities **do not** qualify:

- activities where riding in, or on, a motorized vehicle is an essential part of the activity
- self-directed (unsupervised) activities
- activities that are part of a regular school program\*.

\*Fees charged for programs that are part of a school's curriculum (including regular school physical education programming and sports-academics programs, where students earn credits toward their diploma for intensively participating in the practice of a particular sport) **do not qualify** for the credit. However, fees charged for extra-curricular programs that take place in a school are eligible.

1. Is the program suitable for children? Yes / No

**Note:** The program should be physically safe, not place children at undue risk, and comply with safety regulations.

2. Does the program operate for a minimum of eight consecutive weeks **or** over a period of at least five consecutive days? Yes / No

3. If your program or membership operates for a minimum of eight consecutive weeks, answer Question A, B, or C below, whichever applies. If your program operates for at least five consecutive days, answer Question D below.

A) If the program operates weekly with one or more sessions per week, do about **90% or more** of the activities in the program include a significant amount of physical activity? Yes / No

B) If the program is offered to children by a club, association or similar organization in circumstances where the child can select from among various activities, do **more than 50%** of the activities require a significant amount of physical activity, **or** is **more than 50%** of the program time spent on physical activities? Yes / No

C) If the organization offers a membership, do **more than 50% of the activities** offered to children by the organization include a significant amount of physical activity? Yes / No

D) Do **more than 50% of the daily activities** in the program include a significant amount of physical activity? Yes / No

4. Is a supervisor present and sufficiently engaged to encourage active participation by the children? Yes / No

**Note:** Explicit instruction or coaching is not needed to meet this requirement.

**If you answered yes to all of the above questions,** the program or membership qualifies as a prescribed program of physical activity. A receipt should be issued for the amount of eligible fees paid for the child's registration or membership in the program, as long as the child is under 16 years of age, or under 18 years of age and eligible for the disability tax credit, at the beginning of the year in which the fees are paid.

**If you answered yes to questions 1, 2, and 4 above,** but could not answer yes to questions under 3C) or D) above because the 50% tests were not met, the program or membership still qualifies as a prescribed program of physical activity. However, only a prorated part of the amount paid for the child's registration or membership in the program will be eligible for the credit.

### **Calculating the amount of eligible fitness expenses**

To be eligible for the children's fitness tax credit, expenses must be for a child who, at the beginning of the year in which the expenses are paid, is under 16, or is under 18 and is eligible for the disability tax credit. The expenses must be for the cost of the child's registration or membership in a prescribed program of physical activity.

## Note

It is not an organization's responsibility to determine whether a child is eligible for the disability tax credit. If a parent tells an organization that a child is eligible for the disability tax credit, this should be accepted. In determining the eligible fees for such a child, an organization needs to recognize that physical activity includes activities that result in movement and in an observable expenditure of energy in a recreational context.

**Registration and membership fees** include the costs of administration, instruction, and the rental of facilities. If part of the fees paid by parents is for accommodation, travel, food, or beverages (e.g., room and board at a fitness camp), then this part must be subtracted from the total registration and membership fee paid to the organization.

## Example

You operate an away-from-home hockey camp for children. Parents pay an all-inclusive registration fee of \$700 for the one-week camp. The camp provides hockey pucks and jerseys, which are shared during the camp but kept by the organization at week's end. Children must bring all other necessary equipment with them and parents are responsible for transporting the children to and from the camp. The \$700 fee includes \$200 for accommodation and \$150 for meals.

The part of the fee that is eligible for the children's fitness tax credit is \$350 (\$700 - \$200 - \$150).

## Is the cost of uniforms eligible for the children's fitness tax credit?

Part of a registration or membership fee may be for the cost of equipment or uniforms (e.g., hats, shirts, or shorts) that are provided for participants to use in the program. At the end of the program, the equipment or the uniforms normally have little or no resale value, in which case the part of the registration or membership fee for their cost is included in the eligible fees for this credit.

In other situations, in addition to paying registration or membership fees, parents will buy uniforms or equipment from third-party suppliers or through the organization offering the program. In these situations, the purchase price for the uniforms or equipment is not an eligible fitness expense.

## Mixed-use facilities or programs

Providing that all other requirements are met (i.e., program is ongoing, supervised, and suitable for children as described under "Prescribed programs of physical activity" above), the **full cost of a child's membership** in an organization (including a club, association, or similar organization) will be eligible for the credit if **more than 50%** of the activities offered to children by the organization include a significant amount of physical activity.

If the 50% test is not met, a receipt can be issued for a **prorated amount**, which will represent the percentage of activities offered to children by the organization that include a significant amount of physical activity.

## Note

If your organization provides family memberships, the part of the cost that is for the child's participation in a prescribed program of physical activity may be eligible for the tax credit. In circumstances where the participant in the program can select from among various activities, the **full cost of a child's registration in a program** offered by a club, association, or similar organization will be eligible for the credit if (in addition to being ongoing, supervised, and suitable for children):

- **more than 50% of the activities** offered to children include a significant amount of physical activity; **or**
- **more than 50% of the available program time** is devoted to activities that include a significant amount of physical activity.

If neither of these 50% tests is met, a receipt can be issued for a **prorated amount**, which will represent the percentage of activities offered to children by the organization that include a

significant amount of physical activity, **or** the percentage of program time that is devoted to such activities.

### **Example 1 – Membership**

A child's annual membership at a local health club entitles the child to participate in various activities. If more than 50% of these activities include a significant amount of physical activity, a receipt can be issued for the membership fee. If this 50% test is not met, a receipt can be issued for a prorated amount, based on the percentage of the activities offered to children that include a significant amount of physical activity.

### **Example 2 – Program registration**

Registration in a program offered by a local boys and girls club entitles a child to participate in a wide range of activities, some of which include a significant amount of physical activity (e.g., biking club, weekend hip hop dances, open swim or gym, ski club) and some of which do not (e.g., career planning, board games, reading club). A receipt for the full amount of the program registration cost can be issued if more than 50% of the available activities include a significant amount of physical activity, **or** if more than half of the club's scheduled time (i.e., total program hours) is devoted to activities that include a significant amount of physical activity.

If neither of these 50% tests is met, a receipt can be issued for a prorated amount. That amount can be based on either the percentage of the activities offered to children by the organization that include a significant amount of physical activity, **or** on the percentage of the time spent on activities that include a significant amount of physical activity. For example, if 20% of the activities that are offered include a significant amount of physical activity, but 30% of the available program time is devoted to these activities, a receipt can be issued for 30% of the program registration cost.

### **Issuing receipts**

You should issue a receipt for income tax purposes representing the amount of eligible fitness expenses **paid in the calendar year**. A receipt for amounts paid in 2007 should be issued for 2007 even if the activity takes place in 2008. A receipt should contain the following information:

- organization's name and address
- name of the eligible program or activity
- amount received, date received, amount that is eligible for the children's fitness tax credit (eligible fees)
- full name of the payer
- full name of the child, and the child's year of birth
- authorized signature

### **Note**

An authorized signature is not required for electronically generated receipts.