

COMMUNITY WALKING PROGRAM

Belonging Together/Programs

FOCUS	☒ Internal ☒ External
VOLUNTEER BASE	☒ General corps membership ☒ External volunteers ☐ Youth ☐ Music sections ☐ Women's ministries ☒ Seniors' ministries ☐ Social mission
TARGET POPULATION	☒ Seniors ☐ Youth ☒ People with disabilities ☐ Caregivers ☐ New Canadians ☐ Social mission ☐ Parents of babies and toddlers

Program description:

A community-based fitness and fellowship program that encourages participants to improve their physical health while strengthening their spiritual well-being. Designed to be accessible for all ages and fitness levels, this program offers low-impact walking workouts paired with short devotionals to nurture both body and spirit.

Each session begins with a brief devotional reflection, followed by a 30-minute guided walking exercise featuring uplifting music and a welcoming, supportive environment. Participants are invited to stay afterward for optional fellowship and refreshments, providing further opportunities for community connection.

This program can serve as a valuable outreach tool, drawing individuals from the broader community who may be seeking a healthy, encouraging space but are not yet connected to a church. There is no cost to attend, although voluntary donations are welcome to support program expenses.

What are the intended program outcomes?

Goals include:

- Encourage physical fitness in a safe, supportive environment.
- Provide an accessible, low-impact exercise option suitable for all abilities.
- Foster a sense of community and connection among participants.
- Introduce participants to Christian faith through devotionals and conversation.
- Offer a no-cost alternative to commercial fitness programs, making wellness available to all.



How will these outcomes be evaluated?

- Track participation rates to measure engagement.
- Collect informal feedback and participant testimonials.
- Foster ongoing community among participants and encourage them to bring friends.
- Expand offerings as the program grows (e.g., additional sessions, new workout formats).

What procedures are required to set up this program?

Secure a venue: Ensure a safe, accessible space for walking activities.

Set a schedule: Launch with two to three sessions weekly and adjust based on demand.

Gather materials: Select appropriate workout resources and devotional content.

Promote widely: Use church and community networks to spread the word.

Launch and evaluate: Begin small, monitor participation and adapt based on feedback.

What procedure is required to operate this program?

Session breakdown:

Devotional reflection (5 minutes): A short, encouraging devotional reading to inspire participants.

Walking workout (30 minutes): Follow-along video or facilitator-led movement featuring warm-up, walking and cool-down exercises.

Fellowship and refreshments (optional): Informal social time following the workout for deeper relationship building.

Schedule recommendations:

- Begin with one to two sessions per week (e.g., Monday and Friday mornings).
- Consider expanding to evening sessions based on participant interest.
- Offer year-round programming for consistency and community growth.

Workout video suggestions:

Each ministry unit may choose the resources that best suit their group. Recommended options include:

- Leslie Sansone's *Walk at Home* Series (e.g., *Walk the Walk*, *A Closer Walk*, *Walking Down Your Blood Sugar*).
- Faith-based walking workouts featuring Christian music and encouragement.
- General low-impact cardio videos for seniors or beginners.
- Volunteer-led sessions guiding basic walking movements without video.

Each session should include a warm-up, moderate walking and a cool-down phase.

Are there financial costs attached to providing this program?

Minimal equipment or setup costs:

- If you already have a TV/DVD player, speakers, and space at the corps, there is no additional cost.
- If needed, there could be a cost to purchase a DVD player, screen or basic audio equipment.

Workout videos:

- Some walking workout videos (like Leslie Sansone's older DVDs) are low-cost (often under \$20 each).
- Free YouTube-based resources are available if a reliable internet connection is present, reducing this cost to zero.

Devotional materials:

- Devotional books or printed devotionals (minor printing costs if creating handouts).

Venue rental:

- If using your own corps facilities, no cost.
- If renting community space, there could be a cost (varies by location).

Refreshments (optional):

- Light refreshments for fellowship time (coffee, tea, snacks) if you choose to offer them. These can be covered by donations or a small hospitality budget.

Promotional materials:

- Printing costs for posters, flyers or bulletin inserts.
- Social media promotion is generally free if handled through existing corps channels.

What physical resources will I require?

A large indoor space with a screen (TV/DVD player) or area for guided movement.
Walking workout videos or a facilitator to lead sessions.

Comfortable chairs for participants who may need rest breaks.
Devotional materials or scripture reflections.
Donation box (optional).

Would any additional training be necessary for volunteers with this program?

Vulnerable sector screening: Required if participants include seniors, vulnerable adults, or children.

Abuse prevention training: Recommended for all volunteers to ensure safe ministry practices and adherence to The Salvation Army's safeguarding policies.

First aid/CPR training (optional but recommended): At least one volunteer or staff member with basic First Aid and CPR training is encouraged, given the physical activity involved.

Physical activity awareness (basic orientation): Volunteers should be aware of basic safety tips for leading light physical activities (e.g., encouraging participants to go at their own pace, promoting hydration, recognizing signs of physical distress).

For more information:

For additional guidance, resources or support in planning your program, please contact the community mission department at territorial headquarters for sample materials, best practices and consultation on outreach strategy.