



# Revitalized neighbourhood playgrounds and social gathering spaces as catalysts for youth resilience.

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Sudbury & District

Health Unit

Service de  
santé publique



Laurentian University  
Université **Laurentienne**

# Playgrounds, public health, and research (oh my!)

- Public health promotion of playgrounds and neighbourhood parks for physical activity (PA)
- Traditional research focus
  - MVPA/Steps
  - Sedentary time
  - Injury prevention

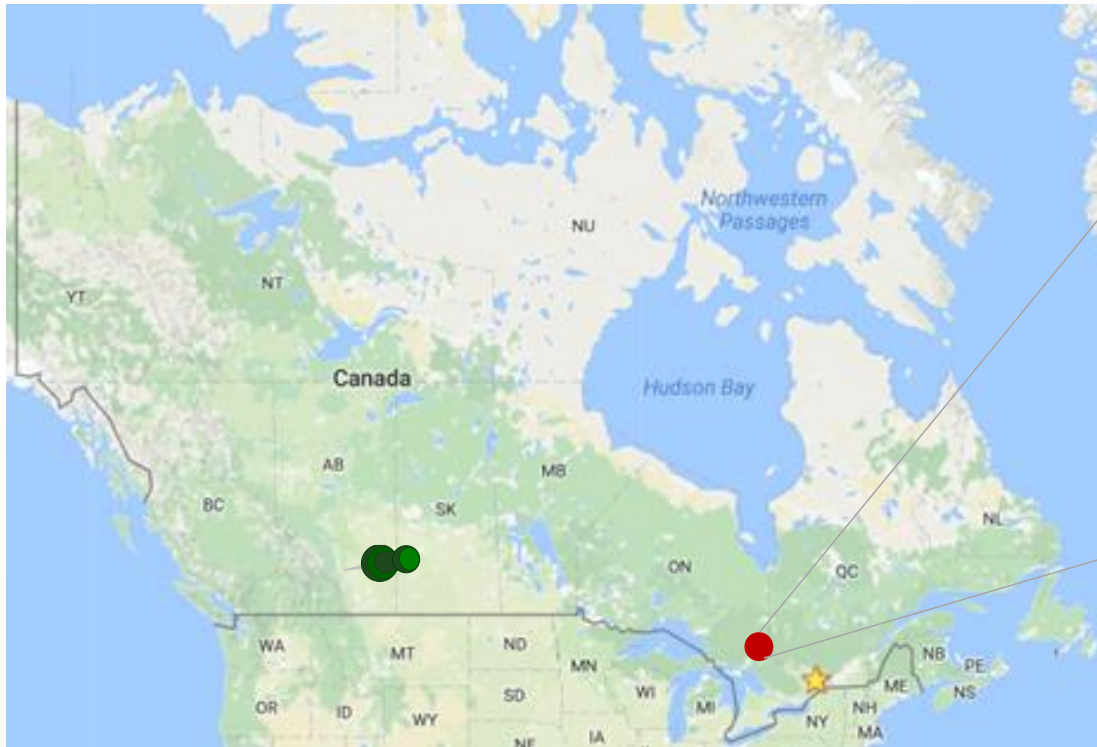


*Photo: [www.PlayGreaterSudbury.ca](http://www.PlayGreaterSudbury.ca)*



# From advocacy to research

- Ridgecrest Playground is 1 of 5 fully accessible playgrounds in Greater Sudbury.



*Photo: Courtesy of Nicole Yantzi, 2014*

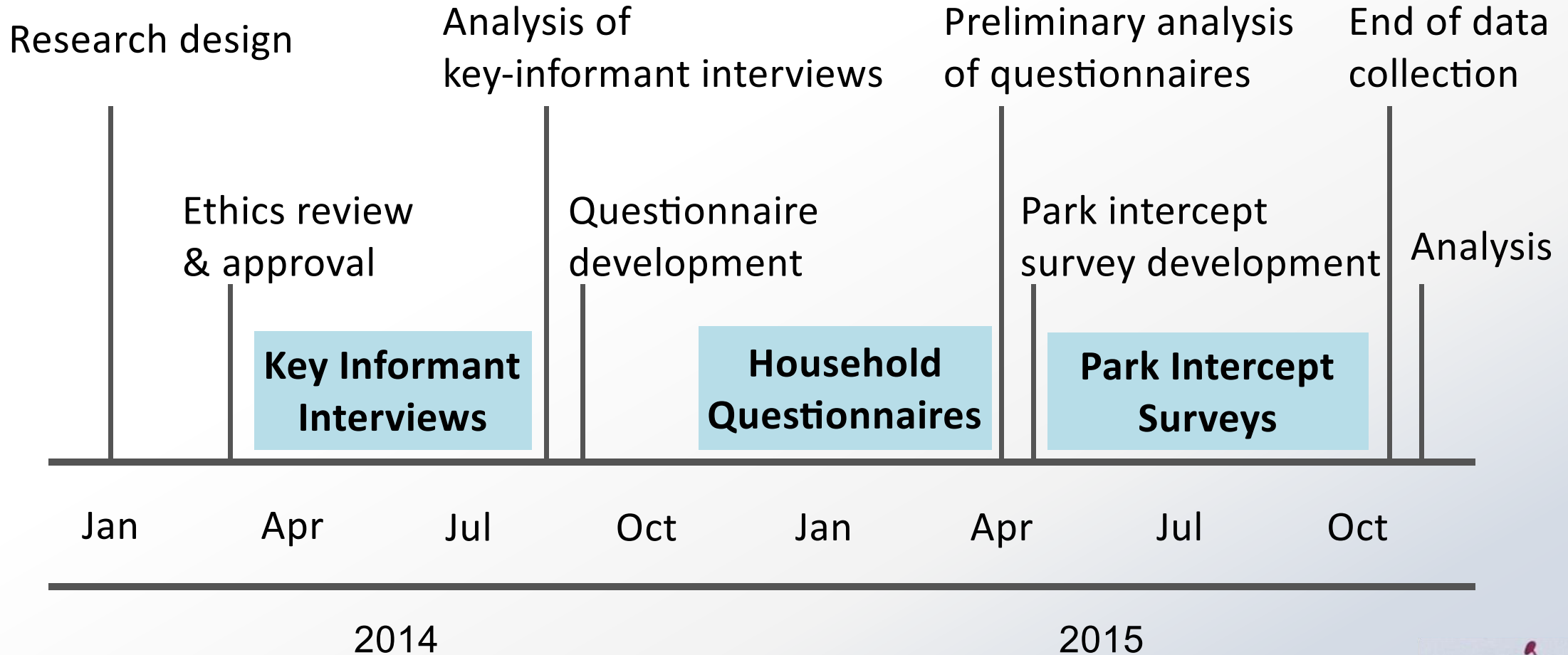


# Purpose

- Objective: Examine the impact of a new accessible playground on the wellbeing of youth and families.
- Areas of focus included:
  - Perceptions of the park's impact on residents' health (physical, mental and social); and
  - Community connectedness and neighbourhood cohesion.



# Methods



# Recruitment

- Household questionnaires
  - Adult/Youth; FR/EN
  - 1321 Households
  - 12% response rate
- Park intercept surveys
  - Mid-week/weekend
  - a.m./p.m

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**Letter of Information and Questionnaire for Youth**

Our names are Nicole Yantzi, Nastassia McNair and Melanie hood. We are part of a group that is doing a project about the Park in your neighbourhood. Our group is trying to find out what you think about the changes at Ridgcrest playground. To help you decide if you want to be part of this research project, here is some more information.

**Title of the Project:** Examining Residents' View Points of the Impacts of Ridgcrest Playground on their Physical, Social and Psychological Health. **Phase II** Residential questionnaires to examine personal health and community impacts of Ridgcrest Playground, an inclusion neighbourhood park.

**What this title means is:** We want to know how you feel about the changes at Ridgcrest Playground.

**We are doing this project to find out if the park makes people feel included in their neighbourhood.** We want to find out how much people use the playground, how much they enjoy playing there and the good things about using the playground. We want to find out what you like most about the changes in the park and what you do not like about it. This project is good because it may help people of all abilities and ages have fun in their neighbourhood parks. By answering these questions you will help us find out if everyone can play together. It will also tell us if more people have been at the park after the changes and if you are having more fun. You can also tell us if you have met any new friends, and feel like you belong at the playground.

**If you decide to join this project** it is important that you understand your rights and what you will be asked to do. By filling out the questionnaire you are telling us that you understand the project and your role in it. Before you answer any questions on the questionnaire, you need permission from your parent or caregiver to answer them.

Once you and your parent/ caregiver have read this letter and agree to take part in the research then you are ready to answer the questions. Your version of the questionnaire is on yellow paper or you can get the web link for the online version from your parent/caregiver. Answer these questions honestly and the best you can. There are no right or wrong answers. You can ask an adult for help with any questions you do not understand. Answering the questionnaire will take about 20 minutes.

When you finish answering the questions you and your parent/ caregiver can place the questionnaires in the envelope. Once you have done this, your caregiver can send the envelope back to the research team.

**There are good things and not so good things about this project.** It is very good that you can help us understand what you like doing at Ridgcrest Playground and the things that you do not like. It is also good that you can help us to understand anything that is hard or causes problems for you when you are at the playground. By telling us these good and bad things we can try to fix them so all children can have fun and can do all the same activities.

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**pour les jeunes ou enfants**  
re. Lisez la lettre de renseignements et  
plir le questionnaire. Vous devez être  
emplissant le questionnaire, vous nous  
(papier jaune) et que vous ainsi que  
herche.

rc Ridgcrest

sez à la section C à la page 5)

1 fois par mois    moins d'une fois par mois

les changements ont été effectués


restez-vous en général?

Plus de 4 heures

ne note entre 1 et 10 où 1  
up

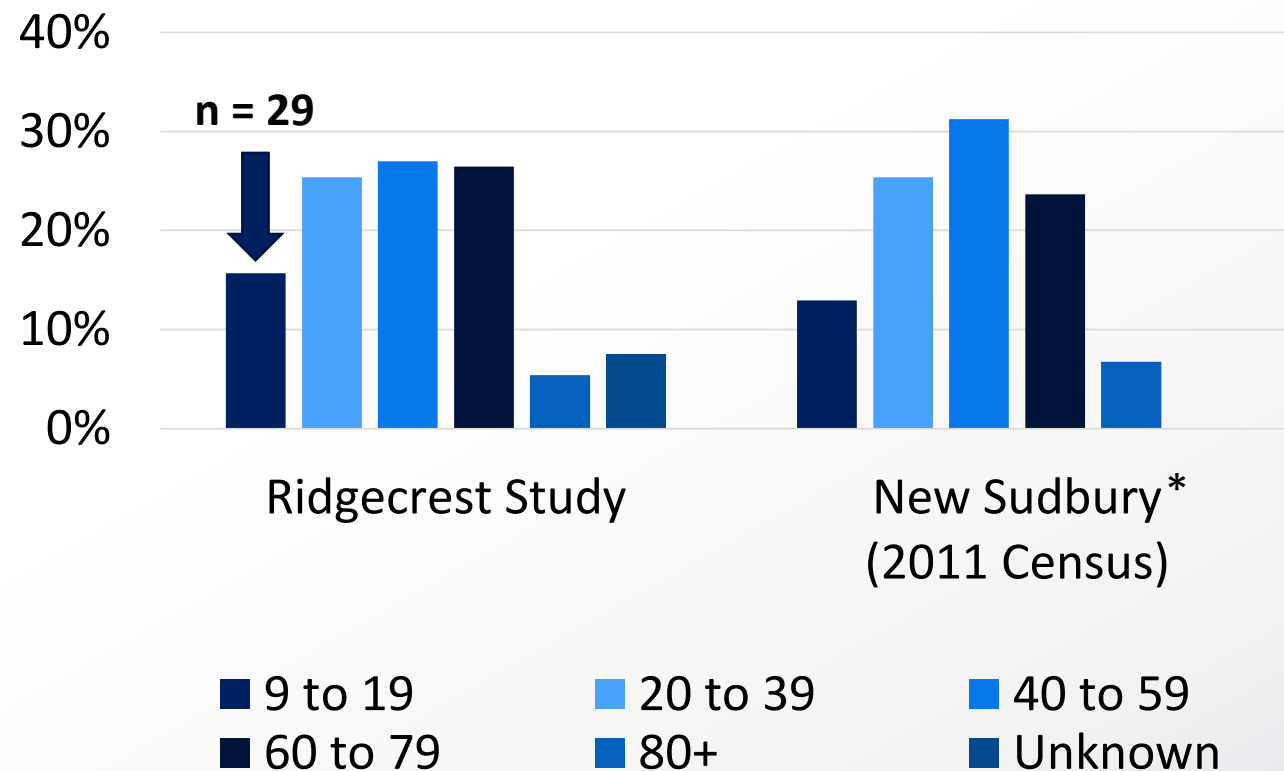
7 8 9 10

ours



# Participants

## Age Distributions



- Youth age categories
  - 62% 9 to 14 years
  - 28% 15 to 19 years

*\*Statistics Canada, % of total aged 10+; Ridgecrest Study n=199*



# Visiting Ridgcrest

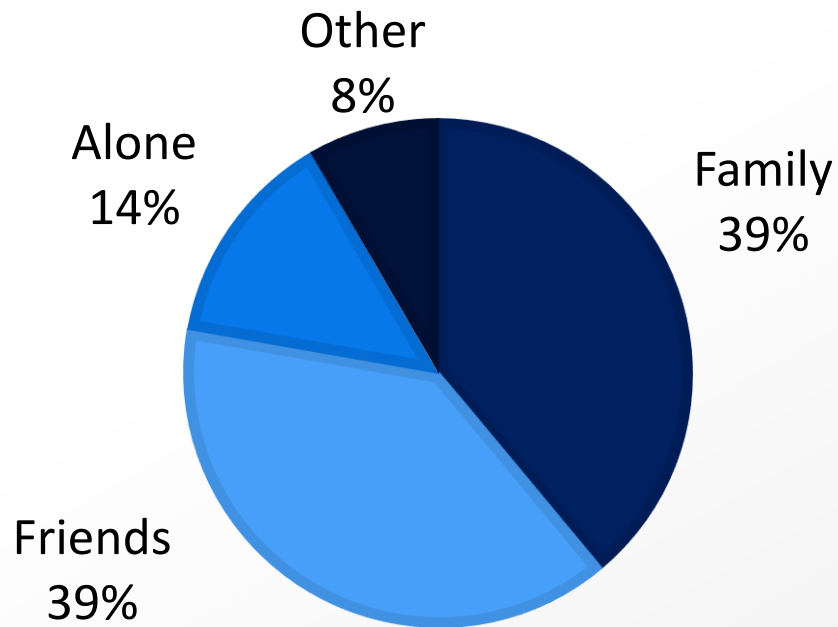
# Youth

- 62% visit at least once a week
- 75% stay for up to 2 hours
- 59% visit more since 2008
- Rating: 8/10



# Visiting Ridgecrest con't

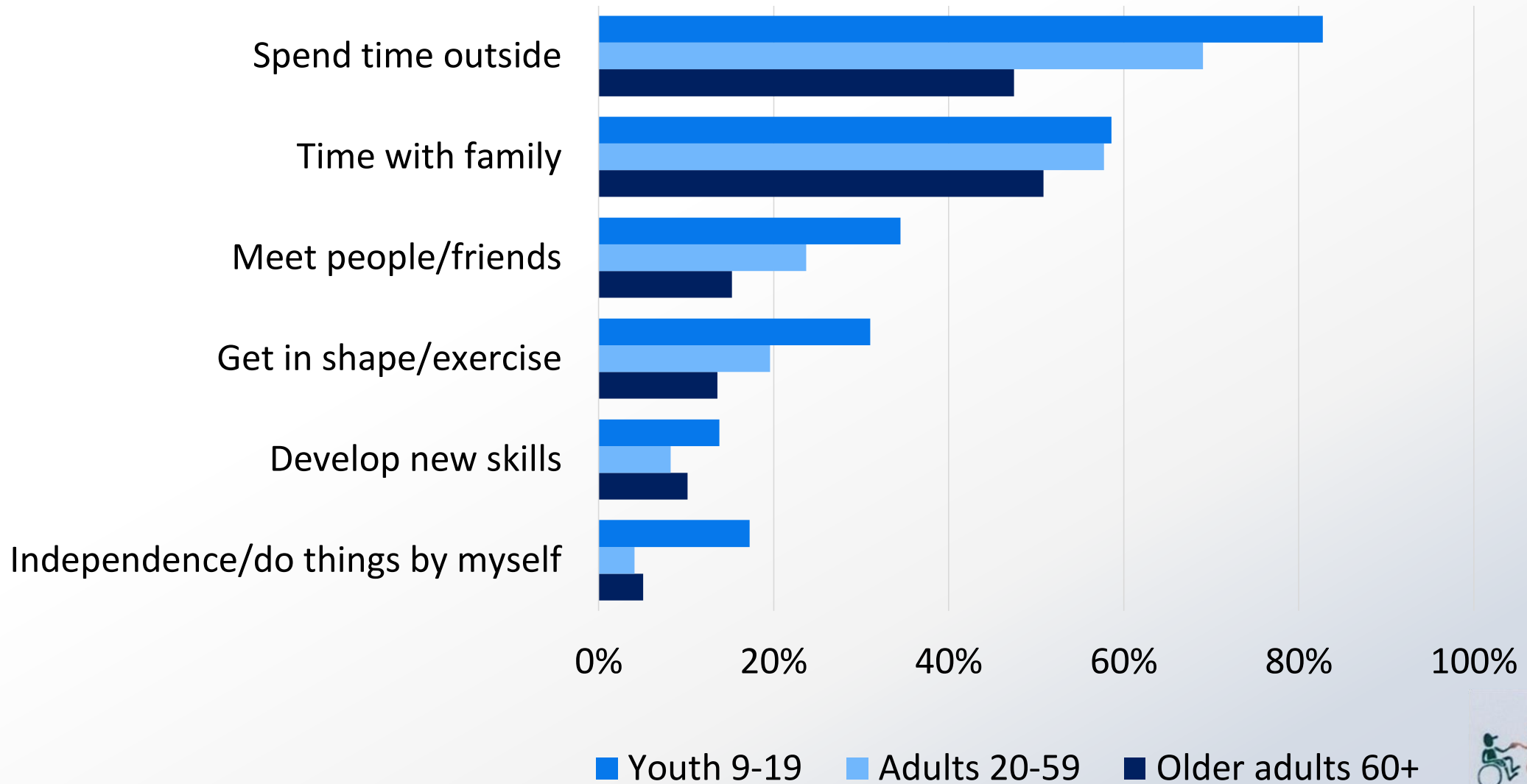
- Visit with



- “Hangout with friends, playing grounder right now.”
- “[With my friends], I played tag, grounder, soccer, playing in the water park.”



# Reasons for visiting Ridgecrest

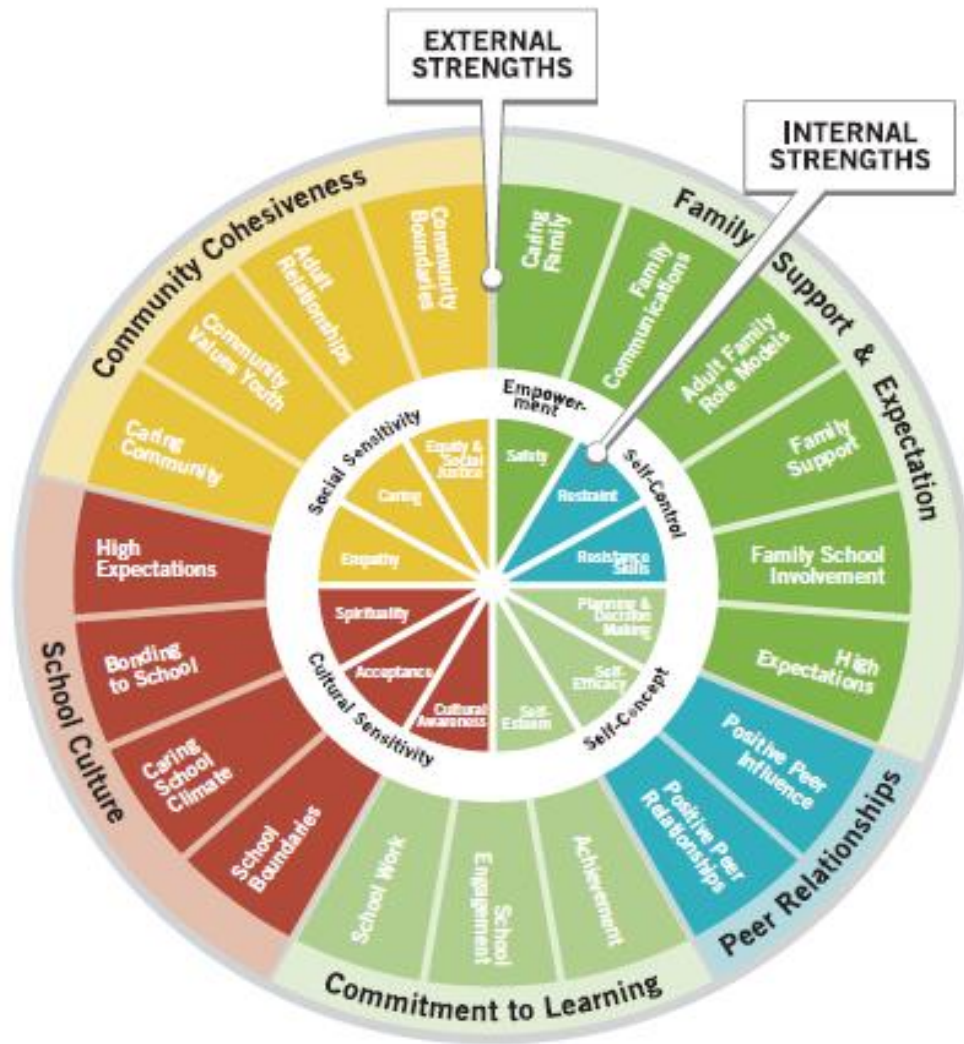


# Ridgecrest benefits

Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth spending time with parents and grandparents</li><li>• Families playing together</li><li>• Healthy role modelling (youth ↔ adults)</li></ul>
Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth engage in play and outdoor activities with friends</li><li>• Peer learning</li></ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trust other adults and youth at the playground</li><li>• Interact and socialise with people they know</li><li>• Meet new friends</li><li>• Adults get to know youth in their community</li></ul>



# Building assets



Caring family • Family support  
Family communications  
Adult family role models

Neighbourhood boundaries  
Adult relationships  
Caring community • Values youth

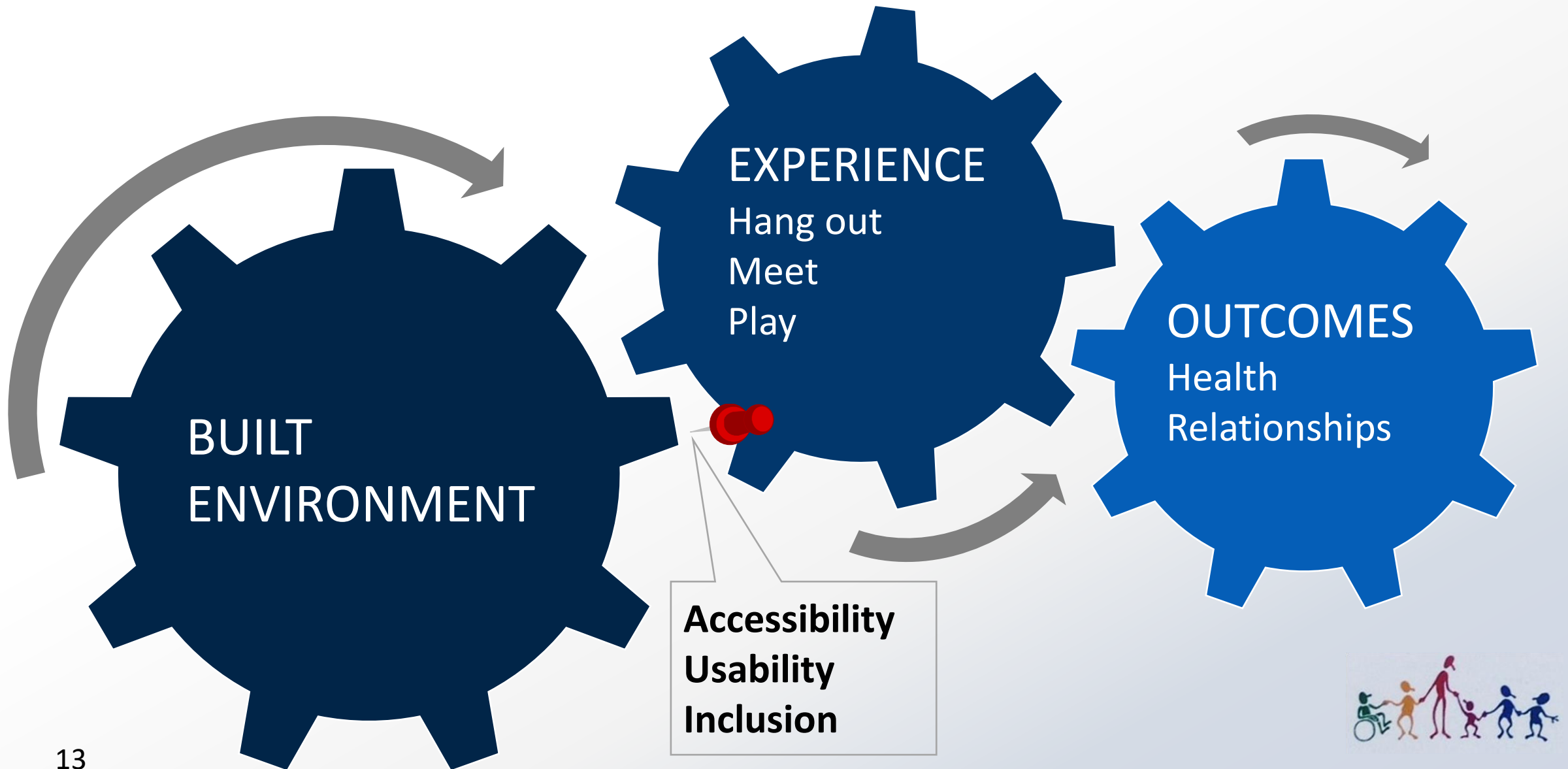
Peer relationships  
Positive peer influence

Safety

Acceptance

Self-esteem • Self-efficacy

# Can playgrounds contribute to resiliency?



# Conclusions

- Ridgecrest Playground offers opportunities for development, beyond physical health.
- Youth described the playground as a community asset that is inclusive, safe, and welcoming.
- Inclusive and accessible playgrounds may promote the development of youth resilience.



# Acknowledgements

- Louise Picard Public Health Research Grant
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- SDHU Project Advisory Committee



# References

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# Limitations

- Comparison
  - Accessible vs. Not/partially accessible
  - Pre-post
- Self-report
  - Social desirability bias
- Sample sizes

