

York Physical Literacy Summit preaches movement as education



By Jake Courtepatte

With all the electronic distractions for the youth of today, York Region is hoping to remind this generation to stay active. The third annual York Physical Literacy Summit, put on by Activate Aurora and titled 'Creating Physically Literate Children and Youth', brought teachers, coaches, and parents from across the district to King's Seneca College campus on Friday for a day of active education.

Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe said it was 'so important to get our kids active, and moving.'

'Not only are we looking to get them moving, but teach them how and why it's so important to stay active,' said Dawe. 'Through parents, through the school, kids should have the opportunity to learn how to stay active.'

The single-day summit had keynote speakers from across the physical literacy landscape, including Dean Kriellaars, a professor at the University of Manitoba and described as the 'guru of physical literacy.'

Dawe praised Kriellaars concept of 'free-range children', and bringing back the freedom that children of the past had to roam.

'What an excellent concept,' said Dawe. 'We've reduced the amount of space that kids have dramatically in the last number of years, and though I'm probably preaching to the choir, we need to bring that space back.'

Kriellaars said that although the concept of physical literacy has a long way to go in Canada, Ontario is a leader in that \$30-million has been budgeted for the project, the first province to do so. York Region was one of the first to receive funding.

He said that having the support of the region's mayors, Mr. Dawe and King Mayor Steve Pellegrini in attendance, is 'vital' to keep the project moving.

'Having the support of local politicians is how we keep making changes in the community,' said Kriellaars.

The Summit was rescheduled from an October 2017 date, when it was cancelled due to a strike at Seneca.