



PLOGGING

AN ACTIVITY GUIDE

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**ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY, CAPE BRETON
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Photo Credit: Shannon Harvey

WHAT IS PLOGGING?

01

Plogging, a combination of running and picking up trash, is a practical activity that contributes to personal and planetary care. The word is a portmanteau of picking up litter + jogging, but the activity extends to walking, running, biking and other forms of recreation!

KEY BENEFITS

Physical + Mental Health

Community Cohesion

Promoting Environmental Awareness

Healthy + Clean Public Spaces



HOW TO PLOG

02

There is no one “correct” way to plog. Typically, individuals combine some form of movement with picking up litter on a route. Plogging is often an activity shared by families or community members, addressing the immediate problem of litter but also serving as a mechanism for intergenerational connection.

THINGS TO BRING ON A PLOG:



- Bags for litter
- Running shoes or other comfortable footwear
- Gloves and/or litter pickers
- Sun protection
- Water
- Friends and family!

Plogging with a bag and litter picker
Source: Research Participant

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 03

Plogging and related activities are best understood within the broader context of civil leisure and physical activity. Plogging can help participants adapt to bodily changes as we age, and help individuals develop the sensory skills to scan their environments



Litter on side of the road
Source: Research Participant

SOME KEY MOVEMENTS:

Running / Walking

Bending and Stretching

Lifting Items

Carrying loads of litter

Using your visual acuity

Balance

“It’s a good workout. It’s not just me walking down the road; it’s bending, stretching, stopping and using my visual acuity”

– Research participant (Nova Scotia)

LEVELS OF INTENSITY

Less Intense

Picking up litter can be done while standing in place. Plogging can begin with a light walk around your neighbourhood!

Using a cart can also reduce the physical load of litter.

More Intense

Plogging in its original form involved jogging & running while picking up litter. You can run continuously or run intervals (run for a distance, stop to pick up litter, repeat).



*Stopping for litter
Source: Research Participant*

Moderately Intense

Walks can be done following local trails or covering longer distances.

Using equipment like a picker can help work out one's forearms, and squatting/stooping to grab items improve mobility.



Stopping for litter
Source: Research Participant

BENEFITS OF PLOGGING



05

Beyond the physical benefit, the people we interviewed spoke about enhanced mental well-being from being outside, reducing litter in their communities, and positive feelings of doing something for nature. When done in groups, plogging can bridge intergenerational gaps and foster community.

BENEFITS FOUND FROM RESEARCH

Strong sense of purpose

Increased civic engagement

Environmental Stewardship

Forming Communities

TESTIMONIALS

06

“Some very old, some very young. We meet regularly and now more and more people are aware about [plogging].”

– *On intergenerational connection, Nova Scotia plogger*

“Garbage is a result of human impact on places. And so if I’m a human going through the same places, I feel like I’m [...] cleaning up after my own people.”

– *On environmental stewardship, Ontario hiker*

“Now that [others] know I’ll do it, [people are] a little more prone to picking it up themselves.”

– *On encouraging others, Nova Scotia Resident*

“[The goal] is improve the morale of the city. Just get people to do it just for doing it. And so it’s really not about litter eradication, it’s about morale improvement.”

– *On boosting morale, Nova Scotia plogger*

“When I was [plogging]...it was to instill good citizenship in young people, and hope it’s something that [young people] carry on.

Just philosophy of life, right?

Leave things better than you found them.”

– *On encouraging younger generations, New Brunswick resident*



Bags after a successful cleanup
Source: Research Participant

RESOURCES



Thank you to our research participants and group who supported this research across Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick!

If you are interested in getting involved in plogging and litter clean ups, the following list of resources might be a good place to start...

(Note: inclusion in this booklet does not mean endorsement)

ONTARIO

Don't Mess with the Don
www.facebook.com/dontmesswiththedon
www.dontmesswiththedon.ca/contact-us

CBU



NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton Trails Coalition

info@frederictontrailscoalition.com
www.facebook.com/FrederictonTrailsCoalition
www.frederictontrailscoalition.com

City of Fredericton

Recreation, Culture & Community Department
(506) 460-2020
recreation@fredericton.ca

NOVA SCOTIA

The Great Nova Scotia Pick Me Up

www.nsadoptahighway.ca



Scotian Shores

www.scotianshores.com

The Ditch Divers

www.facebook.com/TheDitchDivers/

Nova Scotia ONE Garbage Bag Challenge

www.facebook.com/groups/693866384753094/

ACAP Cape Breton

www.acapcb.ns.ca

Blue Nose Marathon – Ploggers

bluenosemarathon.com

**Cape Breton Regional Municipality –
NS Clean Up Litter Day**

www.cbrm.ns.ca

Cape Breton Environmental Association

www.facebook.com/CBenvironmental

Divert NS

<https://divertns.ca/litter>

**Luke MacDonald – World Litter
Run & Halifax Charity Plogging**

[Halifax's Charity Plogging](#)

**CBRM Beautification &
Environmental Committee**

[Facebook Page](#)



CONTACT

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact the principal investigator:

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This study has been reviewed by the McMaster, St. Thomas and Cape Breton University Research Ethics Boards, and received ethics clearance.

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