



# Free Space In Schools For Community Groups

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## McGuinty Government Supporting After Hours Activities

Starting this month, 150 Ontario schools will give not-for-profit groups free access to schools after hours.

Offering school space at no cost will help not-for-profit groups provide affordable or free activities, such as sport, art and recreation programs for youth. These programs help bring communities together and keep young people active and safe.

This is part of [Community Use of Schools](#), a program that helps all Ontario school boards make school space more affordable for use after hours. Increasing access to schools for community activities and services supports the goals of *Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy*, and was a recommendation of [The Roots of Youth Violence](#) report.

### QUICK FACTS

- For the 2009-10 school year, the Ontario government will invest \$38.5 million in community use of schools, including \$5.1 million to help 150 schools offer school space for free. Funding for this program has almost doubled in the past three years.
- Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) aims to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 25 per cent over five years by boosting benefits for low-income families and enhancing publicly funded education.
- The [150 schools](#) are located in areas where the need for low-cost access is greatest.

## LEARN MORE

- [Find out if a school near you is offering free space.](#)
- [Learn more about Community Use of Schools.](#)
- [ontario.ca/education-news](http://ontario.ca/education-news)

"Opening up school doors after hours to not-for-profit groups gives more kids the chance to develop new skills and get involved in local activities."

– Kathleen Wynne  
Minister of Education

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"Across the province, schools are at the heart of our communities, both during the school day and after hours. This initiative will help strengthen and support these important community hubs and will bring in a diversity of activities and groups."

– Deb Matthews  
Minister of Children and Youth Services

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"Programs offered by Boys and Girls Clubs offer positive experiences, role models and a safe place for young people to go after school. Helping to make schools more accessible and affordable for our programs will give more young people a chance to get involved."

– Chris Foster  
Executive Director, St. Alban's Boys and Girls Club