



LEISURE AND CULTURE

By participating in leisure and cultural activities, whether arts, culture, or recreation, we contribute to our wellbeing as individuals, to our communities, and to society as a whole. The myriad of activities and opportunities we pursue and enjoy benefit our overall life satisfaction and quality of life.

As forms of human expression, leisure and cultural activities help to more fully define our lives, the meaning we derive from them, and ultimately, our wellbeing. This remains true throughout our lives regardless of age, gender, or social group. The impact of participation in leisure and cultural activities is even greater for people in marginalized groups, such as those living with disabilities, living in poverty, and as members of a minority population.

LEISURE PARTICIPATION

An active lifestyle has numerous physical, social, and psychological benefits. In Ontario, over 90% of the population reports participating in some form of regular physical activity during leisure time, and like elsewhere across the country, participation has been rising steadily over the years.

In Oxford County, residents report participating in physical activity lasting at least 15 minutes once every day (27.0 times per month on average). This level of activity is only marginally lower than elsewhere in Ontario (28.2 times per month) and in Canada (27.6 times per month).

OPPORTUNITIES

As noted earlier in the Education domain, libraries provide much more than just content to advance people’s education and interests. Indeed, they are important community hubs where people meet, engage in activities, and attend events, thereby strengthening community bonds.

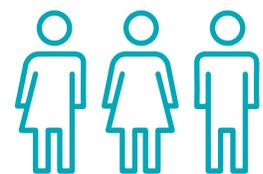
For every 1,000 people in Oxford County, 119.6 in-person visits are made each year to public libraries, a rate of usage that is among the highest of any region in the province. By way of comparison, about 100 visits per 1,000 people are made by residents of West Region (99.5 visits per 1,000 people) and only slightly more are made by Ontarians overall (103.2 visits per 1,000 people).

In the past year, libraries in Oxford County offered 28.6 library programs of various types to every 1,000 people, which is notably higher than that in West Region (23.9) and much higher than that in Ontario as a whole (16.6). In contrast, the County’s libraries offered less than one (0.8) arts and cultural event and show (e.g., Culture Days, poetry and story readings, art shows) per 10,000 people in the past year. This level of offerings is significantly lower than the rate for West Region (5.8) and the province overall (4.4). Indeed, the number of annual culture programs in Oxford County is one of the lowest in Ontario.



average number of times per month participating in physical activity lasting over 15 minutes

OXFORD	27.0
WEST	28.2
ONTARIO	28.2
CANADA	27.6



in-person visits to libraries per 1,000 people

OXFORD	119.6
WEST	99.5
ONTARIO	103.2



annual library programs per 1,000 people

OXFORD	28.6
WEST	23.9
ONTARIO	16.6

Attendance at arts and cultural events are beneficial both to individuals and to the community overall. Consequently, looking at the potential to offer more programs to local residents through the libraries is a means of increasing wellbeing.

Making computers and internet connections freely available in public libraries provides access to information and resources, especially to people who might otherwise not have it due to financial constraints or other access limitations. Access is comparatively higher in Oxford County (an average of 9.0 internet connections per 10,000 people) than West Region and Ontario as a whole (7.7 and 7.2 connections per 10,000 people respectively).