

Celebration and Inspiration

Most of the stories in this book began as telephone interviews with leaders or participants in Manitoba CDPI programs. The interviews were then transcribed and shaped into short stories which were sent back to the narrator for checking and change. Often the story also made the rounds of offices, supervisors or other interested parties. We did our very best to honour the spirit of the narration and incorporate every suggested change. Any errors that remain are those of the publisher, and please accept our apologies for those.

Almost without exception, everyone we talked to was going above and beyond what was expected of them, and many were selfless volunteers who gained only the pleasure of helping their communities and getting healthier themselves in the process. These volunteers, and the many vibrant and committed people we talked to who have CDPI as part of their day job, inspired us to be healthier too – to eat healthier foods, to get more active.

When you read through the stories or pick out various ones to enjoy, be aware that you are definitely comparing apples and oranges. The CDPI parameters encourage a huge variety in the way projects can be administered and what they can be. Each project fits a community's needs. Many grew out of existing projects or dovetailed into them, and these partnerships are encouraged by the Initiative.

Some stories are based on the experiences of a single group, such as a seniors centre in a small community, that applied for and received CDPI funds. They may have decided to construct a horseshoe pit, which seniors are now using every week, or they may serve healthy snacks at a weekly meeting, which helps bring people out, gets them socializing, feeling better about life, and getting healthier in body and mind. Sometimes the committee is little more than one or two intrepid souls who knock on doors and have a vision for a healthier community.

Then there are the larger centres like Brandon, Flin Flon or The Pas, where CDPI funding is meshed with Regional Health Authority programs and helped along by other community partners. The result might be hundreds more people in workplaces walking for exercise daily than there were before, or a major tobacco education campaign throughout a school district. The effort of all the hard-working people on the committees of the bigger communities is no less laudable and exciting for having lots of support.

The stories aren't placed together for any type of comparison or evaluation, but solely for celebration and inspiration. Let each story inspire you in different ways and energize you or your group towards initiatives that result in a healthier community.

We've placed the stories in alphabetical order according to community names. This is not an exact science, as many stories involved more than one community or an entire region. In these cases, the story is alphabetized according to the community featured most prominently in the story or the one most closely connected with the narrator, and these choices don't reflect in any way the relative importance of one community or another within the program. The index in the back of the book will help you to find stories that relate to a risk factor or program you'd like to get ideas for.

We made every effort to provide information from credible and reliable sources. However, the websites listed after the health facts indicate only where the facts came from. They are links to further information, not a CDPI endorsement of the content of those sites.

We felt honoured to be a part of this project, and hope that the stories serve their intended purpose: to celebrate what's been done in CDPI and to inspire continued energy for prevention of chronic disease in Manitoba.

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