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Flin Flon and Area

Tackling Tobacco: Youth to Youth

Grassroots and peer group efforts work. That's the lesson Deanna Johnson has learned as the Regional Smoking Reduction Coordinator and Community Health Developer in the Flin Flon area. Johnson feels strongly that youth are effective in reaching their peers, so she increased the number of Tobacco Tackle Teams from Grade 4 to High School in various communities. Each team is unique and has different ideas on the ill effects of tobacco. "You really have to go with the group and listen to what works in their community," she said. "Let them do their thing. It has to be the kids' project."

One of the teams in Flin Flon put on a play called, "How to Say No." The Grade Fives wrote the script and performed for Grade 4 to Grade 6 classes. They also made bookmarks with tips on how to say no and gave them to their peers. Flin Flon High

"Instead of pushing the smokers to the corner, let's try to get them to understand the addiction."

School students, after holding a contest to reveal how much money they spent on tobacco and what amount they chewed, surprised themselves at the high number of tobacco chewers in their midst.

Cranberry Portage youth produced colourful posters consisting of pictures of themselves and their thoughts about tobacco on each. "The kids were so proud of the posters," said Johnson. Printed copies will reach every Frontier School Division school, and as a result of the project, the students went on to write a graphic novel.

"CDPI funding lets us do better projects," observed Johnson. That was the case in Cormorant where the students submitted posters on second-hand smoke in a contest. Resisting the temptation to correct grammar, Johnson and her co-facilitator allowed the captions to be the students' own words. With funding from CDPI, winning posters were printed off on poster paper and distributed to Frontier Schools.

Cormorant students also put fun into tobacco awareness by setting up original carnival games for all classes to enjoy. The students moved from station to station answering tobacco questions before laying up a perfect throw at "Dunk the Junk," bowling down pins in "Cigarette Bowling," or tossing beanbags through holes named after different chemicals – just a few of the games offered.

The Pas Grade Four students made a multi-media booklet including their thoughts and experiences about tobacco.

It is not always fun and games learning the perils of smoking. One teacher's grandfather passed away from a smoking-related illness, and as a result her father quit smoking. Inspired by their teacher's experience, students went on to create straight-talking advertisements.

"Instead of pushing the smokers to the corner," says Johnson, "let's try to get them to understand the addiction." Giving young

people the information and skills to say no and allowing them to positively influence each other is yielding successful results in the Frontier area.

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Take Note

Teen Smoking in Canada:

- Canadians under the age of 19 consume about 1.7 billion cigarettes every year.
- Teens between the ages of 15 and 19 who smoke consume an average of 12.3 cigarettes a day, down from 13 a day in 1999.
- More than 90% of teenagers who smoke as few as 3 to 4 cigarettes a day may be trapped into a lifelong habit of regular smoking, which typically lasts some 35 to 40 years.
- Tobacco eventually kills half of the people who get hooked on it, and this year, tobacco will kill about 2,000 Manitobans.

<http://www.heartandstroke.mb.ca/site/c.lgLSIVoyGpF/b.3661109/>

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/smoking.html>

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Flin Flon and Area Caught in Motion

Over 1,000 people in Flin Flon/Creighton and area were caught in the act by the Motion Patrol this summer. No arrests were made, but they were all cited for being physically active in public and had their names entered in the “Get Caught in Motion” contest. The program encourages any resident that witnesses someone they know being physically active to phone in and enter their names for a grand prize draw. Physically active suspects were also given spot prizes like t-shirts and gym or pool passes by Motion Patrol officials.

“It’s not just about increasing their own physical activity – it’s about making them aware of who else is doing it.”

Anyone caught golfing, swimming, cycling, walking, or even playing outside with their family was eligible to be entered in the draw. Community response was enthusiastic to say the least. “One lady who phoned in said, ‘I have a list of people that I caught in motion!’” said organizer Fran Labarre. “She felt really good about phoning in – people get to do their good deed.”

Many called in to recognize active people that inspired them, and physically active children also received a great number of ballots. “It’s not just about increasing their own physical activity,” says Labarre, “it’s about making them aware of who else is doing it.”

CDPI funding was integral to the success of the program, which was run in conjunction with *in motion* and the NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority. “We used to just put posters up, but CDPI money allows regular clips on the radio and in the local paper,” Labarre noted. Three Nintendo Wii systems were purchased for top prizes, and the remaining funds have been spread around to other programs as well.

Healthy fresh snacks are now supplied at Flin Flon’s Splash Pool Summer Days, and CDPI money also enabled organizers to purchase a variety of gear for the event, including parachutes and sacks for the always-popular sack race. Kids aged 3 to 10 have a blast at the event with hula-hoops, bouncy balls, and a mural painting session keeping them occupied and active when they’re not in the pool. A new ghetto blaster and PA sound system was also bought to keep community events running smoothly.

With the success of this year’s “Caught in Motion” program, organizers are thinking up ways to carry its momentum through the winter as well. “We want Flin Flon to be the healthiest community in Manitoba,” said Labarre.

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Take Note

Canadians and (in)activity

- The number of Canadians who report they are active enough to achieve health-related benefits doubled from 21% in 1981 to over 40% in 2002.
- The health and quality of life of over 60% of Canadians are at risk because of dangerously inactive lifestyles.
- People are more likely to remain active if they engage in physical activities they feel competent doing, find enjoyable and can easily access and fit into their daily schedules.
- People are more likely to become and remain active if they perceive the benefits of participation outweigh the costs, be they time, effort and energy spent or simply dollar costs.

<http://www.cbc.ca/manitoba/features/getmoving/article03.html>

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Flin Flon

Free To Be Me

Of all the chronic diseases, difficulties with mental health may be among the least understood and most agonizing. Support can be hard to find. In Flin Flon, thanks to a drop-in program called “Free To Be Me,” residents with mental health issues have a welcoming place to socialize and exercise.

Free To Be Me operates under the direction of a volunteer committee with administrative and program assistance from the NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority. A group meets twice a week to support each other and participate in numerous activities coordinated by Judy Fairbairn, a facilitator with the Free To Be Me program. “They need social interaction – in order to promote better wellness, they need to get out, otherwise they’re not going to get better because they’ll close themselves off,” said Fairbairn. “It gives them the group setting instead of being by themselves.”

The group varies in membership, but

includes a core of about 12 participants who join in regular special events and go on outings around the community. Indoor activities include basketball, bingo, shuffleboard, cards, and crafting, and there are summer games such as bocce ball, croquet, and lawn darts.

CDPI funding has allowed enhanced programming for healthy lifestyle changes. Members can participate in new and exciting activities that promote healthy eating and active living. CDPI funding has paid for bowling parties, purchased pedometers for walking clubs, and facilitated healthy snack cooking sessions. A floor shuffleboard set was also bought, along with a dart game and croquet set. Instructors were brought in to teach yoga and gentle stretching exercises that can be done at home, which Fairbairn said was enjoyed by all. “Free To Be Me gives them the advantage of things they can’t afford and places they might not go,” she said.

An atmosphere of acceptance and togetherness is an important basis of the group. “A lot of the people who come have experienced social stigma,” said Fairbairn. “In our group everybody knows everybody else and they accept each other for who they are.”

All the activities are free, and the group contributes by participating in fundraisers like raffles and Christmas baskets. Ages of group members range from 35 to 65, and the Free To Be Me committee is currently focusing on reaching younger people as well. “The next generation will be more

comfortable to seek help,” Fairbairn said. “Some of the older ones still struggle with that.” Fortunately, “Free To Be Me” is open to all in Flin Flon who need help with their struggles in a non-judgmental environment.

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Take Note

Mental Illness in Canada:

- Twenty percent of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness during their lifetime.
- Mental illnesses indirectly affect all Canadians through illness in a family member, friend or colleague.
- Mental illnesses affect people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures.
- The onset of most mental illnesses occurs during adolescence and young adulthood.

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/miic-mmac/chap_1-eng.php

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Flin Flon

From Round Lettuce to Caesar Salad

They're not really picky eaters – they're just not used to eating salads as part of a meal because it is not something they ate growing up. April Head-Nickel, a member of the CDPI committee at the Flin Flon Community Youth Resource Centre (CYRC), is trying to change how children, youth and their parents view healthy food choices and physical fitness. Her clients are unsure of different varieties of foods out there that they haven't tried. "If the lettuce isn't round or the apples aren't red they don't touch it," she said.

Head-Nickel said at the Flin Flon Community Youth Resource Centre they are providing healthy snacks and information along with cooking courses that include a variety of fruits and vegetables. Traditionally the First Nations people in the area used various roots and berries to supplement their diet. Along with ongoing changes to their way of life,

"We are constantly trying to educate them about healthy food choices and why that particular food is good for them."

people have swapped traditional foods for processed, and often sugar-laden, foods. With the help of CDPI funding, the Centre is able educate people on nutrition and introduce them to a variety of healthy foods. "We are constantly trying to educate them about healthy food choices and why that particular food is good for them," said Head-Nickel. Food bingos are held as a fun way of introducing new foods, and cooking classes, aimed at the younger generation, show how to prepare different, simple and nutritious meals.

Head-Nickel said aboriginal youth and parents are often not aware of the damage they are doing to their bodies when they eat processed food and don't make nutritious choices. With teaching from the local health nurse and adding visual supports such as showing how much sugar is in a can of cola, the message is getting across. "Families are saying, 'today I ate a bag of sugar' and realizing this is not so good," said Head-Nickel, who is seeing good progress in young people. Most would still rather pick up a red apple than a green or yellow one, but many are also choosing yogurt over puddings and taking fresh, raw vegetables for snacks. Some are even enjoying Caesar salads and cooked vegetables. "I'm always trying to figure out why they don't eat a particular food and find an alternative to introducing that food again in a different way," said Head-Nickel. "Sometimes it's as simple as cutting up the fruit and then they'll pick it up and eat it."

Head-Nickel is also trying to get an exercise program going for parents and youth after

a survey showed many are interested in incorporating physical activity. “Many of our youth and parents are not comfortable to join the local gym or to sign up for any other fitness programs, but they will get on a treadmill at the Centre or ride the stationary bike,” she said. For the Centre, it is all about staff taking the time to listen to the parents and youth and then find ways to encourage them with activities that they are comfortable doing. Walking and cycling have been complemented with education on the value of increased physical activity and discussions on healthy weight for individuals. “We’re trying to tone up our families by educating them on physical fitness. Sometimes parents are just uncertain about what they should do,” said

Head-Nickel. When parents realize how good it is for their children to be active by just simply go for a walk or a swim, it makes a difference in how often they take them.

CDPI funding allows the CYRC to continue to educate the youth, parents and children about being physically active and making good health choices.

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Take Note

Handy Healthy Eating Tips:

- Enjoy a variety of foods every day.
- Choose low fat foods more often.
- Read labels for hidden fats.
- Choose healthy serving sizes.
- Eat your fruits and veggies.
- Make healthy choices in restaurants and grocery stores.
- Choose high fibre foods more often.

http://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/healthylivingguide/healthy_living_guide.pdf

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Flin Flon

Seniors Walk and Talk in the Right Direction

The CDPI's Walking in the Right Direction program has motivated a group of Flin Flon seniors to exercise, socialize, eat healthier, and even make some inspirational jewellery!

Aimee Deans, the recreation programmer for the City of Flin Flon, says the weekly walking routine has developed into an important social connection. "The walkers have become really good friends," said Deans. "It's a great meeting place – a hub for them during the week. This program is successful because of weekly participation."

Flin Flon's Walking in the Right Direction is for seniors, with increased physical activity being the main goal. Along the way, it's developed a focus on healthy living as well. "The group meets weekly every Tuesday morning for one hour; we walk, exercise, have a healthy snack,

"The walkers have become really good friends. It's a great meeting place – a hub for them during the week."

and do some socializing," said Deans. "We have seniors aged 60 to 85, mainly females, an average of 15 walkers per week. Occasionally, special guests come in to speak about nutrition, diabetes, menu planning. We've made trail mix, and done yoga."

The walking takes place every week from September until June inside Flin Flon's Community Centre, which provides a safe indoor environment for the seniors. Each walker is given a pedometer and the group walks to tunes they've chosen – often old favourites from the 1940s, 50s and 60s – to create an upbeat walking atmosphere. "We do our laps to get our kilometres in," Deans said. "The goal is one kilometre per day." That might seem like a daunting distance for some, but it's attainable for the walkers in this group. One lady found an interesting way to motivate herself and the group. She made an encouragement bracelet with 11 beads on it, then turned one bead over for every lap completed – 11 laps was half a kilometre -, marking the half-way point of the day's goal. Soon, the group made bracelets for all the other walkers too.

"They walk half a kilometre, turn over their beads, have some water, then change direction and complete the kilometre," said Deans. The bracelet trend has added an encouraging – and stylish – element to a healthy weekly get-together.

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▼ *Take Note*
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▼ **Benefits of Active Living**
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▼ Studies show that adults 60 years and older benefit more from regular exercise than 30-year-olds. The benefits include:

- ▼ • increased flexibility and mobility.
- ▼ • increased energy and endurance.
- ▼ • increased muscle strength and balance.
- ▼ • reduced risks of falls and injuries.
- ▼ • increased self-confidence and greater independence.
- ▼ • better management of chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and osteoporosis.
- ▼ • better opportunities for socialization.
- ▼ • better ability to relax resulting in reduced anxiety, tension and depression.

▼ <http://www.tbdhu.com/Safety/SeniorsSafety/ActiveLivingForSeniors.htm>

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Flin Flon

Winter Trails Encourage Everyone to Get Active

On your mark, get set....get healthy! You could be a winner at the Flin Flon ski race, even if you're not the first to cross the finish line. The Flin Flon Ski Club has made good use of CDPI funding to build trails and provide opportunities to get whole families involved in outdoor activities.

An annual event on the cross country ski trail encourages participation for every age group. The race is the Centaloppet – a four-kilometre “race”

which people can do at their own pace and socialize as they go. Eventually, everyone ends up at the chalet for healthy snacks. The event is free and attracts large numbers, encouraging family activity and promoting the Ski Club at the same time. Dave Price, Ski Club vice-president and CDPI committee member, said the event is fun and also good for people. Little ones are sometimes pulled in sleds up and down the hills along the trails

“The Canadian shield has very beautiful scenery and these are the finest trails pretty much anywhere.”

by their parents. In some cases children as young as three or four are already on skis. Price said his mother was visiting from Wales during the event one winter and won a prize, even though she'd never been on skis before. “She won the prize for being from the farthest away,” laughed Price.

Cross country skiing is a sport that can be done at a reasonable cost and is made even more affordable in Flin Flon with annual swap shops where people can trade or buy used equipment. “We make it possible for people to ski without a big expense,” said Price.

CDPI funding was also used to set up a cross country ski course for young children. The Jack Rabbit program teaches children ages 5 to 9 how to ski using fun and games on the snow. The club also has a Moms and Tots group where some of the moms go for a ski while one or two stay back and entertain the little ones at the chalet.

Flin Flon has a total of 27 kilometres of ski trails in some of the most stunning terrain in the country. “The Canadian shield has very beautiful scenery and these are the finest trails pretty much anywhere,” said Price. A two and half kilometre section of the trail is lit so people can ski in the evening as well as during the day. “Even if people are working, they can get a ski in,” said Price. The trails are open to members or to anyone who pays a daily trail fee, and are also used by area schools as part of the physical education program.

CDPI funding has also contributed to a walking trail in the community. The trail winds around Ross Lake in the middle of the town. Plans are underway to light a portion of that trail to promote physical activity outdoors in the evenings as well.

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▼
▼ *Take Note*

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▼ **Did You Know?**

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▼ Every year, 2.5 million Canadians don cross country skis and take to groomed trails. Cross-
▼ country skiing is not only the most popular ski sport in the country – it is experiencing a
▼ surge in popularity among Canadians and is our fastest-growing winter sport.

▼
▼ <http://www.southcaribootourism.com/index.php?page=322>

▼
▼ http://www.alive.com/782a2a2.php?subject_bread_cramb=94

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Flin Flon

More than a Healthy Meal

A community effort at Flin Flon's Food Bank is offering more than just nutritious meals. Using food supplied by CDPI funding, the Taste Testing/Meal Bag Program offers a unique way to get people to cook nutritious meals at home.

CDPI committee member Carol Hydamaka is the food bank chairperson; she works together with Flin Flon's community dietitian to select the meals, which are then cooked by community volunteers from six Flin Flon churches. "They cook up a big batch and take it to the food bank," Carol said. "People taste it, and if they like it, bags containing the recipe and all the groceries necessary to make it are available." When asked how she gets the volunteers to do the cooking, Carol replies matter-of-factly, "I just phone them up. I've known some of these women for forty years."

Carol also administers Flin Flon's prenatal nutrition program, and some of these clients use the food bank too. Recently when Carol asked one of her aboriginal clients what she had eaten the day before, the answer was that one of her meals had been lentil soup. Carol was surprised, as

lentils are not a common choice in the aboriginal community. "Where did you get the recipe from?" she asked. The mom replied that she had tried it at the food bank and then made it at home, and that she and her husband had eaten it all up! Other recipes the Meal Bag program has distributed include apple cobbler, cabbage roll casserole, and hamburger soup.

A Pentecostal church was the first location of the Food Bank program, and some people thought the name of the Food Bank – Lord's Bounty – might keep clients from coming because they'd think it was "churchy." It hasn't deterred anyone from coming, although there have been some touchy moments. In the early days of the program, one lady asked Carol, "What are you, some kind of ___ do-gooder?" Undaunted, she replied, "No, I'm a Christian, and I'm doing what I'm supposed to do – feeding the poor." The lady's response was unexpected. "She gave me a great big hug," Carol said, "and we've had a good relationship ever since."

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Take Note

Five keys from Canada's Guidelines for Healthy Eating

- Enjoy a variety of foods.
- Emphasize cereals, breads, other grain products, vegetables and fruits.
- Choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating.
- Limit salt, alcohol and caffeine.

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/population/national_health_survey-enquete_nationale_sante-eng.php

<http://www.cafb-acba.ca/> (Food Banks Canada)

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Flin Flon

New Field Promotes Soccer as a Healthy Lifestyle Choice

Soccer is widely considered to be the most popular sport in the world and is rapidly gaining popularity in Flin Flon, Manitoba. Dean Grove is the assistant superintendent of the Flin Flon School Division and a member of the local CDPI committee. He said interest in soccer is growing in the community and the committee wanted to generate even more interest in the sport. However the only soccer pitch in town was heavily used and wearing down, so if the profile of the sport was to be raised to get more kids involved, a new field needed to be built. Acknowledging the health benefits of the game and the growing interest, CDPI funding was put into developing a new soccer field in the region. “There are over 500 people playing soccer in our area from the ages of five to adult,” said Grove. “The new field will help soccer to grow as a healthy lifestyle choice.”

The location of the new pitch in Foster Park near the lower income part of town

“The new field will help soccer to grow as a healthy lifestyle choice.”

was carefully chosen to give access to kids who might not have transportation to a field further away. Soil was also a consideration. “We’re on the rocks here and it’s hard to play on rocks,” said Grove. The new field has been built on land that needed extensive drainage. Refurbished soil has been brought in to cover soil that was found to have high levels of toxic contaminants from local mine waste. New sod was placed on top. Organizers are pleased to have refurbished a new recreation spot in the community and have plans for a walking path around the outside of the field. Grove noted that the project started with the vision of the soccer club and became a reality due to a community effort with input not only from CDPI, but from the Phantom Lake Soccer Club, the City of Flin Flon, HudBay Mineral, the Rotary Club, the Northern Neighbours fund, the Truesport Fund, the Neighbourhoods Alive Initiative, Manitoba Community Places grant and Manitoba Infrastructure grants.. “Everybody chipped in a little bit to make it happen,” he said.

Grove said parents like to put their children into soccer programs because of the relatively minor cost for equipment – you just need sneakers, socks and shin pads – and the ability for just about anybody to play. “Anybody who can run can play soccer,” he said, adding there are teams at different skill levels to further accommodate players. It is not just children who play soccer in Flin Flon. This past summer there were four women’s teams and between 20 and 25 men play once a week.

CDPI funding was also used to develop new coaches for the soccer program. In keeping with CDPI's focus on nutrition as well as increased physical activity, the soccer clubs are encouraging players to put good food into their bodies. "We're trying to avoid lower nutrition foods at snack time and talking to teams more about nutrition," said Grove.

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Take Note

Health Benefits of Playing Soccer:

- **Cardio gains:** You'll work up to your target heart rate and reap cardiovascular benefits, including improved blood pressure, increased endurance, and a stronger heart.
- **Add muscle, lose fat:** As opposed to an activity like jogging, where you repeat a motion over and over, switching rapidly from one action to the other engages all of the fibres of your muscles. By doing this kind of physical work regularly, you're more likely to gain muscle mass and burn fat.
- **Build bone:** In soccer, the running around that you do can be considered as a type of weight-bearing exercise, which can boost your bone strength. Children playing soccer can also increase bone density.

http://health.lifestyle.yahoo.ca/channel_section_details.asp?text_id=4240&channel_id=2041&relation_id=23745