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Snow Lake

CDPI Supports Family Centre

The last thing most kids want to do right after school is study. That means if you want to teach them something between the end of the school day and supper time, it needs to be done in an enjoyable way. At the Snow Lake Family Resource Centre, staff running the free after-school program make sure learning is done in an atmosphere of fun. The Centre is about a one-minute walk from the school and has an after-school program from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. for Grades 1 to 4 on Mondays and Wednesdays and Grades 5 to 8 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. “We provide information about health, but we make sure it’s different than going to school, a fun place for them to come and hang out,” said Anne-Marie Butt, Family Resource Centre Coordinator.

Thanks to a grant from CDPI, students – as many as two dozen in the winter time – are given a healthy snack every day. Students are involved in choosing nutritious food from the Canada Food Guide. Getting the

students more physically active is another goal of the Centre and CDPI funding provides prizes for races and games to encourage participation. Activities include indoor crafts and games as well as trips to the local youth centre to use the pool table and ping pong tables. When weather permits, children are encouraged to go outside for a variety of games including hop-scotch, jump rope and enjoy play structure activities.

Butt said CDPI assists the community of Snow Lake to pass on information about health to people of all ages. The Family Resource Centre works with seniors in the area as well as children and realizes that sometimes chronic disease prevention is about the little things and getting out information regarding nutrition and physical activity. Events that encourage health can have a big impact on the life of a senior.

Because Snow Lake is a semi-isolated northern community located over 200 km away from the nearest community, the resource centre provides a major support system. The population is about 850 and there are no government-funded social service agencies in the town. Besides providing emergency intervention for families and individuals in crisis, the Centre offers counselling, educational workshops and a public resource library. With a great community responsibility and limited resources, Butt said the Centre is “very fortunate” to have the support of the CDPI.

Contact Information:

Ann-Marie Butt

204-358-7141

frc@gillamnet.com

Take Note

Youth and Inactivity

- 59% of Manitoban teens are inactive.
- Most Manitobans (61%) aren't active enough to achieve health benefits.
- Girls are less active than boys.
- Up to 82% of Canadian children and youth aren't active enough for optimal growth and development.
- Canadian teens spend 35 hours a week in front of a screen.
- Children are 40% less active than they were 30 years ago.
- Childhood obesity in Manitoba has tripled in the past 25 years.
- Manitoban children (ages 2 to 17) are more overweight and obese than Canadian children in general. 31% of Manitoban children are overweight/obese compared to 26% of Canadian children.

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyschools/issues/physical.html>

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Snow Lake

Making the Beach Accessible Beach for All

Seven years ago Roger Wiesner had a work accident that left him a quadriplegic. Now Wiesner is hoping that one day soon he will finally be able to put his feet in Snow Lake again – without help. By next summer, thanks to a boardwalk project funded partially with CDPI dollars, Wiesner and other people with walking difficulties will be able to get near the water.

Betty Rudd, Secretary of the Snow Lake Boardwalk committee, said the town is surrounded by water but many elderly and disabled have been unable to cross the grass and sand to get to the water's edge. "The lake is very important to the community," she said. "The basic plan was to make a six-foot-wide walkway from one end of the lakefront parking lot in town across the beach to the other parking lot to make it possible for everybody to cross the beach." The walkway did not unfold as originally planned but now starts with an asphalt path from one end of the parking lot to a food booth and the tennis court as well as to a 24 by 32 foot platform.

"It will be nice to get the feet in the water again."

This platform can be used for a variety of functions, including lakeside church services or community functions, or simply for people to sit, relax, and take in the view.

CDPI put \$2,000 into the project and a hard-working committee did some serious fundraising to come up with over \$50,000 more. "It was hard work, but we're getting there," said Rudd. One of the committee's fundraising ideas was to sell engraved boardwalk planks. Planks for the platform are made of Trex, a recycled wood and plastic product with a 25-year guarantee. Wiesner said this product costs more than treated lumber but requires much less maintenance. Each plank includes an engraving of the donor's name. Volunteers spent the winter engraving 240 pre-sold planks (sable color for corporate sponsors and Winchester grey for private citizens) so they would be ready for installation in the spring. The planks were sold for \$50 each and could include up to 30 characters.

"The boardwalk is nice and smooth," said Wiesner, who is now able to get his wheelchair almost into the lake. "The beach is a pretty nice place to go in the summer time." He recalled a time last summer, while volunteers were busy screwing down the planks for the boardwalk, and an elderly couple came by. "She was in a wheelchair and he was pushing her around. It was good to see," said Wiesner, who recognizes and appreciates increased mobility for the disabled. The new path is accessible to people from the local hospital so patients and visitors there will be able

to access the water's edge as well. "It's very beautiful," said Rudd. "People in the hospital will be able to sit and watch the children on the beach and people with disabilities will be able to spend time at the beach with their families." Future plans include building benches for the platform and planting flowers along the path.

Wiesner, 48, said he takes life "day by day" since his accident. With access to the waterfront of his home town, some of those days are now going to be spent watching his family playing in the water or simply taking in the view. And one of these days, he said, sticking his own feet in the lake.

Contact Information:

Betty Rudd
358-28454

Roger Wiesner
rwiesner@mts.net

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▼ *Take Note*
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▼ **Did You Know?**
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▼ According to Statistics Canada, in 2001 there were 147,580 people in Manitoba with
▼ disabilities, or 14.2% percent of the population. The nationwide average was 12.4%, or
▼ over 3.6 million Canadians with disabilities.

▼ <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/89-577-XIE/canada.htm>
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