

Youth Development

Growing Future Leaders: **Chipman Youth Center**

The Chipman Youth Centre presented leadership orientation training for local youth and created opportunities to affirm these skills through experiential learning. The goal of these activities are to encourage the youth to become responsible citizen volunteers equipped with the skills needed to plan, organize and host community events.



Working under the direction of a mentor, the youth organized an inclusive Family Fun Day aimed at promoting the broad range of services available in the community. In addition, the youth were involved in two fundraising events in support of this program.

The Family fun Day was a great success with over 100 people in attendance. As a result of their efforts, families had the opportunity to become well informed about the various services, many of which are tailored to support those on low income or with limited resources.

The average age of the youth participants was 13 and over the summer they volunteered a total of 853 hours to the community.

Children Matter in Chipman: **Chipman Youth Center**

(April 2015)

Chipman Youth Center launched a pilot summer institute for a dozen high needs children, ages 5 to 12, to receive on-going social skills training and tutoring over the summer months. These children, from financially marginalized families, had been attending structured, supervised activities with their peers every Friday afternoon through the school year at the Chipman Youth Center. The goal of this project was to ascertain the effects of providing continued socialization and tutoring over the summer months on their ability to demonstrate success in school in September.

A qualified summer literacy coordinator met with the teachers, to develop individual lesson plans to be delivered over the summer. The program also included a Chef's program to learn healthy cooking, dance instruction, gymnastics, crafts, outdoor play, schedule visits to the Chipman Public Library, physical activity, a camping experience at Camp Wegesgeum which includes swimming in their outdoor pool, and many other activities. As well as taking part in these programs, children received a healthy breakfast, lunch and snacks each day. Transportation was provided, as required, to enable the children to fully participate.

The children attended programming with regular patrons. For these children it was a summer of first time experiences that other children take for granted. For most, it was a wonderful opportunity to be

included along with their peers in activities not normally available to them. Over the summer months, friendships developed, self-esteem improved, cooperation with others improved, new skills were learned and children learned how to follow rules. Parents noted the improvements in behavior and attributed it to inclusion in the program with their peers.

Together for Greater Inclusion: Maison des Jeunes (April 2013)

Youth received subsidized membership in various summer and after hours programs offered by the Maison des jeunes including food skills training, sports, arts, and dancing. Over the course of the year, twenty six children and youth had access to training and developmental opportunities that otherwise would not have been possible.

“Throughout the year, we organized six shows, inviting the community to see and encourage their little ones. Every show has hosted between 300 and 600 people in the audience. What a fantastic opportunity to boost the Youngsters self-esteem. We strongly believe that such an overall experience has had a significant influence on the children, their families and peers’ inclusion within our community, as well as their personal development.”

Wave of Youth: Chipman Youth Center (April 2013)

The Wave of Youth Volunteer Program, a socially inclusive community project aimed at creating a youth volunteer base in Chipman, trains youth in volunteer skills and provides weekly organized social activities. In return, youth sign a contract in which they agree to contribute a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer time in their community over the upcoming summer months. Funding ensured that this program could be offered free of charge to participants and therefore be accessible to all youth. The youth also undertake two fundraising activities to cover program expenses.

“It allowed them the opportunity to work at various jobs in the community, learning new skills and making a good name for themselves as they became known as hard working, reliable teens. They built relationships that crossed age, interests and abilities. They learned by experience what it takes to organize and present community events, serve the public, help those in need and how many hands make light work.”

“New to the program this year is the addition of an overnight camping trip which will enable participants to meet the requirements to apply for a Duke of Edinburgh Award. This accreditation will enhance employment prospects and university applications and build self-esteem.”

At the final count, it was determined these youth logged over 2000 hours of volunteer contributions over the summer months.