

Saskatchewan In Motion- Community Challenge Pledge Proposal



What we are doing now:

Swift Current is fortunate to have many programs organized throughout the city to encourage children and youth to be physically active. Some of our main programs include:

- The Boys and Girls on the Move programs is designed to keep youth aged 10-15 active and healthy. The Girls on the Move program runs on Wednesdays from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at The Center while the Boys on the Move program runs on Thursdays from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Rec Center. In 2011, there were 640 visits from girls and 563 visits from boys.
- Our Parks Play Program in the summer targets children aged 5-12 by providing a drop in summer program of games and activities five days a week in July and August. While the youth between the ages of 10 and 17 can attend the Hub at The Center. The Parks Play program allows five parks to be running throughout the week to ensure there are plenty of opportunities for the children of the city to stay active and have fun over the summer months. From the five parks that ran there were a total of 3554 visits in July and August 2011.
- The Hub is a great program that provides activities and events for the youth of the city to try free of charge. It helped to keep them active and out of trouble during the summer months. The Hub's attendance rate throughout the summer was very consistent, even with the change of location for the program. The Hub was visited 593 times by the youth of Swift Current.
- The City's Recreation and Parks department has partnered with the Cypress Health Region for the past three years to provide the Get Fit! Be Fit! Youth wellness event that encourages youth aged 10-18 to participate in different sport and fitness activities in a circuit format. This has been a tremendous success! The program has seen a lot of progress within the last three years, and also the number of participants has almost doubled from each year previous. The attendance in 2009 had 30 participants attend, whereas in 2010 there were 50 participants attending. This past year, the 2011 total was

144 participants. Each year there has been the necessary changes made and marketing strategies added in order to get the necessary numbers to increase. Now that the program is better established it seems that there will be an even larger turn out this coming spring.

- As well, last year four of the elementary schools participated in an In Motion School challenge where the students kept track of their minutes they were active outside of school. A total of 657 students participated from the 4 schools with a total of 1 702 757 minutes = 28 379 hours = 1182 days = 3.2 years in just over 3 weeks!! Another wonderful success in our community!
- In the spring, the city began an after school youth fitness program called Fit For Fun that took place at the youth drop in location called The Center. The target of the program was to facilitate a place for the youth of the city to attend after school and try different fitness activities led by various fitness instructors. The hours of the program ran from 4:00 until 5:00 pm; however, the number of attendants was very low so it has been decided to move the program to the middle years' schools of the city to encourage a greater attendance level, as well as more exposure and accessibility for the students. The program is designed to bring in a qualified fitness instructor from the community to lead the students in an organized and fun fitness program. Chinook and Holy Trinity School Divisions as well as the administrators of each school are very supportive and encouraging of this program. Principal of Fairview Middle Years' School, Travis Kelln, stated: "I am completely on board anytime we are encouraging students to be physically active and having fun! The students will benefit greatly from this program." This is the first time a programming partnership has been established where we use the school facilities since 2006.

The city of Swift Current offers many fitness and sports programs for the youth to join, which is evident at our City Wide Registration event that is held twice a year with over 70 organizations in attendance for registrations. However, it is a growing concern with the large percentage of our children and youth that are still inactive in our community. The after school time between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm for our youth is a great concern since this is often when they are unsupervised and inactive. Therefore, our focus is on getting our children and youth more active after school so they will live long and healthy lives!

What we would do with \$10,000:

Firstly, the In Motion Community Pledge Challenge campaign in our community of Swift Current has been a great success! We may not be leading the challenge in pledges, but we are truly making our community more aware of the importance of physical activity in their lives. We have tried to bombard the community with the information about this challenge and the benefits to pledging. We have advertised on the radio, paper, facebook, webpages, twitter as well as local videos and the Southwest TV news. Visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=f75DL_TsUIk and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBd-639mdrw> to view these videos. We have spoken to all but two schools at assemblies in addition to sending 1600 notes home with the students. We have had pledge stations set up at our Bronco hockey games, high school drama performance, Little Theatre drama performance, the mall, Christmas concerts, Great Plains College, BodyFit fitness lounge, provincial volleyball tournament, The Youth Center, and the library.

Through all of these events we have made some very important connections and partnerships in our community with the arts, culture, sports and youth organizations. Even though some of our efforts were unsuccessful in receiving pledges, the future partnerships are very worthwhile. For example, when we reached out to the Seniors' facilities, they were unable to pledge because most of them do not have email addresses, however, we still built an important partnership with them so that in the New Year we are going to be having monthly newsletter items and begin monthly In Motion activities at the seniors' facilities. There is definitely an In Motion awareness in Swift Current which we hope will only continue to grow! And in order for this momentum to push forward, we must continue to build new partnerships, promote In Motion everywhere in our community as well as provide great opportunities for our residents to be active.

If our community was awarded the prize money of \$10 000, we would use the funds to expand our after school Fit For Fun program to every school in the community. It is now being offered to the three middle years' schools; however, with these funds we could then provide this free after school fitness program to our four elementary schools and our high school. This would target about 2 700 students from the ages of 5 – 19 according to the 2006 Canadian statistics for Swift Current. This program will help to break the barriers of participation for youth that come from single parent homes which

makes up 13% of the families in Swift Current including youth from aboriginal ancestry and visible minorities. The Fit for Fun program is an all inclusive program offered to all students regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity!

With this after school program we are hoping to attract more students to create a skill set for them to use later in life, as well as to gain confidence and knowledge of what a healthy lifestyle is like. This program will require sufficient advertising and promotion as well as paying the qualified instructors to lead the activities designed for each age group. Once the program is better established and has consistent hours and attendants, we are hoping to incorporate different sports instructors to teach a session such as yoga, boxing, lacrosse etc in order to expose the youth to various activities to keep them interested as well as to keep the momentum of the program growing. We know how important it is to have sustainable programs and we want to make sure that this beneficial program is long lasting in our community. We plan on having volunteers become a part of this program by training them and incorporating them in the success of the Fit for Fun program.

The mayor of Swift Current and Council Chamber members are fully behind this new movement in our community to keep kids active. In a radio interview, Mayor Schafer stated: "It is a great initiative put forth by In Motion Saskatchewan, and I am challenging other mayors throughout the province to make sure their communities are getting active, and we are hoping to set a great example throughout the province!" http://www.swiftcurrentonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16016 We also have the support and encouragement of the Chinook School Division and Holy Trinity School Division. It is obvious that our community knows the importance of our children and youth being physically active and leading healthy lifestyles. We are willing to work together to make it happen!



Mayor Jerrod Schafer takes the first pledge in the In Motion Community Pledge Challenge

Why should we win this challenge:

It is with your help and financial support that we can continue to build a successful after-school program for the youth of our community. By providing this program, we will break barriers such as socio-economic, cultural and ethnic as well as physical, mental and social wellbeing.

We also believe that this program can be used as a building block and pilot project for other communities to build upon or use as a template on how to build strong partnerships, motivate a community and run a successful after-school youth fitness program.

The success and progress of the Fit for Fun after-school program will be evaluated through both qualitative and quantitative data. The Outcome Model below outlines how this will be done and which data will be collected.

A.) Inputs:

- School facilities – in-kind
- Staff and staff time
- Equipment – in-kind
- Money and funding

B.) Constraints on this program:

- Funders' support
- Funding

C.) Activities:

- Providing Social Competencies and Positive Identity assets through offering physical fitness activities that build self-esteem and confidence in the youth
- Offering the opportunity for non-traditional physical activities
- Providing Boundaries and Expectation assets by creating a safe and caring environment with positive peer influences
- Offering Constructive use and Time assets in an after-school fitness program

D.) Outcomes – measured by quantitative date:

- number of participants in the Fit for Fun program each week
- number of returning participants each week
- number of different physical fitness activities planned

E.) Outcomes – measured by qualitative date:

(observations and conversations with the youth about their opinions, suggestions and concerns on physical activity)

- increased knowledge of fitness and physical activity
- increased physical activity and health benefits
- gained and shared knowledge of life skills learned
- increased self-esteem and positive image

Swift Current should win this challenge because the youth of our community deserve and need to have a fun fitness program offered to all of them so that they can increase their physical activity and become healthier! A healthy community is a strong community, and it begins with our children and youth since they are our future!



And residents are active!!

