



Dream Brokers

SUPPORTING ACTIVE KIDS IN SASKATCHEWAN!

**THE FRAMEWORK FOR RECREATION
IN CANADA GOALS AND PRIORITIES:**



**ACTIVE
LIVING**



**INCLUSION
AND ACCESS**

CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

In Saskatchewan almost one quarter of children live in poverty (Child and Family Poverty in Saskatchewan, 2017). Children living in core neighborhoods are less likely to be physically active and participate in sport, culture and recreation activities outside of school than their peers in higher-income neighborhoods. This can result in an adverse quality of life and less access to opportunities to be healthy.

IMPLEMENTATION

Supported by Give Kids a Chance Charity Inc., the mission of the Dream Broker Program is the sustained involvement and participation of children and youth experiencing poverty in new or existing arts, sports, cultural and recreational activities. Established in 2006, Dream Brokers is a community-led project that uses a community development approach.

A Dream Broker connects and supports children and youth by identifying and overcoming the social and economic barriers to participation they experience (e.g. registration fees, transportation, equipment, nutrition). He or she consults with children and their families, school staff and community service providers, and then creates new and existing opportunities for active participation. The Dream Brokers work closely with community organizations to address and support the needs, interests and dreams of the participants. They identify the interests of the child, link them to the activity, help fill out forms, and access funding and transportation and provide support while in the activity.

The Dream Brokers program partners with the Public and Catholic School Boards in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Yorkton, and North Battleford, service providers and other community organizations. The School Boards provide oversight and direction, attend all stakeholder meetings, assist with evaluation, and provide the Dream Brokers with office space and daily supervisory support. The Cities assist with education and promotion of the program at the provincial level.

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The Dream Brokers program presents opportunities for children and youth to develop physical literacy and engage in sustained participation in sport and physical activity. Children and youth are given the opportunity to refine, rehearse, and repeat a wide range of skills in a fun, supportive environment that emphasizes social and physical development. The after school/evening/weekend mandate ensures that the children and youth are participating in activities outside of school hours. In 2018, the program was enhanced to support a multi-sport program for children in Grades 1 and 2.

Dream Brokers helps students access both KidSport and Creative Kids—programs designed to increase the participation of children and youth in families facing financial barriers to sport and cultural activities of their choice. In 2018, Creative Kids also offered a new program, where Dream Brokers could access program funding, which in turn supported an additional 295 children in activities such as beading, drumming, tipi teachings, sewing, pottery, piano lessons and more.

The program supports the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action 89 and 90. Specifically, “the promotion of physical activity as a fundamental element of health and wellbeing” (89), a way to “reduce barriers to sports participation” (89) and as one of the “community sports programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples” (90).

The Dream Brokers program supports the following Framework for Recreation in Canada goals:

- Foster active living through physical recreation
- Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation, and
- Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and building strong, caring communities.

2017 OUTCOMES

- Dream Brokers connected and supported over 2,500 children and youth in 649 sport, culture and recreation programs. There were a total of 5,426 program registrations. Many participants accessed multiple programs throughout the year and because most face multiple barriers, it is estimated that over 8,000 barriers were removed.
- Through some 8,395 consultations with children and youth, barriers to participation were identified and overcome. Dream Brokers corrected the idea that some barriers are insurmountable. All consultations eventually led to successful registrations, due to persistence and continued connection over time.
- Family consultations occurred 4,500 times over the year to identify barriers to participation and help register children and youth in their preferred programming. Roughly 247 families participated. Moreover, 133 parents and caregivers volunteered with their child's program(s) in over 500 instances of volunteerism.
- Dream Brokers promotes the benefits of sport, culture and recreation. In 2017, they delivered 1,028 in-school and 416 promotions of programs outside of schools. They also supported the creation of 108 One-Day Events with service providers and schools. During consultations, they also discuss the benefits of participation; 100% of parents and caregivers felt Dream Brokers had increased their awareness of these benefits.
- 89% of program participants identified as representing diverse populations, including Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, new Canadians, and people with disabilities. Approximately 74% identified as Indigenous, and another 8% identified as newcomers.

2018 OUTCOMES

A survey reported:

- 100% of participants enjoyed their program, reported a high level of attendance and would like to continue in the next year.
- 73% of participants were in their 2nd + year of Dream Brokers.
- 67% of participants took part in multiple programs.
- 100% of parents and caregivers wished to keep their child/youth in the Dream Brokers program; 86% talked with their child about their programs at home; 82% wanted to get more involved (e.g. group meetings, coaching opportunities, summer activities where they can volunteer).

TESTIMONIALS

- “My experience in the Dream Brokers program was fun and gave me lots of opportunities. It helped me stay fit and healthy.” – Participant
- “I have learned how important it is for children to be involved in sport, culture and recreational activities. Being involved teaches important life skills, time management, teamwork, and commitment. Being a part of healthy activities provides individuals with a sense of pride.” – Dream Broker
- “The Dream Brokers support has relieved a huge financial stress off myself and helped my child stay healthy by participating in all her favourite activities.” – Caregiver
- “Dream Broker students are showing up for school, seeming more social with others and cannot wait to go to programs.” – School Principal



“My experience in the Dream Brokers program was fun and gave me lots of opportunities. It helped me stay fit and healthy.”



LESSONS LEARNED

- Take a “with community” and not a “for community” approach in developing and implementing participant-centered programming.
- Present the program in a positive and inclusive manner to ensure participants feel a sense of belonging.
- Recruit and train competent leaders. Hiring for Dream Brokers is based on 40% academic qualifications, 40% on competencies (experience working with youth), and 20% on characteristics such as passion and empathy, and experience that supports inclusive participation. The Dream Brokers program has 80% employee retention.
- Focus on more than just recreation and sport. The cultural element with a focus on diversity enhances sense of belonging and contributes to increased confidence and success in acquiring leadership skills.
- Create and maintain a strong partnership with schools. It is important to have the school’s buy-in from the beginning. Clarify roles, responsibilities and operational details with a Memorandum of Understanding.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- [Dream Brokers](#)
- [Give Kids A Chance Charity Inc.](#)
- [Child and Family Poverty in Saskatchewan](#) (2017). Hunter, Garson and Miguel Sanchez

Framework Goal and Priority	Goal 1: Active Living Goal 2: Access and Inclusion
Population Addressed	Children and youth that may not have access to, or experience barriers to participation, attending grades K-8 in elementary schools selected to participate in the program Includes Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, new Canadians, and people with disabilities.
Community	Schools in the urban centers of Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Yorkton and North Battleford, Saskatchewan
Setting	Urban
Lead Implementer and Organization	Give Kids a Chance Charity Inc. Cheryl McCallum Community Sport Development Manager Sask Sport Inc. cmccallum@sasksport.sk.ca 306-975-0807
Key Partners	Sask Sport Inc., SaskCulture, Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, School Boards, community organizations
Activity Focus	Increasing physical activity, sport, culture and recreation participation by addressing social and economic barriers
Stage of Development	Ongoing