



REACHING EACH AND EVERY ONE

Success Story

Youth learning how to play Reverse 4's

Volleyball program breaks down cost barriers for Vancouver youth

THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD NOAH LOVES TO play volleyball, but hasn't had the opportunity to play on an actual court.

At school, he and his friends don't have access to a volleyball net - so they play the game over the soccer nets, sometimes with a soccer ball.

His father Sen, who played volleyball when he was younger, likes to try and teach him at home or at a nearby park. But it's still not the same as practicing on a proper court.



COLLINGWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE,
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Canada

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Noah, Tyler & Riley played in the Reverse 4's Volleyball tournament after learning the basic skills during the skill development program for the Windermere Secondary Hub.



Noah building his serving skills during skill development.

“The idea was to train a number of youth to be coaches — so having certification, and giving them confidence to actually work with a group of younger athletes. It was building upon building.”

Molina Chow, CNH’s project coordinator who oversaw the program

In 2023, Noah - along with other youth aged 13 to 18 – were finally able to practice their volleyball skills on an actual court, and even receive some coaching, as part of Collingwood Neighbourhood House’s (CNH) Find Your Sweet Spot program. This opportunity was made possible thanks to funding from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association’s Reaching Each and Every One: A Community Sport Intervention program. This program, which was funded by Sport Canada’s Community Sport for All Initiative, seeks to remove barriers and increase sport participation rates for equity deserving groups across Canada.

CNH, which is based in Vancouver, offers a variety of recreation and sport programs for participants of all ages. Activities include music, dance, and art, as well as other physical and social activities. The Find Your Sweet Spot program provided youth in the neighbourhood the opportunity to play volleyball. Participants built skills, mastered them, and then had an opportunity to coach younger participants.

“The idea was to train a number of youth to be coaches – so having certification, and giving them confidence to actually work with a group of younger athletes. It was building upon building,” explains Molina Chow, CNH’s project coordinator who oversaw the program.

Chow says the program was initially geared towards youth aged 15 to 18, but the organization opened it up to youth aged 13 to help them make the transition from elementary to high school a little easier and give the younger players confidence to play with the older players. They can be intimidated by the older students.

She adds that for many of these youth, cost is a major barrier to participating, with some camps running as high as \$250 per week or it is too far for parents to take them to a camp further away.

Find Your Sweet Spot, however, was offered free of charge – which helped many youth overcome this barrier. The funding also covered the cost of the gym rental, and staffing needed to run the program.

“We would not have been able to run this program at all if it weren’t for the funding from CPRA,” Chow says. “We just won’t have the capacity to pay for our staff, and pay for the gym rental itself – especially in the summertime, when gym rentals are really hard to come by.”

For Noah, the experience also helped him get access to a volleyball court, which was a barrier for the Vancouver teen. The ability to play on an actual court – and with youth that were slightly older – helped give him more confidence as a player, says his father Sen.

“He feels a lot more confident playing with older kids,” Sen says, adding that the program has also improved his son’s volleyball skills. “I definitely see a lot more progression in his skill level. And I definitely saw a lot more improvement in a lot shorter time than we would have in the limited space at home, or at a park.”

Noah adds that he loved having the opportunity to play with other youth, and the experience has encouraged him to keep playing volleyball.

“What I enjoyed most was improving my volleyball skills,” he says. “I can’t wait to keep playing volleyball in high school.” 🍁