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Dauphin

Free Recreation Passes Remove Couch Potatoes' Last Excuse

Dauphin, the City of Sunshine, has been called an all-season wonderland, and several CDPI initiatives are promoting active and healthy living for area residents. One of the most popular programs is a free recreation pass giveaway, which has been accessed by an average of 200 people per month. For more than a year and a half, thanks to CDPI funding and in collaboration with Manitoba's *in motion* initiative, families have been able to receive passes once a month for each family member for a variety of recreational facilities. The program's most popular features have been swimming and bowling, and for those who don't want to get wet or hit the lanes, passes are available for the walking track at the Rec Complex, indoor playground for younger children, and even a skateboard park. There is even a free monthly swim at the pool, which features the province's only indoor wave pool.

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Anybody lacking safety equipment can go to the Friendship Centre to pick up free CDPI-provided helmets, elbow and knee pads for skateboarding and biking. Swimsuits and swim shorts are also available for anyone who needs them. The goal is to reduce all barriers to physical activity, and free safety gear and activity passes cut down on the number of excuses available to would-be couch potatoes. "People love the recreation passes," said Crystal Amyotte, a CDPI committee member. "They can't believe they're free – the whole family can go."

Of course, all that physical activity requires proper nourishment, and a number of programs have been designed to encourage healthy eating. In addition to well-received gardening and canning workshops, the CDPI started cooking clubs at the Friendship Centre that run for three to four weeks at a time. Another program that runs out of the Centre is Dauphin's Food for Thought hot lunch program. Junior High and High School students come to the Friendship Centre for free nutritional hot lunches that include foods like pizza buns, soup, and salad. Volunteers also go to area elementary schools twice a week between November and March to serve hot lunches that students sign up for.

Reaching young people with an effective message for disease prevention is a key focus of Dauphin's CDPI committee. Anti-smoking kits that include neon rubber bracelets with slogans like "Kick Butt" are distributed to youth. The committee is also planning a presentation by a Canadian

Cancer Society representative for middle school students where the kits will be given out. The plastic bags are filled with resources to quit smoking, information about second-hand smoke, and CDPI bracelets. People can ask for them at the Friendship Centre, clinics, and the health centre.

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Take Note

Swimming Benefits

Cardio and respiratory benefits: Swimming favours blood flow back to the heart and the pumping of blood to the legs. The body's horizontal position promotes good circulation.

Muscular benefits: Swimming is a complete physical activity that puts all of your muscles to work.

Anti-stress relief: Water is a very effective element for relaxation. It frees your muscles of tension and puts you in a state of well-being.

Weight control: Since swimming is an activity that requires a lot of endurance, it burns a lot of energy and then goes to work on any extra fat you may have on your body.

Adapted from

http://www.divine.ca/en/fitness-and-nutrition/articles/c_11_i_2928/swimming-and-its-benefits-1.html