

Report HDR-SS-06-14

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Lisa Campbell, Community Relations Worker
Meeting Date: March 12, 2014
Subject: **Community Investment & Sponsorship Grant from Bruce Power**
Status: Recommendation endorsed by Committee as presented per Resolution SSC24-14 March 12, 2014; Adopted by County Council April 1, 2014 per Resolution CC47-14;

Recommendation(s)

THAT Report HDR-SS-06-14 regarding the funding received from the Bruce Power Community Investment & Sponsorship Program be received for information.

Background

The focus of this particular initiative was to provide a cost-effective Healthy Community Cooking Program to residents who attend the Alpha Family Resource Centre in Owen Sound and in Bruce County at a Social Housing development in Walkerton. The goal of the resource centre is to provide a centralized location for services within the neighbourhood to reduce barriers to accessibility of services while fostering an environment that supports health and community mobilization.

65 households were approached to take a brief survey in the fall of 2013 to assist staff in identifying demographics and to obtain direction for future programs/services/activities to be offered at the Alpha Family Resource Centre. 47% of tenants completed the survey. Results of the survey are attached to this report and may be received for information. The results of the survey currently support the direction the Collaborative Partners are considering when developing resources and supports to offer to the participants of the Alpha Family Resource Centre.

Healthy Eating as a Community at the Alpha Family Resource Centre

The series included 11 sessions with new recipes prepared each week from the “Basic Shelf Cookbook.” On average, six parents and three children attended each week.

Participants attended consistently across the series and occasionally new participants tried the group as well. Two participants completed the Safe Food Handler's course to be able to act as cooking facilitators for the group. Many parents have since expressed interest in completing the safe food handler's course after recognizing the skills gained and the value it adds to a resume and employment opportunities.

Participants were open to trying a number of new foods and recipes they would otherwise never have experimented with before. Many participants were pleasantly surprised with the outcomes and chose to take leftovers home with them to share with their families. The facilitators and the child care provider received a \$200 gift card to a store of their choice as an honorarium for their help and each participant received a copy of the "Basic Shelf Cookbook" for their own kitchen.

While preparing food and eating, the informal atmosphere supported discussions around healthy eating as well as a number of other topics including: active living, information to support continuing education and employment and small business grants, their network of informal supports, problem solving, pest infestations, housing concerns/issues/ recommendations, Legal Clinic referrals, financial concerns, and neighbourhood safety.

Community Garden

The community garden elicited the participation of four parents regularly. Van Vugt's Garden Centre donated several seedlings and plants to fill the garden with a variety of vegetables. Child participants were the champions around weeding and watering and tasting produce directly from the garden. They would rototill the garden with their bicycles being careful to avoid the delicate plants. Cooler spring temperatures and a brisk fall shortened the growing season, however green tomatoes were visible ripening on window ledges of a number of homes.

Pedometer Challenge

Seven parents participated in a pedometer challenge from December 2013 to February 2014. Participants chose to run the challenge at this time to encourage families to be active during the winter months when the weather and sidewalk conditions make being active more challenging. The winner of the challenge received a \$25 gift card to Walmart however all participants were rewarded for their participation with a \$15 gift card to Walmart.

One of the consistent significant positive benefits identified by parents included that their involvement at the Alpha Family Resource Centre allowed them to participate in a purposeful, productive, meaningful way. They learned and grew in an environment where they were respected and their input was valued. For some parents this requirement to be at regularly scheduled events supported their development of other positive skills such as time management and dependability.

These programs provided a great opportunity for folks who possessed leadership qualities to take direction from others who maybe did not appear to possess strong leadership skills. Conversely participants who were more shy and reserved had the ability to share their perspectives and take on some leadership roles. For some parents their accomplishments included successful group skills and participation as part of a community. Many participants voluntarily offered critical feedback to improve the dynamics of the group. They also “looked out for one another” and helped each other to be successful in participation and attendance by assisting with childcare and errands.

New partners engaged at the Alpha Family Resource Centre included:

- The Financial Literacy Program Coordinator from the United Way of Bruce & Grey
- Owen Sound Police Services (OSPS), which has developed into an ongoing partnership with the OSPS and students of the Police Foundations Course through Georgian College to provide support to improve communication, identify environmental concerns and make surveillance recommendations to encourage Community mobilization.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

All expenses for these programs were billed to the Bruce Power Grant.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Enabling healthy and resilient communities by working cooperatively with community partners to improve quality of life opportunities

Attachments

Results of Survey Completed at Alpha Fall 2013

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisa Campbell

Community Relations Worker

Director Sign Off: *R Wyatt*

Alpha Street Survey October 2013

Summary Report, February 2014

A total of 68 households were approached to take the survey.

- 37 households did not complete the survey

A total of 31 households completed the survey.

- Only 23 respondents indicated their sex
- 13% (n=3) of respondents who indicated their sex were male
- 87% (n=20) of respondents who indicated their sex were female

How many people live in your household?

Older Adults (age 65 years and older) = 1

- 1 household has 1 older adult living in the home

Adults (age 20 to 65 years) = 29

- 16 households have 1 adult living in the home
- 12 households have 2 adults living in the home
- 1 household has 3 adults living in the home

Teens (age 14 to 19 years) = 9

- 6 households have 1 teen living in the home
- 1 household has 2 teens living in the home
- 2 households have 3 teens living the home

Pre-Teens (age 9 to 13 years) = 12

- 11 households have 1 pre-teen living in the home
- 1 household has 2 pre-teens living in the home

Children (age 0 to 8 years) = 20

- 10 households have 1 child living in the home
- 9 households have 2 children living in the home
- 1 household has 3 children living in the home

How long has your family lived at Alpha Street?

- 48% (n=15) of respondents have lived at Alpha Street for **more than 3 years**
- 26% (n=8) of respondents have lived at Alpha Street for **1 to 3 years**
- 26% (n=8) of respondents have lived at Alpha Street for **less than 1 year**

The Good Food Box

- 97% (n=29) of respondents **have heard of the Good Food Box**
- Only 27% (n=8) of respondents **have bought or received the Good Food Box in the last 6 months.**

Do you think that you or anyone else in your house would be interested in helping to plant, maintain, and harvest a community vegetable garden with others in your neighbourhood?

- 53% (n=16) of respondents said that the people living in their household **would be interested** in helping with a community garden

Have you ever done anything together with other people in your neighbourhood? (For example: walking group, BBQ supper, play group for kids).

- 32% (n=10) of respondents have **never**
- 7% (n=2) have **once**
- 42% (n=13) of respondents have **a few times**
- 19% (n=6) of respondents have **many times**

Thinking about the people in your neighbourhood, how many people do you know?

- 3% (n=1) of respondents **don't know anyone** in the neighbourhood
- 84% (n=26) of respondents **know a few of the people** in the neighbourhood
- 10% (n=3) of respondents **know many of the people** in the neighbourhood
- 3% (n=1) of respondents **know most of the people** in the neighbourhood

Do you feel you can get help from people in your neighbourhood when you need it?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
1 (No, not at all)		29.0%	9
2		12.9%	4
3		25.8%	8
4		9.7%	3
5 (Yes, definitely)		22.6%	7
Total Responses			31

In the past year, have you ever used, or attended any events in, at the Alpha Street Family Resource Centre?

- 74% (n=23) of respondents have used, or attended an event at the Family Resource Centre in the last year

If yes, please give an example of something you attended at the Family Resource Centre:

- BBQ (7 respondents)
- PMA group (5 respondent)
- Dropped off paper work (2 respondents)
- Good Food Box (1 respondent)
- Public Health (1 respondent)
- SYIPS (1 respondent)
- Guitar lessons, cooking community networking (1 respondent)

Thinking of yourself, what kinds of things do you like to do for fun?

- Go for a walk (7 respondents)
- Go to the park (4 respondents)
- Computer / video games (4 respondents)
- Board games/ puzzles (3 respondents)
- Camping (3 respondents)
- Spend time with kids (3 respondents)
- Sports (3 respondents)

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Would you be interested in helping out with activities at the FRC?

- 54% of respondents said "yes"

Would you be interested in helping out with information sharing?

- 52% of respondents said "yes"

What kind of information would you find valuable?

- Activities happening at the FRC or going on with housing (5 respondents)
- Classes (e.g., parenting, cooking, stress, personal development, health, job skills, income tax, fire safety) (5 respondents)
- Don't know/none (4 respondents)
- Activities for children (2 respondents)
- Health and other services (flu shots, dental, backpack program) (1 respondent)
- Community recreation (1 respondent)

What is the best way for you to receive information about the centre and related events?

AFRC newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 90% Yes• 10% No
Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 47% Yes• 53% No
Work-of-mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 43% Yes• 57% No
Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 26% Yes• 74% No
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20% Yes• 80% No