

Summer 2013



Closer *to* Home

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Uniting vulnerable children, youth & families

Table of Contents

[Cross Cultural Parenting Program](#)
[Backpack Program Changes](#)
[CTH Seeking Volunteers](#)
[AGM Save the Date](#)
[WCRC Programs Resuming Soon](#)
[Big Smoke Ceremony](#)
[Donor Appreciation](#)

Quick Links

[Our Website](#)
[Donate Now](#)
[Contact Us](#)

Backpack Program Changes Staples for Education Registration Process

If you need assistance getting a backpack for your child for this school year, help is at hand. And if you have participated in the backpack program in the past, please note that there are changes this year. If your child attends a Calgary Board of Education school, please speak to your school principal to register for a backpack as soon as you can (before the school year begins). If your child attends a Separate School Board school you can access a backpack by calling the Salvation Army at 403-220-0432 to register.

Closer to Home will gladly accept gift cards for Staples, Walmart and Target to purchase school supplies and clothes for families still in need of these items.

If you would like to donate gift cards for back-to-school items please call 403-543-0550 ext 226 or visit our website for more ways to donate:
www.closetohome.com/donate

Dear Friends of Closer to Home,

The days are getting shorter, kids are anticipating the first day of school and many parents are looking forward to it. As we say farewell to summer, in this edition of the Closer to Home quarterly newsletter, you can read about a new West Central Resource Centre parenting program starting up in September, as well as programs that will be resuming. You can also read about the "Big Smoke" ceremony that happened at Pekewe House in June, dates for our upcoming Annual General Meeting and our current volunteer needs.

Goodbye summer, we'll miss you!

New Parenting Program to Launch This Fall

By Mahmoud Rahim, Volunteer Journalist

Closer to Home Community Services is partnering with Calgary Immigrant Women's Association to host the Cross Cultural Parenting program (CCP). The CCP program begins this September at the Closer to Home offices (3507A - 17 Avenue SW) and is offered over five weeks, with two-hour sessions twice a week.

This program is designed to help immigrant parents cope with parenting challenges in a new country and new culture. The program is available to all immigrant parents and grandparents, including Canadian citizens with linguistic or cultural barriers. Here are some of the details of the program:

- Educational workshops for parents of children aged 0 to 6 years old
- Workshops for parents of teenagers
- Individual parenting skills support
- Customized educational sessions and support for fathers
- Guidance to understand the expectations of Canadian society
- Facilitator training sessions for service providers working with immigrant families

This program is designed to educate parents on how to connect their cultural values with Canadian cultural expectations, and gives Closer to Home the opportunity to facilitate the transition of families with multicultural backgrounds to life in Canada. The Cross Cultural Parenting program perfectly complements the many other multicultural and diversity-related programs that CTH's West Central Resource Centre currently offers.

For more information on the program and how to register, please call Minoush at the West Central Resource Centre at 403-543-0555 or email westcentralcrc@closetohome.com.

CTH Currently Seeking Homework Club and Food Donation Pick-Up Volunteers

By Rohan Somers, Volunteer Journalist

Homework Club Tutor

Closer to Home (CTH) operates three Homework Clubs in Calgary, at Glenbrook, Lincoln Park and Shaganappi locations. Each hosts between 16 and 30 students once a week from September to June. Several volunteers are needed for each location to support the program and assist students who can benefit from after-school help in core subjects like English and math.

Katie McArthur runs the Shaganappi Homework Club and says the value a volunteer provides to the program can be seen in the ongoing academic performance of the students.

"You're with the students for such a long period of time that you can really see the changes in their academic performance and it's really encouraging," says Katie "It's great to see their progress over that time and see how you've really made an impact in their lives."

Katie notes that the volunteer experience may be of particular interest to post-secondary students in teaching or education programs not only because of the direct teaching experience, but also because of the unique experience gained outside of a classroom setting.

Amanda Reid runs the Lincoln Park and Glenbrook Homework Clubs and says the need for volunteers is high because of the number of students in each club and the level of one-on-one help that students require.

"We have lots of kids that are below grade level," says Amanda "So we need a lot of volunteers that can help with reading, math, the basic subjects; because the kids are so far behind and they might not have anyone at home that speaks English well enough to help them with their homework."

Katie and Amanda are hoping to get three or four volunteers for the Lincoln Park location, one or two for the Glenbrook location, and two or three for Shaganappi.

Food Donation Pick-Up Volunteer

Closer to Home also needs a volunteer who can pick up food from the Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank and deliver to the CTH West Central Resource Centre between 8:30am and 10:30am on Thursday mornings.

The program serves approximately 100 people each month and is important to a number of families who depend on food bank donations through CTH. Without a volunteer to deliver donations in recent weeks, we have, at times, had no food to distribute.

Amanda and Katie also help facilitate the CTH Food Bank program and say the need for a volunteer to deliver donations is high because of families who may depend on the CTH West Central Resource Centre in emergency situations.

"Sometimes you have a 24-hour wait to get into the Food Bank," says Amanda "and sometimes we have families come in who say 'we have nothing in our fridge, we can't feed our kids tonight.' At least we can give them something to make for dinner that night."

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for either of these programs, please visit the CTH Website to complete a [Volunteer Application Form](#) and email to volunteer@clostertohome.com



Clloser to Home AGM - Save the Date!

Mark your calendar for our 2013 Annual General Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at 5pm Thursday, October 24, 2013, at the Marda Loop Communities Association (Upper Hall), located at 3130 – 16 Street SW. We will unveil our annual report, celebrate practitioners who have achieved certification and provide special recognition to our donor, volunteer and practitioner of the year. Light refreshments will be served.

We hope you'll be able to join us!
To RSVP or for more information please call 403-543-0550 ext 0
or email reception@clostertohome.com.

WCRC Programs Start up Again in September

By Tina Chapman, CTH Employee

Closer to Home's West Central Resource Centre brings a coordinated approach to providing a variety of programs and services to communities located in Southwest Calgary. It is a place where people are valued and individual differences and diversities are celebrated. Here are a few programs that are resuming in September 2013 that are designed to help children and parents gain skills to be successful in many different areas of everyday life.

Homework Club

Students in grades one through six can access homework help, participate in recreational activities and get to know other children in their neighbourhoods. Children receive support with their homework as well as their social/emotional skill development. Our staff provide grade-appropriate educational activities for students who do not bring their homework.

When and where:

Bethany Chapel

Tuesday 3:30pm – 5:15pm

Shaganappi Library

Wednesday 3:30pm – 5:00pm

Glenbrook Calgary Complex

Wednesday 3:30pm – 5:30pm



How to join:

For details and to register for Bethany and Glenbrook, call **Amanda** (403) 543-0550 ext 244
Shaganappi, call **Katie** (403) 543-0550 ext 224

Mother Goose

Mother Goose is a program for parents and caregivers, and young children aged birth to four years. The program uses the power of songs, rhyme and stories to create a fun, positive environment to equip parents with new skills and promotes positive interactions between parents and their children.

When and where:

Shaganappi Library

3415 - 8 Avenue SW

Wednesdays 10:00am - 11:00am

How to join:

Call Amanda at (403) 543-0550 ext. 244 for details and to register



Money Management

Want to learn more about managing your money? Money Management is a 6 week budgeting workshop, to help teach individuals the skills they need to save money, manage debt and budget effectively.



When and where:

West Central Resource Centre

3507A - 17 Avenue SW

Date and time to be determined

How to join:

Call Amanda at (403) 543-0550 ext. 244 for details and to register

MUST BE REGISTERED TO ATTEND

Big Smoke Held in Support of CTH Aboriginal Programs

By Marsha Hanson, CTH Employee



On June 5, 2013, a Native Ceremony known as "Big Smoke" was held at Closer to Home's Pekewe House. In Native culture, Big Smoke ceremonies are held to honor and receive guidance from the Creator. Closer to Home (CTH) sought guidance and Spiritual direction for future program development. Preparation for the Big Smoke started with Elder Grant Little Mustache (Ceremonies Elder) and a CTH Aboriginal team member (this writer) offering prayer to the Creator, to ask for specific direction for the Pekewe House Program as well as other CTH programs.

A male representative for CTH's Aboriginal Services (the Sponsor) was chosen by Elder Little Mustache to sit in the Holy Place, a position in the inner circle of the ceremony. His role was to receive prayers and blessings on behalf of CTH during the ceremony. The Facilitating Elder, other Elders and the Pipe Carrier were also a part of the inner circle, while female Elders and other participants sat in an outer circle. The ceremony started at dusk and went through the night until dawn.

The evening started with a feast of potatoes, beef, vegetables, bannock, fruit and water was served to all participants. Leonard Bastien, the Facilitating Ceremonies Elder, opened

the ceremony by explaining why the Big Smoke Ceremony has been called. Next, a smudging ceremony of sage and sweet grass was carried out to drive out negative spirits, feelings or influences, and also to keep negative spirits from entering the area where a ceremony took place. It was also an opportunity for participants to spiritually cleanse themselves.

After all preparations were complete, the Pipe Ceremony began. The pipe is very sacred to First Nations people. The pipe was kept in a sacred bundle owned by the Pipe Carrier, and only he or the Helper was allowed to open the bundle to prepare for the ceremony.

(continued on page 4)

The Pipe Carrier Helper offered prayers to the four directions (north, south, east and west), the Creator, Mother Earth and all living things. The pipe was then passed to the participants for the opportunity to either touch or smoke it. The tobacco was then allowed to "die" and the pipe was disassembled and returned to the bundle until the next ceremony.

Throughout the night there were prayers, drumming, songs, and finally a berry soup (cooked by a female

Elder through the night) was served to draw the ceremony to a close. After the ceremony was over, one of the Elders went around the circle and collected a symbol of each participant's prayers. The Elder offered the symbols to the Creator in a private ceremony after the Big Smoke was complete.

CTH Board Members, an Associate Director, Manager and Coordinator of Aboriginal Services and members from the Aboriginal Services team

attended the Big Smoke. Each participant was significant to the overall experience of the Big Smoke. The opportunity to participate in these prayers for guidance and receiving of blessing from the Creator, helped not only to strengthen the unity of those present, but also gave guidance for the work done within CTH's Aboriginal Programs. What an honor it has been to be a participant in the Big Smoke and a member of this team!



Donor Appreciation

Closer to home would like to recognize our supporters from the last quarter (April 1, 2013 - June 30, 2013)

- Barb Henning
 - Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank
 - Cenovus Energy
 - Cristin Forbes-MacFarlane
 - Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church
 - Eric Lumsden
 - Erin O'Reilly
 - Forward Level Marketing
- Geoffrey McMillan
 - Glamorgan Bakery
 - Glamorgan Church of God
 - Government of Alberta
 - James D. Lytle, P. Eng.
 - Jennifer Head
 - Joanne Rawlinson
 - John L. Stewart Architects Ltd
- Karen Olivier
 - Kids Up Front Foundation
 - Linda Kolner
 - Michelle Ribeiro
 - Minoush Rafie
 - Susan Smith
 - The Staff of Crystal Glass
 - Tina Chapman

Yes! Closer to Home can count on my support

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Email _____ Phone # _____

Donation: \$250.00 \$100.00 \$75.00 \$50.00 \$25.00 Other Amount \$ _____

Cheque Visa American Express Mastercard

Card # _____ Name on Card _____

Expiry Date _____

Does Closer to Home have your permission to publish your name in the Donor Recognition section of CTH publications such as our quarterly newsletter and Annual Report? Yes No

Please send completed form to: _____ Charitable Registration #: 89823 5759 RR0001

3507A - 17 Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T3E 0B6



COMMUNITY SERVICES
www.closertohome.com
Ph: 403-543-0550

*For credit card donations, we will call you during business hours to verify information. All credit card donations are processed through the Canada Helps Website