



River City Squash News

Summer 2017 Update

www.rivercitysquash.org

2016-2017: Our Second Year



The 2016-2017 school year was another year of growth and expansion for our youth program, and we are again deeply grateful for the support of all involved. Thanks to our supporters, volunteers, and community partners, we ran weekly sessions throughout the year at the squash courts at No Limits Fitness. Eight students from our first school partner, **Brocklehurst Middle School**, started again with us in the fall of 2016 and twelve students from **Arthur Hatton Elementary School**, our new school partner, began weekly sessions in December 2016.

The program works by engaging students through the sport of squash and fostering personal growth through academic tutoring and mentoring. We connect with students from grades four to seven, encouraging participation and commitment in weekly after school sessions, with the plan of supporting them through the program until graduation from high school.

Thanks to everyone's support, we also ran programs with groups of children and youth from our community partners, including weekly sessions through the fall and early winter with the Kamloops Boys and Girls Club. The size of the sessions varied, with eight to twelve children and youth on the two courts in the weekly after-school sessions, while our outreach sessions range in size from ten to sixteen children.

Athletic skills are improving, but more significantly for us is the growth in relationships, between the students themselves (an ongoing challenge at times!), and especially between the students and our staff and volunteers.

Our Program



We are continuing to build our program on the Urban Squash model which has been a strong and positive force in the lives of hundreds of inner-city kids across the United States. Squash works well as a tool of engagement, especially for those with short attention spans, and it can be adapted to suit different learning levels and abilities. Our focus is to connect with at-risk children and youth from lower-income families, although we include children and youth from a variety of backgrounds to encourage peer modelling and overall healthy diversity.

Mentoring

Mentorship is an inherent part of the River City Squash program. Providing positive role models to the students through staff and volunteers and developing relationships with the students is the foundation to the program's success. By providing a safe, reliable, and predictable environment, we can encourage the children and youth to explore and understand personal choices leading toward healthy lifestyles, respect and empathy towards others, and self-esteem and confidence in themselves.

Academics

Weekly sessions this last school year consisted of groups of students in grades 4-6 and 7-9, and we are developing academic activities to challenge and engage all levels. For all students, homework help is always available as needed. An unexpected benefit of using the squash courts at No Limits Fitness is that the facility seems to be popular with teachers and staff at Brocklehurst school. The students enjoy the extra-

Our Mission



Our mission is to engage at-risk youth to achieve their full potential. We seek to build motivation, through an engaging environment, and to expand and enrich each participant's life experience.

A note from Dave Clutton,
Executive Director:



We are very grateful for the support we have had - many thanks to all of you! If you would like to be involved in any way, or if you'd like to know more about our program, please contact me by phone: 250-314-9600, or by email: dave@rivercitysquash.org

Our Volunteer Leaders



Danica Silver

Danica is the Learning Assistance Resource teacher at Brock, and she has been instrumental in helping to start and develop the after-school program. She has also helped to guide weekly sessions with

curricular interaction, and sometimes the teachers stop by to chat or even to take a break from their workout to sit down with a student and lend a hand with their homework.

We will continue to offer homework help and to work on basic literacy skills in English and mathematics. We also focus on building knowledge relating to physiology and health, as these tie in so well with the game of squash and sport in general.



Literacy

We are building a small lending library with books that our students can sign out and return. We also have several boxes of books donated by Domtar and First Books Canada. First Books donates books to educational programs and schools, and Domtar facilitated the donation of books to share with our students. These books we give to our students to keep, and we will gladly share any extra books with other community groups.

Sport

The students are developing their athletic skills, although there is a wide range of ability and focus. Some students need time to build confidence in their own abilities, while others may have had success previously in athletic endeavours. Some need encouragement and opportunity to perform at ease and to their best or to act collaboratively in a group setting. Our work is to encourage each one, to build skills, confidence, and awareness of their own physical abilities and strengths.

our grade eight students this year, acting as a coach, mentor, tutor, and counsellor.



Adrian Conradi

Adrian coached mostly with the Arthur Hatton group sessions, and his patience, optimism, and positive outlook served as great inspiration. Adrian is a teacher and international education consultant who has experience locally at TRU World and internationally; he is also a published writer and a fierce crokinole player.



Kyle Crowder

Kyle has helped coach weekly sessions with both schools and has been a regular volunteer with the Brock middle school student sessions; his energy and enthusiasm provided a welcome boost to the sessions. Kyle works as a financial associate and develops games in his spare time (when he isn't playing squash).

School Partners

We began the program by connecting with schools and community partners and in the spring of 2016, we began weekly sessions with our first partner school, **Brocklehurst Middle School**. In December of 2016, we began sessions with our second school partner, **Arthur Hatton Elementary School** - many thanks to principal Deb Piggin and the teachers and staff for their support for the program! We are continuing to work towards developing partnerships with other schools in north Kamloops, and with the elementary school serving children from the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc Indian Band, the **Sk'elep School of Excellence**. We also plan to continue sessions with the alternative high school for aboriginal youth, **Four Directions Storefront School**.

Community Partners

The **Kamloops Boys and Girls Club** squash sessions are scheduled during the summer months and during the school year; these sessions allow us to connect with more children from north shore schools. The **Sports/Recreation team of the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc – Kamloops Indian Band** and the **Full Circle Youth Centre** have come to some outreach sessions at the squash courts.

The local daycare, **Puddle Jumpers**; these sessions are also a good way for us to not only introduce physical literacy concepts to the smaller children but also serve as an introduction to the children who may become participants in the weekly sessions in the future.

No Limits Fitness, the fitness facility with squash courts in Kamloops, has generously continued to offer discounted access to their facility space for the program; their facility is located close to the schools serving low-income families on the north shore of Kamloops. The kids in our sessions can be boisterous, to say the least, and the noise and activity level is at times rather high and somewhat unusual for the facility - we are grateful not only for use of the space but also for the support of the facility members!



Kathy Rollheiser

Kathy responded to our request to the local squash group for more female supervisors for the Tuesday group and brought immediate calm to the chaos. Kathy is a special education consultant and has worked with children for 30 years. She currently conducts teacher and parent training workshops on teaching children with learning disabilities.



Hubert Bourne

Hubert has been coaching with us since 2015. This year he volunteered to help with outreach sessions with the Boys and Girls Club and the local daycare kids, and also at weekly sessions when possible. When he is not coaching or playing squash, Hubert runs his own business, primarily as a home builder and renovator.



Online Information

For more information on River City Squash, please visit our website: www.rivercitysquash.org

Our Volunteers and Supporters

We are fortunate to have had the help of a fantastic group of volunteers helping out on and off the court. Volunteer coaches and tutors to date have included Danica Silver, Hubert Bourne, Adrian Conradi, Kyle Crowder, Tom Vinterlik, Kathy Rollheiser, Broughton Maywood, and Grant Rice. Volunteers play a vital role in our program, providing positive role models and mentors for our students.

If you are interested in helping our program as a volunteer, there are a lot of opportunities to become involved, and positions can be weekly or on-call.

Academic tutors: Volunteers are needed to work with our students on daily homework assignments. Subject areas may include basic reading, math, science, and computer skills.

Squash coaching: Volunteers are needed to coach, drill, and practice with the students on court. Coaching certification is preferred but not required, and players with a passion for the game and a minimum C playing level are welcome to apply.

Community outings: Volunteers may also be needed to help with community service events.

Our Supporters and Community Partners 2014-2017



Champions (\$10,000 +)

The Joyce Family Foundation

Leaders (\$5,000-9,999)

Anonymous

Economical Insurance

General Mills, Champions for Healthy Kids

Loyal Protestant Association

RBC Learn to Play Grant

TELUS (Thompson Okanagan Community Board)

Patrons (\$2,500-4,999)

Anonymous

City of Kamloops, Social Planning Grant

Hamber Foundation

McGregor Young Foundation

Tweedledum Foundation

Friends (\$1,000-2,499)

Anonymous

BAT Construction

Charles and Julie Bentall Family Foundation

Kamloops Blazers Sports Society

The Lloyd Carr-Harris Foundation

Lohn Foundation

Province of BC and viaSport

The Rotary Club of Kamloops

TD Canada Trust; TD Play

Supporters (\$500-999)

adidas Canada

Certes Applied and Natural Sciences Ltd.

Dark Horse Consulting Ltd.

Georgina Foundation

Schein Foundation

Sean Gosnell

Shefali Thakore

Steve and Kathy Rollheiser

Contributors (\$250-499)

Leanne Children's Foundation

Murray Foubister

Donors (\$1- 249)

Anonymous (2)

Bruce Madu

Chris Town

Dave Clutton

Mario Costa

Naowarat Cheeptham

Teck Resources (matching funds)

Gifts in Kind

Domtar (books for our students, with First Book Canada)

Our Corporate Supporters

Black Knight

No Limits Fitness

Tad's Sporting Goods

River City Squash is a registered charity and contributions are tax deductible in accordance with the laws governing gifts to Canadian charities.

