



River City Squash News

Summer 2019 Update

www.rivercitysquash.org

2018-2019: Our Fourth Year!



Summer has arrived once again, and we have wrapped up our fourth year of programming. We had many new faces on the squash courts along with a strong return from previous participants, and we are once again deeply grateful for the support of all involved in helping to run our sessions throughout the school year. We now have four school partners and a new weekly session with home-school students - thank you to our supporters, volunteers, and community partners!

We started weekly after-school sessions in 2016 with students from our first school partner, Brocklehurst Middle School, and later that year Arthur Hatton Elementary became our second school partner. We began sessions with students from AE Perry Elementary in the spring of 2018, a group of home-school students at the beginning of 2019, and students from Parkcrest Elementary in the spring. In this last school year we had a total of forty-five participants, including twenty-nine elementary students, thirteen middle-school students, and three high-school students.

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

Our Program



We are continuing to build our program on the Urban Squash and Academics Model. 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. We work with teams of students, with a target of ten to twelve students in each session. We pick students up at their schools at the end of the school day, drive them to the sessions and then drive them home afterwards. Snacks are provided when we pick them up, usually mandarins or apples, bananas, granola bars, and fruit juice, and the food continues to be one of the favourite parts of the session.

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.

Sport

We use the sport of squash and physical activity in general to encourage healthy lifestyles and continuous learning. Squash is a physically and intellectually demanding sport that requires focus, technical skill, and physical fitness. Squash works well as a tool of engagement, especially for those with short attention spans (the ball is never that far away), and it can be adapted to suit different learning levels and abilities.

A note from Dave Clutton, our Executive Director:



We are very grateful for our supporters, partners, and volunteers - many thanks to all! 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 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.

Our Volunteer Leaders



Danica Silver

Danica is the Learning Assistance Resource teacher at Brocklehurst, and she has been instrumental in helping to develop the after-school program. She has also helped to guide weekly sessions with our students, acting as a coach, mentor, tutor, and counsellor.

Depending on the session, we sometimes allow time for unstructured play and the freedom to play in a supervised and safe environment. The group develops games together and rules must be agreed upon, allowing players to build social skills, learn to interact with others equitably, and agree on fair standards of play.

Leadership

Squash is an excellent sport for youth development. As an individual and often intense sport, the players must develop motivation and accept responsibility in order to improve physically, mentally, and emotionally. Squash also offers great opportunity to develop leadership skills, by actively helping to lead and coach, or by simply modelling positive character traits amongst their peers. Skills are developed through play and practice, building confidence in abilities, and eventually players learn to mentor younger and newer players in groups and in one-on-one settings.



Academics

Weekly sessions this last school year consisted of groups of students in grades four to six (elementary level) and seven to ten (middle and high school levels). Academic activities consisted of literacy, math, and geography puzzles, along with word searches and concentration games to challenge and engage all levels. We focus on building knowledge relating to physiology and health, as these tie in so well with the game of squash and sport in general. For all students, homework help is always available as needed.

Literacy

We maintain a small lending library, along with 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. We give these books to our students to keep, and we will gladly share books with other community groups.



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 is learning Mandarin in his spare time.



School Partners

Sessions with our first partner school, **Brocklehurst Middle School**, and our second school partner, **Arthur Hatton Elementary School** were well attended throughout the school year. The cohort from our third school partner, **A.E. Perry Elementary School**, graduated and moved on from that school last year, so we are working to rebuild the team there. Our fourth group was formed with the home-school students in January of 2019. In the spring of 2019 we began sessions with **Parkcrest Elementary School**, and it was a great start to a new school partnership with enthusiastic and often exuberant students.

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, the **Sk'elep School of Excellence**.

Community Partners



Community partner sessions have in the past included the **Kamloops Boys and Girls Club**, the **Full Circle Youth Centre** and local daycare **Puddle Jumpers**, and we will continue to offer outreach sessions when possible during school breaks and the summer months.

No Limits Fitness, the fitness facility with squash courts in Kamloops, offered 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.



Phil Arkinstall

Phil has been a driving force for the program at Brocklehurst, helping to form the team there and also helping to coach on court. He spends his free time with his family, playing sports, and training their young dog.

Program Goals

- Improve life skills
- Improve decision making skills
- Build positive relationships
- Build leadership skills
- Increase critical thinking skills
- Build healthy lifestyle choices
- Improve cultural awareness
- Improve academic performance
- Increase sense of belonging
- Improve sense of safety and security



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 wonderful group of volunteers helping out on and off the court. Volunteer coaches and tutors to date have included Danica Silver, Cheyenne Macleod, Adrian Conradi, Kyle Crowder, Brian Demsey, Adelaide Hu, Crystal Austin, Lavonne Fortie, Hubert Bourne, Tom Vinterlik, Phil Arkinstall, 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 tutoring: 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 2014-2019



Champions (\$10,000 +)

The Joyce Family Foundation

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

Ames Family Foundation; Anonymous; The Block Charitable Foundation; Dr Ann Worth Charitable Foundation; Economical Insurance; General Mills, Champions for Healthy Kids; The Johansen Larsen Foundation; Loyal Protestant Association; RBC Learn to Play Grant; TELUS Thompson Okanagan

Community Board

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

Anonymous; Chris Spencer Foundation; CIBC Wood Gundy - Chris Uri; City of Kamloops, Social Planning Grant; GMR Foundation; Hamber Foundation; The Lloyd Carr-Harris Foundation; Lohn Foundation; McGregor Young Foundation; Province of BC and viaSport; Sherman Foundation; Trails Charitable Foundation; Tweedledum Foundation

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

adidas Canada; Anonymous; BAT Construction; Charles and Julie Bentall Family Foundation; Joel Olson; Kamloops Blazers Sports Society, Sports Legacy Fund; Loblaw Healthy Kids Grant; Mathisen Family Private Foundation; The Rotary Club of Kamloops; Schein Foundation; Scotiabank; TD Canada Trust, TD Play

Supporters (\$500-999)

Anonymous; Certes Applied and Natural Sciences Ltd.; Dark Horse Consulting Ltd.; Georgina Foundation; Iranian-Canadian Benevolent Foundation; Riley Nash; Sean Gosnell; Shefali Thakore; Steve and Kathy Rollheiser

Contributors (\$250-499)

Anonymous; Leanne Children's Foundation; Murray Foubister

Donors (\$1- 249)

Andrew Kaminsky; Anonymous (2); Bruce Madu; Chris Town; Dave Clutton; Grant Rice; 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.

