

Boys and Girls Club getting grant

For the third straight year, RBC will be providing grant money to the Boys and Girls Club of Strathcona County

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The Boys and Girls Club of Strathcona County will be receiving a grant of up to \$40,000 from RBC. The announcement was made by RBC earlier this month.

According to Tyler Roed, program co-ordinator for the local Boys and Girls Club, this is the third consecutive year RBC will be providing funding.

Previously, the club received approximately \$40,000 and \$32,000 Roed said.

“Canadians realize that after-school programs are crucial in keeping kids safe, inspiring them to learn and helping to alleviate some pressures for working families,” said RBC’s vice-president of Corporate Citizenship. She is also the executive director of the RBC Foundation.

“These grants will help more after school programs in at risk communities deliver enriched activities outside the classroom and support the development of social skills with peers that will pay academic dividends.”

“It helps with programming,” Roed said of the money. “Just basically everything with our after school program: staffing, snacks, materials.”

In addition to RBC funding, the club also receives grants from Strathcona County and the Boys and Girls Club of Canada.

The local Boys and Girls Club offers after-school service to children ages six through 12 between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. during the week, in addition to other youth-oriented programs.

Recently, the Boys and Girls Club has partnered with the Robin Hood Association at the Children and Youth Community Centre. The club will celebrate the grand opening of the centre, located at 3 Spruce Ave., this Wednesday at 4 p.m. A ribbon cutting is planned for 5:30 p.m.

According to the club’s 2008 report, it served 156 youth last year with after-school drop-ins averaging 25 youth a day.

The club provides healthy snacks and teaches children social interaction skills providing arts and crafts, as well as recreational activities.

In addition to the after-school program, summer camps with trips to Banff and Jasper are also offered by the local club.

Roed said the club is not affiliated with the Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton, which recently announced it would have to cutback employees due to funding issues.

Unlike the Edmonton-based club, Roed said the Strathcona County club does not handle high-risk youth.

Alberta’s government has been blamed for those cutbacks, but Children and Youth Services has since said its contract with the Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton is on a fee-for-service basis.

Since 1999, RBC has donated more than \$19 million to after school programs in 198 different organizations.

In the last year alone, RBC dedicated \$99 million to community initiatives through donations or sponsorship of events.

Programs that will receive funding from RBC are selected based on their dedication to safety, social skills and self-esteem building.

Money provided through the grants can be used for computer instruction, literacy tutoring, nutrition guidance, sports, homework assistance and music and art lessons.

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