

## **Recreation Fee Assistance Program**

Recreation is a component of a healthy lifestyle is often the first to be cut in families facing financial difficulties, despite its benefits in reducing stress, providing role models, and helping youth develop assets which help them grow to be competent, healthy, caring adults.

### **The program:**

The Fee Assistance Program will subsidize 80% of the cost of any class, program, or recreation opportunity provided through the Town of Okotoks, up to \$50.00. Each family member in an eligible family can participate in the program up to three times yearly (each time a new Town of Okotoks community program guide is distributed; Fall/Winter, Winter, and Spring/Summer). Clients who meet the criteria for funding are provided with a voucher, which is sent to the Recreation Centre. The client is then responsible for contacting the Rec. Centre to enroll in their chosen class and pay the subsidized fee. The remainder is billed to the OHFRC.

### **Eligibility:**

The fee assistance program is accessed through the coordinators of the Healthy Family Resource Centre. Families and individuals experiencing financial difficulties are eligible for this program. Clients are automatically approved if they have any one of the following:

- Alberta Child Health Benefit card
- Income support through Alberta Works or Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)
- Alberta Health Care full premium subsidy

If these are not available, a coordinator will look at income on the basis of previous year's tax return (must show income under \$25,000 for a family with 1 child, add \$2,000 for each additional child). Seniors must be receiving the Old Age Security benefit. In some cases, Coordinators will complete an informal needs assessment based upon current circumstances.

### **Funding Sources:**

The program has been funded by many donors since it was started in 2001, including:

- Calgary Foundation Community Grants program
- Okotoks Safeway "Because we Care" campaign
- Okotoks Wal-Mart
- the United Way / Okotoks Partnership
- individual donors and businesses

The program is currently being delivered through donations from individuals and businesses.



Families needing financial support for an organized sports program that is NOT operated through the Town of Okotoks (soccer, swim club, community basketball, school football, etc) should contact Kidsport Calgary. This organization will fund up to \$250 per child per year. Application forms are available on their website [www.kidsport.ca](http://www.kidsport.ca)