

## **NorWest Community Health Centres FOCUS Program Update**

FOCUS program funding will be ending in March 2008. There are 22 FOCUS program sites across Ontario. We are currently working with the Ministry of Health Promotion to have the funding extended.

### **Initiatives planned for 2007-2008**

#### Parent's Alcohol and Drug Awareness Presentations

This new initiative is in response to community requests for AOD presentations to parents of at-risk children. Presentations include discussion of risk factors, signs and symptoms of adolescent substance abuse.

#### Strengthening Families for the Future

Strengthening Families for the Future is a prevention program for families with children between the ages of seven and 11 who may be at risk for substance use problems, depression, violence, delinquency and school failure. Strengthening Families is effective because it involves the whole family.

#### Youth Leadership Workshops

The goal of this initiative is to develop youth leaders in the area who will be involved in community development.

#### Children's Talking Circle

FOCUS will continue offering talking circles to children at Ogden Community School and McKellar Park School. The purpose of the talking circle will be the teaching of traditional values such as honesty, respect, courage, love etc. and an opportunity for children to share how they are incorporating these values into their lives.

#### S.T.E.Y.

Skills to Empower Youth (S.T.E.Y.) is a 10 week alcohol and drug abuse prevention program for grade six students. We will continue offering this program to students at Ogden Community School, St. Jude School and McKellar Park School.

#### Safe Found Needle Program

There are a significant amount of used syringes found in the Ogden-East End each month. The purpose of this program is to inform the community about safe found used needle handling. This is accomplished through the use of presentations, bookmarks and handouts.

### Bullying Prevention Program

One of our community schools has identified that bullying is starting as early as grade 3. We will be developing a bullying prevention program tailored to the needs of this age group.

### Violence Prevention Initiative

There has been an increase in alcohol related violent crime in the Ogden area this past year. FOCUS wishes to spearhead gang prevention training to parents, professionals and teachers.

### Boozum Buddy

This injury prevention program will target community events where alcohol is being served. We hope to pilot the program at the Dragon Boat Festival.

### Health Fair

Over the two years there has been success with a Neighbourhood Block Party in the Ogden-East End. We wish add a health fair component. The health fair will include a variety of information on alcohol and drugs and how to stay well in Thunder Bay.

### Safety Forum

There was a safety audit completed on the Simpson Ogden South Core in 2006. There were a number of safety issues identified and alcohol abuse is a significant concern. This initiative will involve assisting with a variety of stakeholders and the City of Thunder Bay. We will be partnering on a safety issues in the south core with the purpose of developing an action plan and implementing it.

### Community Wellness Guide Program

The purpose of the Community Wellness Guide is to provide people with the information they need to lead better lives. Fact sheets will be used to in a variety of presentations on alcohol and drug abuse, injury prevention and chronic disease.

For more information please contact Darren Borg at NorWest Community Health Centres 622-8235 ext. 2245.