



Red Fox Healthy Living Society

News Release

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Red Fox youth strive to survive federal program cancellation

June 25, 2012 (No.1) Youth, families and media are invited to join Red Fox youth leaders as they deliver their last sessions today Monday, June 25, at Strathcona Elementary School, 592 East Pender Street, from 3:00 to 5:30PM. This award-winning Aboriginal Youth Leadership program just learned that their biggest source of funding, the federal Cultural Connections for Aboriginal Youth (CCAY) program, has been cancelled. The Government of Canada has gone back on its initial 2012 budget and promise to support vulnerable Aboriginal youth through the CCAY initiative.

For twelve years, the Federal Government has provided funding to deliver social, cultural and enrichment activities to at-risk Aboriginal youth across Canada. The CCAY funding enabled organizations like Red Fox to support youth to develop the skills and confidence to engage with Canadian society and become healthier, stronger and safer. Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing demographic in Canada, and they are the most at risk for dropping out of school, developing a host of illnesses including addictions and diabetes, being recruited for prostitution, and being suicidal. Activities that appeal to Aboriginal youth and mitigate these health crises, reduce future health and safety costs.

Since 2006, Red Fox youth leaders have helped over 200 children and youth a month, and 15,000 children and families a year, to be active, eat healthy food, develop leadership skills, and share Aboriginal traditions.

Verdann Evans, Red Fox youth leader and Youth Council member, said “if it wasn’t for Red Fox, I wouldn’t be the successful young woman I am today. Through Red Fox, I got a closer connection to my culture, learned a lot about myself, and got the second chance I did not think I had”.

Because the federal government structured the funding so that organizations were forced to deliver programs months and cover costs themselves before receiving funds, many are now in deficits. Red Fox has spent \$25,000 in good faith. The Red Fox Aboriginal youth leaders see this crisis as another hurdle to overcome, and they are determined to find ways to continue delivering fitness, food security, leadership and cultural activities to children and youth throughout Metro Vancouver.

For more information, contact Emma Sutherland, Executive Director, at 604.319.2571 and info@redfoxrecreation.org