

# Creative Kids Case Statement

Communities Benefit from Arts and Culture



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## Communities Benefit from Arts and Culture

### The Story

Participating in arts and cultural activities is a right of passage for most Canadian children. Across the country there are children discovering their cultural history through language and tradition, expressing themselves through music and dance, and learning to create and appreciate unique pieces of art. Watching children grow from these cultural experiences may be common place in most homes. But not all homes.

The opportunity for these experiences to shape who these young people will ultimately become is something not all kids get to realize. There are some children who, due to low family income, are unable to participate in such activities because their family cannot afford the associated fees. This reality was the catalyst for the Creative Kids program.

At its core, the Creative Kids program is a charitable giving program designed to reduce social financial barriers for children and youth who wish to participate in arts and cultural programming. Children and youth can receive up to \$750 per year from Creative Kids for engagement in creative activities.

All kids deserve an opportunity to grow through creative programming. It's good for children and it's good for our community. This program provides that opportunity.

### Some Background

In 2007 a need to develop a program to assist children with social and financial barriers to participate in creative programming was identified. A volunteer committee was struck, and community consultations began. A feasibility study was completed in 2009. The study validated the need for the program and revealed a genuine interest in Saskatchewan to support it.

The initial consultations included members of the arts and culture communities, the core neighborhoods of Regina and Saskatoon, representatives from Sports, Culture and Recreation Districts, the corporate community, as well as the municipal and provincial governments. All groups unanimously agreed a program such as Creative Kids was not only viable, but necessary.

In early 2010 a full-time staff person was hired to develop, implement and manage the Creative Kids program.

## Mission & Vision

### The Mission of Creative Kids is to:

- Increase participation by children and youth in creative activities;
- Assist children, youth and their families to overcome financial and social barriers that prevent or limit their participation in creative activities; and
- Facilitate community and family capacity to support children and youth to participate in creative activities.

### The Vision of Creative Kids is:

All children and youth in Saskatchewan will have opportunities to realize their potential through access to creative activities.

#### Values:

- We believe that creative activities are fundamental to the positive growth and development of children and youth;
- We believe that cultural programming is critical to a healthy, vibrant community; and
- We believe that all children and youth should have the opportunity to participate in creative activities regardless of what economic or social barriers they may face.

## The Program

The Creative Kids program will rely on local and provincial volunteer committees to help guide and administer the program. Communities throughout Saskatchewan will be invited to become Creative Kids communities. Once a community has become an accredited Creative Kids community, it can begin to receive, adjudicate and allocate funds to program applicants. Applications will be accepted by individuals, as well as programs offering art or culture activities specifically for those who qualify for the Creative Kids program. Each volunteer committee is also responsible for local fundraising initiatives, promotion of the Creative Kids program, annual evaluations, and financial reporting. Creative Kids applications will be available locally. Relationships with art and cultural groups throughout the province offering programs that qualify for Creative Kids funding will be developed.

## Why this Program is Important

Arts and Cultural activities help bring communities to life – whether the community is as big as Saskatoon or Regina, or as small as Pelican Narrows or Fox Valley. However, looking across Canada at the various arts and cultural non-profit programs available to youth, there is no singular provincial organizational body that is comparable to the proposed model of Creative Kids. Within most communities there are opportunities for participating in arts and cultural activities, however, there is no organizational program that offers grant funding for children and youth who need assistance with fees and associated costs to participation.

The opportunity for such programs is important to us as Canadians. In a 2007 Canadian Heritage publication, it was revealed that 90% of Canadians support public funding for arts and culture, 80% agree that governments should provide special funding for arts activities involving culturally diverse or Aboriginal communities, and 9 in 10 Canadians from ethno-cultural communities feel it is important for the arts and culture of their own traditions to be passed on to the next generation<sup>1</sup>.

It is widely accepted that children and youth thrive when they are not only given the opportunity to participate in creative activities, but when they receive quality instruction and encouragement for creative disciplines. Providing this opportunity is crucial to the success our communities. Quality experience and exposure to arts and culture initiatives improves self-esteem, learning potential, focus, and most importantly, provides children and youth with a place to be expressive and successful.

Creative arts and culture experiences not only encourage children to take pride in themselves and their cultural activities but also to become active participants and leaders in their communities.

## Why Support Creative Kids?

**One hundred percent of all funds raised for Creative Kids through private donations, grants, and corporate sponsors will go directly to supporting Creative Kids applicants requiring financial assistance to participate in creative activities.** This is made possible through the ongoing administrative support of SaskCulture, the founding organization of Creative Kids.

Developing and implementing a successful fundraising campaign which includes individual donations, corporate sponsorships, government investment, foundation and grant funds, and eventually, a planned giving campaign, is vital to the success of the program. Without the participation of the broader public, private and corporate communities, Creative Kids cannot exist.

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<sup>1</sup> [Arts and Heritage in Canada: Access and Availability 2007, Phoenix Strategic Perspectives.](#)

## What's the Plan?

### Community Involvement – Committee model

The Creative Kids program relies on a volunteer infrastructure comprised of provincial and community-based or regional committees to help guide and administer the program.

**Provincial Advisory Committee:** This committee is responsible for oversight of the Creative Kids program and its strategy. The provincial committee assists with governance, fundraising strategies, communications and marketing, public relations activities and overall program strategies. The provincial committee also receives, adjudicates and allocates applications that are received from communities that are not represented by a local committee.

**Local Committees:** Each community will have an opportunity to form a local committee to raise and administer funds and adjudicate the applications. Local committees receive guidance and fundraising support from the Creative Kids Coordinator and the Provincial Sport, Culture and Recreation Districts. Similar to KidSport, local and/or regional committees must be accredited through the provincial organization.

In some communities, Creative Kids has an opportunity to partner with KidSport™ to share volunteer resources. In these communities the local organizing committee may administer the funds of both of these programs. We recognize that volunteer resources are limited in many communities and through this partnership we can gain efficiencies that reduce the volunteer workload.

**Funds Allocation:** The process to apply for Creative Kids funding is easy and transparent. We know that these families face many daily barriers to keeping their children active and engaged, so we have removed as many obstacles as possible to accessing funds while maintaining the integrity of the program. Families who qualify for the program will not have to go through layers of red tape or a complicated application process to receive assistance.

Children, youth and their families applying to the Creative Kids program simply fill out an application form. The application form includes the nature of the activity (dance, music lessons, theatre, etc.), the cost of the activity, the length of the activity, and how much funding they are requesting (up to a maximum annual amount of \$750 per child). The form is endorsed by an adult that can verify the family/child is in need of financial support. An adult endorser may be a school teacher, physician, social worker, member of the clergy, etc.

Once a completed application form is received by the local committee, that committee reviews all applications and makes funding decisions based on available funds and identified need. Funds will be distributed directly to the organization/instructor offering the activity.

At the end of the year the committee is responsible for submitting an annual financial report accounting for all funds raised, received and allocated, as well as all relevant statistics (number of children supported, types of activities, etc.). Program funding will also be considered using the same application, review and allocation process.

**Evaluation Process:** It is important to the future and integrity of the program that Creative Kids has a solid reporting structure. As a result, Creative Kids will evaluate the program on two levels:

**Committee Operations:** Each Creative Kids Committee will be required to submit an annual report to the provincial office. These reports will include all financial information, relevant statistical data, funding allocations, fundraising reports and all other committee activities throughout the year.

**Program Review:** The Creative Kids program will conduct an annual review regarding the program progress, momentum and relationship with sponsors, donors and key stakeholders.

## Pilot Communities

In the first year, Creative Kids will be piloted in six communities; Regina, Saskatoon, and four rural communities still to be identified. The 'pilot' communities are chosen based on existing demand for the Creative Kids program, and the availability of active and committed volunteers to administer the program in the community. We will also explore regional delivery systems as a way to administer the program. Using existing community resources may assist with program efficiency.

The specific 'pilot' locations will be confirmed by May, 2010. These pilots will help to further develop and refine the program for use in the other areas of the province. Once the 'pilot' communities are operational and successfully established, more communities in the province will be added to the program. Ultimately, all communities in Saskatchewan will have the opportunity to participate in Creative Kids.

## Conclusion

Currently, Creative Kids receives on-going, operational funding and support from SaskCulture. SaskCulture is a community-based, volunteer-driven organization that works with its membership and other community partners to build a culturally-vibrant province, where all citizens can celebrate, value and participate in a rich, cultural life. SaskCulture has committed to funding the operational costs of the Creative Kids program, including providing office space, staff salaries, print material, and any other related overhead costs.

With the operational funding already committed by SaskCulture, 100% of all additional funding received for Creative Kids will go directly to the children and youth in Saskatchewan facing barriers to participation in art and culture activities.

*My mother said to me, "If you become a soldier, you'll be a general; if you become a monk, you'll end up as the Pope." Instead, I became a painter and wound up Picasso.*

*- Pablo Picasso*

