

2009

Creative Kids Feasibility Study
SaskCulture Inc.



Praxis Consulting Ltd.

April 2009

Introduction

The *Creative Kids* program is a charitable giving program designed to reduce financial barriers for children and youth to participate in arts and culture programming. In today's society the importance of creativity is being recognized as an essential agent in the pursuit of a healthy society. It is imperative that we rejuvenate our existing cultural systems in order to meet the challenges of today by stimulating the developmental potential within Saskatchewan's youth population. To this end, *Creative Kids* seeks to impact this important agenda within our communities.

Creative Kids will look to support children and youth under age 20 who face financial and social barriers to participation in creative activities. Activities that will be supported will be creative in nature and must show a level of creative engagement. It is intended by *Creative Kids* that local communities determine what type of creative activities will be supported locally depending on the needs, wants, and benefits to potential program users. Activities can be those that introduce a participant to a creative discipline or those that allow the participant to continue their development after introduction. With regards to funding, participants can receive up to \$750.00 per year from *Creative Kids* for engagement in creative activities. Any expenses directly associated with engagement in creative activity are considered supportable including registration fees, materials and costs, and some travel costs associated with participation in the activity. Funds will be made payable to the organization or person delivering the program.

As we know, arts and cultural activities help bring communities to life – whether the community is a large city or a small town. In order to gain a greater understanding of whether or not *Creative Kids* can support such a large scale local and provincial initiative, we will look at the feasibility of the project to determine its potential for success. This research project will provide a complete environmental scan looking at the demographics of potential targets and other comparable programs in Canada, an assessment of available community resources, and a variety of other aspects that will aid in program development and delivery.

Project Overview

SaskCulture Inc. engaged the services of Praxis Consulting Ltd. to conduct a feasibility analysis of *Creative Kids*. The purpose of the study is to determine the need for a *Creative Kids* program and if *Creative Kids* is an entity that could attract corporate sponsorship within Saskatchewan. Further, to provide insight into an operating structure for the program, communication/marketing approach, funds development approach, budget and implementation plan.

The study builds upon previous stakeholder consultations on *Creative Kids*. In 2008, 93 key stakeholders were invited to contribute feedback into the *Creative Kids* concept. From these consultations a vision and program concept were developed.

This study concludes that the concept is feasible and should proceed.

The key findings of the feasibility study are as follows:

- Saskatchewan demographics and usage statistics gathered from *KidSport™* Saskatchewan indicate that there is a need for a program to support underprivileged children and youth to participate in arts and culture programming.
- Twelve Saskatchewan-based corporations from a variety of sectors were interviewed to determine the attractiveness of *Creative Kids* as an entity for sponsorship. Overwhelmingly, corporations were interested in the opportunity. They regard *Creative Kids* as an opportunity to “make a difference” in a demographic that that is difficult to reach. Further, most were interested in contributing to arts and culture.
- Corporate sponsorship opportunities are available immediately.
- The concept of *Creative Kids* is broadly understood by the corporate community due to the high level of awareness of *KidSport™*. This creates a significant advantage for *Creative Kids* to gain early traction in the market place.
- There is an opportunity to partner with *KidSport™* in the operations of *Creative Kids*. A partnership may involve sharing a charitable entity, combining local operating committees, and administering and accounting for funds.
- A separate and distinct identity/brand is critical to the success of *Creative Kids* and important to potential sponsors

Creative Kids is a feasible program. The challenge that lies ahead is to capitalize upon the excitement and anticipation of all stakeholders including potential sponsors while ensuring that the due diligence of program design, governance processes and policies is complete before launching what is certain to be a successful program.

Environmental Scan

Canada's federal and provincial governments have grown to recognize the value of supporting arts and cultural activities. Arts and cultural issues are often included in Throne Speeches, and ministries, agencies and councils have been created across the country to foster and promote the arts through grants and funding provided federally and provincially. When Canadians were asked about the vital role that the arts and cultural sector plays, 75% said that they believe that the arts are important in enhancing the quality of their lives, and 85% per cent agree that governments should provide support for arts and culture.¹

Looking across Canada at the various arts and culture non-profit programs available to youth, there is no singular Provincial organizational body that is comparable to the proposed model of *Creative Kids*. Within each all communities there are non-profit groups offering arts and culture programming, however, there is no organizational program that offers grant funding for children and youth to take part in existing arts and culture programs.

KidSport™ presents a successful model for engaging underprivileged children and youth in sport. *KidSport™* is a pan-Canadian program with provincial/territorial boards in eleven jurisdictions (exceptions are Yukon and Nunavut). *KidSport™* is administered on a provincial basis to ensure consistency of policies and procedures and is delivered locally through community-based committees. The Saskatchewan program offers a maximum of \$300 in funding annually to children and youth to offset participation fees in sporting programs. Local sport program providers may also apply to receive a block of funding to support targeted programs. Program funding allocations are based on availability of funds. *KidSport™* owes its success in part to the provincial/territorial sport federations who have provided a consistent organizational support infrastructure for the program across Canada.

Determining the need for a funding program to support underprivileged children and youth in arts and cultural programs is difficult. There is no means to determine the number of underprivileged children and youth who desire to participate in arts and cultural programming but are prevented from doing so due to financial barriers. We do know that in 2008, *KidSport™* Saskatchewan provided funding to 8,317

¹ Decima Research for the Department of Canadian Heritage, 2001, http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/arts/pubs/etude-report/index_e.cfm

children and youth. A total of 2,517 applied for funding via local organizing committees or the provincial committee. An additional 5,800 children were supported through approved *KidSport™* program grants.

Another indicator is the total number of children and youth who could be defined as underprivileged in Saskatchewan. On average, low income thresholds in Canada may range from \$21,000 to \$29,000². The following page displays selected 2006 Census statistics for the Province of Saskatchewan that assist in defining the number of children and youth in low income families. The total population for the province of Saskatchewan at the time of the most recent census was 968,157. Looking at age characteristics, we can see that there are 262,595 youth 19 years of age or younger in the province of Saskatchewan. Since *Creative Kids* will target funding towards low income families, we have included the number of lone parent families which is shown to be 44,445, with 35,170 of these families being *female* lone-parent families. The statistics can also tell us that that this particular demographic of *female* lone-parent families has a median after-tax income of \$27,384.00 while *male* lone-parent families have a median after-tax income of \$33,845.00. These statistics suggests that there is a viable need in the province of Saskatchewan for grants and funding help for such families to enrol children in creative arts programming. With 44,445 lone parent families in the Province of Saskatchewan, the number of children in need within this demographic alone may be estimated upwards of 45,000, depending on the number of children in the family.

² http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/research/categories/inclusion/2008/sp-864-10-2008/page06.shtml

2006 Census Statistics for the Province of Saskatchewan

Demographic	Characteristics	Total	Male	Female
Population and Dwelling Counts	Population in 2006	968157		
	Population in 2001	978933		
Age Characteristics	Total population	968160	475240	492915
	0 to 4 years	57495	29395	28100
	5 to 9 years	61070	31160	29905
	10 to 14 years	69130	35405	33725
	15 to 19 years	74900	38455	36445
Selected Family Characteristics	Total number of census families	267455		
	Number of married-couple families	194165		
	Number of common-law-couple families	28855		
	Number of lone-parent families	44445		
	Number of female lone-parent families	35170		
	Number of male lone-parent families	9265		
	Median after-tax income in 2005 - Married-couple families (\$)	57535		
	Median after-tax income in 2005 - Common-law-couple families (\$)	45530		
	Median after-tax income in 2005 - Lone-parent families (\$)	28577		
	Median after-tax income in 2005 - Female lone-parent families (\$)	27384		
Median after-tax income in 2005 - Male lone-parent families (\$)	33845			
Selected Household Characteristics	Households containing a couple (married or common-law) with children	102350		
	Average household size	2.4		

Source: Statistics Canada. 2007. 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E>

Proposed Model for Creative Kids

Vision

All children and youth in Saskatchewan will have opportunities and access to participate in creative activities.

Beliefs

- ✓ We believe social and economic obstacles can prevent some young people from participating in creative activities. *Creative Kids* Saskatchewan is being established to help overcome these obstacles.
- ✓ We believe *Creative Kids* is about the future. We believe creative activities provide a lifelong opportunity for self-expression and self-discovery.
- ✓ It is important that children interested in creative activities have exposure to qualified instructors to maximize on the benefits of their chosen field of creative activity.
- ✓ We believe all children and youth have creative potential.
- ✓ We believe children and youth want to be creative.
- ✓ We believe families will support children and youth who want to be creative.
- ✓ We believe communities contain a wealth of knowledge and resources that can be leveraged for children and youth.
- ✓ We believe the engagement of family members, community stakeholders and partners is essential to the success of *Creative Kids*.

Mission

The mission of *Creative Kids* is to:

- ✓ Increase participation by children and youth in creative activities.
- ✓ Assists children and youth and their families to overcome financial and social barriers which prevent or limit their participation in creative activities.
- ✓ Develop community and family capacity to support children and youth to participate in creative activities.

Governance Structure

The proposed governance structure for *Creative Kids* will include two levels of committee to oversee and administer the *Creative Kids* initiative. Watching over the entire program is the Provincial Committee which is responsible for province wide fundraising. This type of large-scale fundraising will include large corporate contributions, the accreditation of local committees, the development and monitoring of policies and program guidelines, marketing initiatives, and branding. The provincial committee will also have to establish an appropriate balance between province-wide consistency of delivery and flexibility to respond to local issues and priorities.

A provincial coordinating committee will hold responsibility for:

- ✓ Program oversight, guidelines, marketing, branding and high-level fund raising.
- ✓ Training and support of local committees, including provision of opportunities to network.
- ✓ High level program administration and accountability.
- ✓ The "Promising Artists Fund" (*still to be established).
- ✓ Coverage of areas where no local committee exists.

Watching over the program locally, including the receiving and administering of all applications for funding from the relevant regions, are local committees. This system can begin with the organization of a provincial committee and allow for the development of local committees where interest and need emerges. The provincial committee can be responsible for areas where local committee coverage does not exist and rural communities may combine to form a local committee in order to cover a larger region. Local committees will operate within provincial guidelines, but will have a degree of flexibility to respond to local issues and priorities.

A local coordinating committee will hold responsibility for:

- ✓ Local fundraising.
- ✓ Interpretation of, and adherence to, provincial program guidelines.
- ✓ Local program administration and accountability to the provincial committee.
- ✓ Receiving and adjudicating local applications for funding.

Critical Success Factors

Critical success factors are a list of attributes or conditions that are absolutely necessary for a program to succeed. In fact, so critical are these attributes and conditions that without progress in each of these factors, the program will ultimately fail.

1. Administrative transparency and due diligence – As a charitable entity, *Creative Kids* must ensure that funds are administered with a high degree of rigour. Corporate partners and donors must have assurance that there is no risk that their contribution will be used in a manner other than that which is agreed upon in the materials. This due diligence must be carried out equally at the provincial and local levels of administration.
2. Relationship Management – *Creative Kids* will be highly dependent upon acquiring and maintaining corporate partners; management of these relationships is absolutely critical. *Creative Kids* offers an attractive sponsorship entity for corporations. In order to benefit from this position of strength, a well designed corporate relationship program is necessary.
3. Minimize administration and overhead – Successful charities strive to minimize administrative costs and maximize the percentage of contributions that are directed to the “cause”. *Creative Kids* is in an enviable position of having an established relationship with SaskCulture Inc. and therefore access to lottery funds to cover administration. Utilizing the *KidSport™* approach (i.e. 100% of monies raised goes directly to kids) is a best practice and is attractive to potential sponsors and donors.
4. Non-Profit Status – Corporations and donors desire to give their money to organizations that are volunteer driven and not affiliated with government. It is important that *Creative Kids* maintain independence from governmental agencies.
5. Local Relevance – One of the strengths of the *Creative Kids* model is its relevance at the local level. Through local organizing committees, stakeholders can be assured that the program is meeting the needs at the community level while ensuring provincial oversight and brand identity.
6. Emphasis on Arts and Culture – Although it is inherent in the name “*Creative Kids*” there must be constant reassurance in communications material that *Creative Kids* is supporting

participation in culture and the arts. Corporate partners are interested in supporting culture and the arts and want to be reassured that their contribution is directed to this sector.

7. Branding – A strong brand is critical to reassure donors and corporate sponsors that their contribution is affiliated with a credible and highly visible brand. Branding also increases awareness of the potential funding applicants.
8. Accessibility to Funding - Applicants and community members must have a clear understanding of how to apply for funds and where to access application forms. An effort to ensure that all eligible applicants have fair access to apply for funding is imperative.