

NONSTOP P.A.R.T.Y. PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name: Nonstop P.A.R.T.Y. (Phase II); NSPII **Issue:** Drug Use in Youth
Keywords: Drug use; illicit drugs; prevention; youth; injury prevention; Lakeland P.A.R.T.Y. Program; risk
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Organization: Lakeland P.A.R.T.Y. Program Association **Website:** <http://lakelandparty.ca/nsp2.htm>
Region: Bonnyville/Cold Lake and Surrounding Areas in Alberta
Project Description: **Target Group:** 453 youth 10-24 years old in schools in our community including aboriginal and non aboriginal youth. The project was limited, so not all schools participated; there was a focus on aboriginal youth.
Timeline: January to September 2009
Communities Involved: Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Kehewin
Key Features: 46 in-class learning sessions and 20 youth-led community events (half of the events were for youth from aboriginal communities)

Partners/Supporters:

- AADAC (now AHS-Addictions Services)
- Appara Shoes
- Ardmore Hotel
- Assumption Jr/Sr High School
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Bonnyville and Cold Lake Health Centres & Staff
- Bonnyville Centralized High School
- Bonnyville Municipal Ambulance
- Bonnyville Nouvelle
- Burger Baron
- Centennial Centre
- Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee
- Cold Lake Ambulance Society
- Cold Lake Sun
- École des Beaux Lacs
- École Voyageur
- Finishing Touch
- Fragrant Treasures
- Frames'n'Things
- Grand Centre Boosters
- Grand Centre High School (Cold Lake High)
- Grand Centre Native Friendship Centre – Youth Learning Resource Centre
- Kehewin Community Education Centre
- Kinsoo Ridge Ski Hill
- Lakeland Catholic School Division
- Lakeland Centre for FASD
- May Theatre
- Mo's Pizza
- Mr. Sub
- Northern Lights School Division
- Panago
- Pizza Hut
- Pure
- R.A. Reynolds School
- RCMP/Victim's Services
- Sobey's
- Subway
- Vault Youth Drop-In Centre
- Wal-Mart

Funding: Health Canada's Drug Strategy Community Initiatives Fund

Project Results: **Significant outcomes for youth:**

- Increased awareness of factors affecting drug use
- Gain in skills to build healthy relationships and make healthy choices to avoid drug use
- Decrease in risk-taking associated with drug use

Significant outcomes for community:

- High levels of engagement and involvement to address youth drug use
- Improved community practices, networking, and access to resources to address youth drug use

Products: Project Manual and Resources (e.g., posters); Webpage

Instruments: Pre- and post-session input forms; discussion forms; post surveys; impact surveys; facilitator reports

Findings: **Teaching youth ice breakers and welcome wagon skills and providing them with opportunities to engage with community in positive, healthy social and leisure activities increased healthy lifestyle choices and displaced drug use. Events were successful at multiple levels** of complexity, attendance, cost, etc. and sometimes spun off into further positive fun. Aboriginal youth in particular benefitted from this project.

The project contributed to the "Nonstop" cycle of change toward resiliency and away from drug use through repetition and integration over time and space. Individual youth explored their own vulnerabilities and strengths and those of their peers with respect to drug use, and learned information and skills to address the problem. Their sphere of influence spread throughout the classroom and school as they reviewed and practiced to meet the standard. It continued growing in their family and community lives as youth applied the knowledge and skills to plan and execute an event. The project's effects reverberated beyond the short-term to long-term effects, and going even further, students predicted that their future behaviours would continue to be affected by what they learned. The effects also reverberated in other ways that would renew the cycle (e.g., improved attendance at school; opportunities to develop teamwork).

Capacity, relationships, and engagement grew as the fabric of the community was knitted more thoroughly together. Youth developed real relationships and felt valued. A group of teachers emerged prepared to keep the project going. Parents and business owners said they valued their own involvement, and expressed enthusiasm and a strong desire to continue the project. Schools reported networking and building relationships with local businesses and other organizations, and the project included many opportunities to strengthen relationships amongst peers as well as between students and school staff. Furthermore, the project involved family—grandparents, parents, siblings—in various ways.

Food and active living were central themes. Delicious food is a great thing to spend the time and money on that dealers work so hard to steal from our precious young people. Food was prominent in the events (planning, making, eating, sharing) and in-class sessions. Learning ice breakers involved bringing in food, sometimes donated by local businesses, for youth to enjoy and use to practise relationship building and healthy partying skills. This often turned into an opportunity to invite and share with/practise on peers and teachers. On another note, the events generally also showed the desire of youth to do something active and the strong support of the community to help them do it.