



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee      **Date:** September 7, 2018

**From:** Elizabeth Ayers, Director, Recreation Services      **File:** 11-7000-01/2018-Vol 01

**Re:** **Community Services Summer Programs for Children and Youth 2018**

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Community Services Summer Programs for Children and Youth 2018” dated September 7, 2018, from the Director of Recreation Services, be received for information.

Elizabeth Ayers  
 Director, Recreation Services  
 (604-247-4669)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Arts, Culture & Heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Social Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

## Staff Report

### Origin

This report provides Council with a review of Community Services summer programs taking place in 2018. The report outlines the scope of services provided to children and youth including the number of programs, participation numbers, and the impact on individuals and the community.

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #2 A Vibrant, Active and Connected City:

*Continue the development and implementation of an excellent and accessible system of programs, services, and public spaces that reflect Richmond's demographics, rich heritage, diverse needs, and unique opportunities, and that facilitate active, caring, and connected communities.*

2.1. *Strong neighbourhoods.*

2.3. *Outstanding places, programs and services that support active living, wellness and a sense of belonging.*

### Analysis

Community Services, in cooperation with community partners, offers a wide range of summer programs and events for children and youth throughout the community. The summer season offers unique opportunities for programming: children and youth are out of school, warmer days allow for a wide variety of activities, outdoor pools and school facilities are available, and longer hours of daylight allow for late afternoon and early evening programming. Young adults and youth are also available to work and volunteer in programs in the community.

Children and youth can take part in a variety of opportunities including registered programs such as daycamps or instructional programs, drop-in activities which do not require registration, free programs, and community events.

These programs and events not only provide interesting and fun experiences for participants, but provide children and youth connections in the community and reinforce a sense of belonging. The programs and activities not only reflect Council's Term Goals, but are part of the implementation of the Wellness Strategy and Youth Strategy. Programs increase the level of physical activity, and support healthy eating among participants. The registration numbers indicate the popularity of summer programs for children and youth in Richmond.

### Registered Programs

Virtually all facilities and many parks are utilized for registered programs and are supervised by skilled leaders.

Through the various activities, participants gain new skills throughout the summer and increase their awareness of the recreation opportunities available in Richmond. Through program activities, children and youth practice active living skills that promote wellness such as:

- Physical literacy;
- Teamwork and problem solving;
- Learning new skills and hobbies;
- Nature and outdoor appreciation.

Through social engagement these opportunities help promote tolerance and understanding among children and youth from varying backgrounds. By developing new friendships and connections in the community participants develop a stronger sense of community and belonging.

Participants either register for daycamps, which generally occur on a daily basis throughout each week, or programs which usually occur once a week on a weekly basis.

The following table lists participation in 2017 and 2018 registered summer programs.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Registrations</b>	<b>Daycamp Registrations</b>	<b>Other Program Registrations</b>
2017	28,896	12,051	16,845
2018	29,709	12,303	17,406

Daycamps provide a variety of activities during the summer. Specialized daycamps serve a particular interest area such as a junior archeology camp, digital animation camp, or the skateboard and scooter camp. Other daycamps provide a variety of activities throughout the week, incorporating sports, games, crafts, and team building skills.

The following table lists participation in other registered program types. Swimming lessons, arts programs, and sports programs receive the most registrations.

<b>Program Area</b>	<b>2017 registrations</b>	<b>2018 registrations</b>
Aquatics- swimming lessons	6,395	6,450
Arenas – skating lessons	815	916
Arts – dance, music, visual arts (drawing, painting), performing (voice, theatre)	3,463	3,757
Computers, Technology and Social Media	151	130
Cooking	458	447
General Interest - including Heritage programs	654	787
Martial Arts	592	636

<b>Program Area (continued)</b>	<b>2017 registrations</b>	<b>2018 registrations</b>
Nature and Science	611	491
Outdoors (hiking, water sports)	167	88
Racquet Sports (tennis badminton)	829	809
Sports/Fitness/Health-physical literacy, sports instruction (e.g. basketball, soccer, baseball, golf), group exercise	2,710	2,895
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,845</b>	<b>17,406</b>

### Drop-in Opportunities

In addition to structured programs, drop-in opportunities are available for children and youth. The Summer Swim and Skate Pass offers unlimited swimming at all pools and skating at the Richmond Ice Centre. Youth also take advantage of fitness centres and fitness activities at community centres.

The following table lists swim, skate and fitness attendance in 2018:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Summer Swim and Skate Pass visits</b>	<b>Single admission and monthly pass use at Pools and Arenas</b>	<b>Youth visits to fitness centres</b>
2017	19,726	28,067	9,146
2018	17,464	24,078	10,004

Cultural facilities including the Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Museum, Steveston Museum, Britannia Shipyards and the Steveston Interurban Tram, offer opportunities for families to visit daily in the summer. Through these experiences and programs, children and youth become aware of the history and diversity of Richmond.

### Free Programs

Weekly, 13 free drop-in programs are offered in neighbourhood parks throughout the City. In addition, programs are offered in selected housing complexes where the programs contribute to the asset development of children and youth residing there. These programs typically include games, an art activity and active play. Activities take advantage of playgrounds and fields in parks, and unique features such as water play features in Lang and King George parks. Especially in preschool programs, there is often information regarding health and parenting of young children.

The programs occur throughout the day and early evening, giving working parents an opportunity to participate with their children. Typically parents arrive with their children and depending on the age of their children, they often stay. This provides the opportunity for families to get to know each other, which leads to more resilient and stronger neighbourhoods.

The Art Truck's summer programs provide free drop-in classes through partners such as the Richmond Public Library, Richmond Centre for Disability and the Thompson Community Centre. The Art Truck provides high quality arts experiences in neighbourhoods as it comes with trained staff and a variety of arts supplies.

Throughout the summer, localized neighbourhood events are offered. Some events are designed specifically for children and youth while others are meant to serve families. Events include:

- Concerts in the Park – local musicians entertain families while activities are provided for children;
- Weekly Theme Days – such as Hula Hoop in the Park, and Art in the Park;
- Outdoor movies appealing to children and families; and
- Special events such as West Fest (Hugh Boyd Park), Block Party (South Arm Park), Community Picnic (Thompson Park), and Barbeque in the Park (Steveston Park).

These special events provide opportunities for residents to enjoy and participate in activities which reflect the character of their neighbourhoods.

At special events, the Youth Street Team and Physical Literacy Team provide a wide range of activities which are not only fun, but provide opportunities to learn new skills and make connections in the community. This summer the Physical Literacy team:

- Attended 28 community events and programs;
- Provided leadership, activities, and experiences for 3,600 children; and
- Interacted with 2,500 parents about the importance of physical literacy and wellness.

Free opportunities for youth included:

- Friday evening drop-in programs featuring theme nights, physical activities, games and food;
- Coding clubs which assist youth in developing websites; and
- Open gym times for youth to play basketball, badminton and other sports with friends.

Summer also provides the opportunity for children and youth to make use of Richmond's parks, playgrounds and trails for a variety of physical activities.

### Inclusion

Providing meaningful recreation opportunities for children and youth with challenges and diverse needs is a focus of summer programs. Although the situations are complex and challenging, there are successes. One to one support for participants is provided by day camp staff, as well as with the assistance of external agencies, such as the Supported Child Development Program through Richmond Society for Community Living. This support provides opportunities for children to participate in day camp programs, in some cases for the first time.

As participants interact with others who may have unique needs, this reinforces the concept of shared responsibilities and caring for others in the community.

Staff and parents have provided positive feedback about the strides individual children have made in skating and swimming programs as staff work with families to improve their children's physical and social well-being.

The Recreation Fee Subsidy Program reduces barriers for children and youth, facilitating their participation in summer programs.

### Work and Volunteer Opportunities

Richmond's Volunteer Strategy guides volunteer initiatives in Richmond. Summer programs provide meaningful work experience for more than 300 paid and volunteer staff. Each facility conducts training sessions and a group training workshop is held prior to the beginning of programs, so that all staff and volunteers have a common approach to delivering services. Volunteers are an essential part of programs, as they assist staff in a wide range of duties, while learning skills that have proven to be invaluable in future careers. Volunteers also interact directly with children and youth, encouraging participation in activities. This summer, 175 volunteers contributed 6,000 hours of volunteer time.

Volunteers gain new skills, while providing an example of service to participants and parents of how to contribute to strengthening neighbourhoods and community.

### Impact of Summer Programs

The impact of programs on children and youth is demonstrated by some of the following responses from parents, and observations by staff:

- From an Aquatics staff person regarding a child with a physical disability who participates in an adapted swimming program:

*"[He] lives for our adapted classes as it is a place where he can truly shine and push himself to his maximum potential."*

- From a parent in a Community Centre day camp program speaking about how soundly her child sleeps:

*"...because she's tired after all the fun at the camp!"*

- From a summer leader at a neighbourhood park:

*"Parents have told me how much they appreciate our staff coming to the park and engaging with the families and kids in the community – the kids really look forward to coming and playing with us."*

- From the parent of a child who initially had challenges during the skating portion of a day camp:

*“The instructors were attentive and caring with teaching her. They helped her stay on her feet and learned to skate rather quick! I was shocked at her progression as she is a [hesitant] at times...from then on we knew she fell in love with ice skating.”*

- From a parent of a child in the museum explorers camp:

*“Wonderful experience. My son loves this program very much. He will come back for sure. Thank you!”*

- From a community member after an evening musical event organized by a community centre:

*“I wanted to send you both a big thank you for planning such a great community event. It truly was a night I will never forget, [it] provided such a great community gathering where I connected with new and old friends.”*

### **Financial Impact**

None

### **Conclusion**

Community Services summer programs, offered in partnership with community partners, provide meaningful recreation and cultural opportunities for children and youth and provide positive work experience for staff and volunteers.

The benefits of these opportunities impact both individuals and the community. For children and youth, the benefits include improved health outcomes, mastering new skills, and reducing loneliness. The friendly and caring attitude of staff and volunteers make programs welcoming, and give children and youth a sense of belonging and community. As a whole, Richmond benefits as these programs build community among neighbours, and build strong and healthy children and youth. This results in a healthier and more resilient community.



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