

Information Booklet

The



Program

CLIENTS



Dear Client Applicant,

Fall 2010

On behalf of the Sidekicks Mentoring Program, I would like to convey my appreciation for your interest in becoming a client of the Sidekicks program. As you are aware, St. Albert has a need for mature and responsible role models for its youth. The Sidekicks Mentoring Program was developed to help fulfill this need. Sidekicks provides mentors for your child, as well as support and opportunities for your whole family.

Once your family is accepted into The Sidekicks Mentoring Program, and your child has participated in a group activity, your child will be placed on the waiting list for anywhere between a week to two years. Your child's wait time is dependant on the number and influx of volunteers and your families' participation in the program. We do not match according to first come, first served. The match is based on the interests and needs of both the volunteer and child.

We realize that your family and child are in need now, not in two years. Therefore, we plan fun events like movie nights, camping trips, craft days and special events such as Halloween and Christmas Parties so everyone can benefit from Sidekicks, even if they are still waiting for a Senior Sidekick. These events are an opportunity to meet each other, benefit from Group Mentors and expand your support base. Many of our parents and children have become friends and get together to talk to one another about similar family situations.

As the Sidekicks Director, it is my job to assist in all phases of the screening and matching process and throughout any challenges, which may sometimes accompany friendship. This application is the first step. Once we receive your application we will schedule an interview with both yourself and your child. I look forward to meeting with you in the near future in order to proceed with the interview. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 459-6666.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Berard Gerling
Sidekicks Mentoring Program Director

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN THE
SIDEKICKS MENTORING PROGRAM**

WHAT IS SIDEKICKS?

The Sidekicks Mentoring Program is a program of the Community Information and Volunteer Centre. We match community volunteers to school-aged children between the ages of 6 and 16. The goals of Sidekicks are to provide these children with positive mentors and role models to be their friends.

Sidekicks clients are typically single parent, low-income families, children who may have a mental or physical disability, or they may be children who just need a friend. It has been proven that children who have positive mentors do better in school and have a happier youth. Sidekicks is also a support program for the St. Albert families that we serve. We provide opportunities for the families to network and increase their support base, as well as chances to get involved in the community through group events & activities that all the members can participate in.

We make referrals to other social service agencies and obtain discounts and free passes to local businesses and attractions.

If you feel that your family could benefit from being a member of the Sidekicks Mentoring Program and you are willing to participate, than you can apply to become a client. You do not need to be referred from an agency.

WHO DO YOU CONTACT?

The **Sidekicks Mentoring Program Director is Lorraine Berard Gerling**. She has a background in Volunteer Management and extensive education and experience in mentoring, working with youth and volunteering. If you have any questions or concern regarding the program, your application, or involvement, call or send an email to Lorraine and she would be happy to assist you.

The contact information for Sidekicks is:

SIDEKICKS MENTORING

#10, 215 CARNEGIE DR.

ST. ALBERT, AB T8N 5B1

ATTN: LORRAINE BERARD GERLING

PHONE: (780) 459-6666 FAX: (780) 460-1365 email at sidekicks@stalbertcivc.com

I'M INTERESTED IN APPLYING, WHAT NOW?

Included in this information booklet is a client application form. Fill out the application with as much detail as possible and then mail, fax or drop it off at the Sidekicks office. Once your application is reviewed, the Program Director will call you to arrange interviews with you, your spouse (if applicable) and child(ren). These interviews will be conducted at the Sidekicks office and are held individually. The questions in the interviews are in-depth and focus on the family situation, background and needs, interests and expectations of both the parents and children. The interview is to insure that we know your family well enough to make the best match possible for your child. All clients will also receive an orientation manual.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE CLIENTS?

By becoming a member of the Sidekicks Mentoring Program, **you are agreeing to participate to a certain extent to maintain your membership.** Guidelines on participation are covered in more detail in the orientation manual, but it is important for perspective clients to understand what will be asked of them.

- ✓ Jr. Sidekicks are required to participate in a minimum of 6 activities per year.
- ✓ All clients of the program are required to attend the Child Sexual Assault Awareness Workshop offered by the program at least once and other workshops offered for personal development.
- ✓ All clients over the age of 18 are required to work a minimum of three bingo's per year. Bingo's offset the cost of the activities and supplies. Clients are also expected to participate in other program fundraisers.

HOW ARE THE VOLUNTEERS SCREENED?

Each volunteer receives an information booklet that is similar to the information booklet that is given to the clients and an application that includes submitting three references that are checked by the Sidekicks Caseworker. Volunteers are interviewed and asked for a photocopy of their driver's license and a copy of "proof of car insurance" (if applicable). They are required to complete a criminal records check and child welfare check.

Once all information is collected and returned to the office it is reviewed and determined if the volunteer would make a good Sidekicks Volunteer. If the volunteer is accepted, they are orientated and trained.

IS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO GO THROUGH SUCH EXTENSIVE SCREENING?

For the protection of both the volunteer and the client it is necessary to have such extensive screening. Proper screening is important to ensure that the volunteer has chosen the right volunteer position for themselves and that the volunteer is the right person for us. It is also important that we know the volunteer and clients well, so that we will make an appropriate match and both the child and volunteer will have a positive experience.

SIDEKICKS CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Confidential information acquired as a result of contact with individuals in a relationship, family, or friendship group will be respected and safeguarded.

- Members will not disclose information that one person has requested be kept confidential from a partner, family member, or friend.
- Members will not disclose to family member's or friend's information that would be considered confidential even if not specified as such by the client.
- Family member's who request privileged information regarding a person known to the agency will be directed back to the individual.
- Disclosure of privileged information may occur with the informed consent of the person who gave the information in confidence.
- When a client consents to have confidential information disclosed, members are able to release information that pertains to the consenting person only. The privileged communication regarding all other members of the family must continue to be respected.
- Information that is disclosed that pertains to the safety of members in the program should be reported to the Caseworker even if the information is considered privileged.