
KidSport launched in the valley

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Bow Valley KidSport opened its doors on Monday, February 1, as they secured the funding needed to meet their start-up costs and launch the children's charitable program.

KidSport was established in 1993 by Sport BC. The program has since developed throughout Canada and currently operates in 173 volunteer community chapters and 11 provinces and territories. KidSport Canada was formed in 2005 and assists the provincial chapters in raising funds as well as helping the organization build public awareness. The Alberta chapter was started in 1995.

Glenn Naylor, the former president of the Canmore Minor Soccer League, decided a Bow Valley Chapter of KidSport was needed.

"It can be difficult in this community to make a go of it," Naylor said. "With housing so expensive and both parents having to work in order to survive. There can easily be no funds left at the end of the month for their kids to participate in organized sporting activities as some of them can be very expensive."

The Bow Valley chapter is part of the national program that is focused on improving the lives of children.

"The Bow Valley chapter includes Canmore, Banff, Exshaw and Morley," Naylor said. "Because so many of their kids participate in sports here. This is not a soccer program, it is for all sports, summer and winter."

After holding meetings and getting local businesses interested, the Bow Valley Chapter has now opened its doors. On the board with Naylor as president is Dave Hanna as vice-president, Louis Baxter as treasurer and Lynne Richardson as secretary.

"KidSport Alberta is completely donor driven," Naylor said. "We rely solely on the generosity and support of the community sponsors and individuals."

On Saturday night, Cornerstone Theatre presented KidSport with a check for \$1,595.

Cornerstone donates a portion of every ticket sold to KidSport Bow Valley. The money helped to bring the total raised to the necessary \$15,000 needed to officially launch the children's program.

"This check enabled us to reach our initial milestone to open our doors to start being able to fund kids," Naylor said. "We have had other donations from the business community over the past year. What we need more than anything is to obtain sustainable funding. Cornerstone Theatre is one of the first sustainable fund raising initiatives that KidSport is benefiting from. If any other organizations are interested in participating in the program in a sponsorship manner, they can contact me directly at 403-688-0061."

"At KidSport, we are trying to advocate the benefit of sport and the pursuit of life long health and wellness to children who might not get a chance to participate without our help," Naylor said. "We strive to overcome the financial obstacles that prevent some young people from participating in sport or other activities."

KidSport Bow Valley is holding a fundraising six-course dinner at the French Quarter on Thursday, March 4. Tickets are \$75 per person and all proceeds go to KidSport Bow Valley. There will be live music and draw prizes.

"Tickets will be available shortly," Naylor said. "They will be available at the French Quarter, both Beamer's coffee locations and the Town hall in Banff."

If anyone would like to apply for assistance from KidSport, they can go to kidsportbv@gmail.com or call 1-877-636-5328. To find out more, visit www.kidsport.ab.ca.

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