



Louis Riel and Associates (1869) Glenbow Archives NA-1039-1

## A Gathering to Celebrate Métis History and Culture: Sharing Values for Success

A Summary Report by Learning Initiatives for Rural and Northern BC (LIRN)  
Dawson Creek: November 14, 2008



AN INITIATIVE OF THE BC HEALTHY LIVING ALLIANCE



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Every community has a memory of itself.  
Not a history, nor an archive, nor an authoritative record...  
A living memory, an awareness of a collective identity woven of thousands upon  
thousands of individual and group stories.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

Dawson Creek and the Peace Region of British Columbia is home to a diverse combination of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, each bringing a unique set of stories to the collective identity of the Region. Among the many stories in Dawson Creek and the Peace Region are accounts about the contributions, challenges, cultural practices, and histories of the Métis people. An understanding of these accounts and the significant role that the Métis people have played and continue to play in shaping the Peace Region, the province of British Columbia and Canada as a whole is fundamental to the experience of being Canadian.

To understand one another in a multi-cultural society, we need invitations to learn across our cultural differences. If we accept these invitations, we have the opportunity to enrich our capacity to appreciate one another, and contribute to the animation of that living memory that we call our collective Canadian identity. On November 14, 2008, community leaders from many ages and backgrounds gathered at two different sites in Dawson Creek for a celebration of Louis Riel Day. The morning gathering of community leaders took place at Northern Lights College, while the afternoon presentation session took place at Middle Central School for a group of over 100 students.

The objectives of these two events were: (a) to facilitate learning among participants regarding Métis history and culture from Métis leaders living in the Peace Region; and (b) to engage participants in intercultural and intergenerational dialogue about shared community values, and engage questions about how such values can improve our individual lives and the communities within the Peace Region.

The Kiwanis Enterprise Centre was the host organization for the community gathering and the school presentation, providing logistical support and planning direction. Doris Brock and Anna Bridges were the local LIRN Partners who convened participants and made arrangements for the venues. The facilitation services were provided by Scott Graham, Director of the Community Development Education Program at SPARC BC (Social Planning and Research Council of BC).

This report summarizes the major activities of both the community gathering at Northern Lights College and the presentation at Central Middle School in Dawson Creek. The activities at both venues have been captured in a series of selected photos, which are briefly explained in adjacent textboxes. The event organizers decided to not “collect”

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the homepage of the Centre for Digital Story Telling:  
<http://www.storycenter.org/index1.html>.  
Retrieved January 14, 2009.

detailed accounts of participants' stories at the gathering or the presentations at the school because it was felt that such an exercise could stifle the flow of conversation and prohibit some participants from sharing their stories with others. As such, this report is a story told primarily in pictures.

The section that directly follows this introduction explains the activities at both events (i.e. college and school). The third section of this report consists of a series of photos from the gathering and the school presentation. The final section is the appendices. The first appendix consists of the evaluation results from the morning session. The agenda is featured in the next appendix. The third appendix is the participant list for the morning session. The fourth appendix is a list of resources on Métis culture. Finally, the description of LIRN BC is presented along with an overview of the LIRN partner organizations.

## **2. Overview of Activities**

As we note above, *A Gathering to Celebrate Métis History and Culture: Sharing Values for Success* consisted of two parts. The morning session took place at Northern Lights College and began with a round of welcoming speeches from multiple community leaders, including the local MLA, Blair Lekstrom, Principal of Northern Lights College Dawson Creek campus, Doug Patterson, Northern Lights College Aboriginal Education Coordinator, Theresa Gladue, and then acting mayor, Mariyln Belak. Following these welcoming addresses, the Riding Thunder Dance Group demonstrated a series of traditional and contemporary Métis dances. The dances were followed by a series of teachings by Métis Elders and youth on values for success in life. After these teachings, Gerri Goulet, Business Strategy Manager at the Ministry of Housing and Social Development, provided an excellent presentation, imparting information about Métis history, as well as a series of stories about her own personal history as a Métis person growing up in the Peace Region. After Ms. Goulet's presentation, small groups were formed and each group engaged questions about the values imbedded in the dances, teachings and Ms. Goulet's stories. The morning session ended with a delicious lunch that was provided by Northern Lights College, during which time participants continued their conversations and got to know one another a little bit better.

The afternoon session took place at Central Middle School, and involved two rounds of presentations to students by Métis leaders on a range of topics, including Métis history, personal accounts of being Métis, recent accomplishments of Métis people in BC and Canada, as well as opportunities for Métis youth to be involved in their culture in BC's Northeast region. The six presenters were:

- Dan Pope (Métis Nation British Columbia)
- Carol Paynter (Métis Nation British Columbia)
- Jacqueline Lafleur (Métis Nation British Columbia)
- Cory Lizotte
- John Morrison (Northern Lights College)
- Gerri Goulet (Ministry of Housing and Social Development)

### 3. Celebrating Métis Culture at Northern Lights College: A Story in Pictures

There were five major parts to the gathering at Northern Lights College: (1) Pre-gathering visit; (2) Dancing by Riding Thunder Dance Group; (3) Teaching by Riding Thunder Dance Group; (4) Engaging in Intercultural and Intergenerational Dialogue; and, (5) Summary, Event Evaluation, and Lunch.

Each of the major activity sets are represented by photos in this section, each of which are accompanied by a short text box that explains the photo.



**1. Pre-gathering visit:** Before the event began, participants were given time to get to know one another through informal conversation. Many participants also took this time to peruse the table of resources on Métis history and culture.



**2. Dancing:** The Riding Thunder Dance Group provided outstanding dance performances, offering participants an opportunity to appreciate traditional and contemporary expressions of Métis music and jigging.



**3. Teaching:** Too often we engage in community development work without remembering the foundational values that unite us as people. Sadie Lukan and the Riding Thunder Dance Group honored the participants with a heart warming reminder of seven teachings to live by, which can be summarized as follows: Wisdom, Love, Humility, Respect, Courage, Honesty, and Trust. Ms. Gerri Goulet provided an excellent personal presentation on Métis history and culture following the dancing and teachings of the Riding Thunder Dance Group.



**4. Engaging in intercultural and intergenerational dialogue:** After the dancing, teaching, and Ms. Goulet's presentation, participants were divided into small multi-generational groups and asked two questions: (a) What values do you hear and/or see in these stories and dances? (b) What are some examples of when these values have been put into practice in your relationships?





**5. Summary, evaluation and lunch:** After each small group was given a few minutes to share the major themes emerging from their small group dialogue, a final summary of the event was provided by Scott Graham, who thanked everyone for their participation and invited all to complete an evaluation form before moving into the lunch room for a warm and healthy meal.

## 4. Celebrating Métis History and Culture at Central Middle School

In keeping with recent learning about Métis history and culture in the classroom, teachers and school staff helped organize presentations to students on Métis history and culture from a group of Métis leaders from the Peace Region. The presenters shared interesting insights into traditional and contemporary Métis culture with over a hundred students from grades 5, 6 and 7. The six presenters are featured in the photo below, in order from right to left.

- Dan Pope (Métis Nation British Columbia)
- Cory Lizotte
- Jacqueline Lafleur (Métis Nation British Columbia)
- Carol Paynter (Métis Nation British Columbia)
- Gerri Goulet (Ministry of Housing and Social Development)
- Scott Graham (Moderator: SPARC BC)
- John Morrison (Northern Lights College)



**Presentation by Dan Pope:** In dim light, Dan Pope explains what the Métis Nation of British Columbia is and helps students understand key parts of Métis history and the significance of Louis Riel. Mr. Pope also emphasized Métis contributions to Canadian society, emphasizing the recent accomplishment of Métis literary figure Joseph Boyden, the 2008 winner of the Scotia Bank Giller Prize.



## 5. Closing Remarks

We must cherish our inheritance. We must preserve our nationality for the youth of our future.<sup>2</sup> (Louis Riel)

Each generation of people are the recipients of the historical circumstances that were forged through the interactions of their predecessors. Celebrating Louis Riel Day is an act of recognizing the contributions that Métis people have and continue to make to Canadian society, through both their ongoing struggle for self-determination, and through their current day commitment to sharing their rich culture with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

*A Gathering to Celebrate Métis History and Culture: Sharing Values for Success*, offered people in the Peace Region, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, young and young at heart, the opportunity to learn about local and national Métis history, and the ways that the work of local Métis leaders are improving community well being throughout the Peace Region and beyond. The event provided a safe space for meeting and sharing, for taking time to ask new questions with a view to learning new things and making new friends. As a celebratory event, it was a unique historical moment when diverse people come together with open hearts and minds to pursue new understandings of each other, and appreciate the inheritance of the many inter-related communities that hold our province and country together. In the words of one participant: “We need more of these kinds of gatherings.”

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<sup>2</sup> Manitoba Métis Federation:  
[http://www.mmf.mb.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=118&Itemid=135](http://www.mmf.mb.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=118&Itemid=135). Retrieved January 15, 2008.

## 6. Appendices

### Appendix A: Evaluation results

All participants were asked to complete an evaluation of the morning session. In this appendix, we feature the summary of the evaluation results. The evaluation form was completed by 25 participants.

**1. Please indicate the type of organization that you represent.**

- Aboriginal organization (14)
- Social development nonprofit organization (3)
- Economic development nonprofit organization (2)
- Business
- Government (municipal, provincial or federal) (2)
- Environmental organization
- Health (Health authority, mental health association, etc.)
- Education (School, College, University) (3)
- Civil society (citizen, volunteer group, etc.)

**2. Please indicate how relevant this event was for your community?**

Irrelevant

Very Relevant

1

2

3

4

5

Average rating: 4.7

Comments:

- Need more of these things
- Very Good
- Very relaxed & positive
- Very good group
- Really getting to understand the culture & history of Aboriginal peoples growing up in a primarily white school in Lower Mainland
- Because we got to find things out

**3. Please indicate how the LIRN event helped you connect with the people in your community.**

Not at all Helpful					Very Helpful
1	2	3	4	5	

Average rating: 4.7

**4. Did the LIRN event increase your interest in exploring new ways to work with people in your community?**

Not at all					A Great Deal
1	2	3	4	5	

Average rating: 4.4

**5. How would you rate the event facilitator(s)?**

Poor					Excellent
1	2	3	4	5	

Average rating 4.8

Comments:

- Excellent
- It seemed the event was taken over by college - which was unfortunate as it didn't give enough time for all of the speakers
- Very well put together

**6. How would you rate the dancers and presenter?**

Poor

Excellent

1

2

3

4

5

Average rating: 4.8

Comments:

- Nice to see a wide variety of ages
- I never got here to see them

**7. What was your favorite part of the workshop?**

- The history talks and group discussions
- Talking out and knowing the people
- Speeches/welcomes..as well as small table discussions
- The dancing, Gerri Goulet's speech, & the small-group discussion
- Round table discussions-speeches
- The butterfly dancers
- Dancing
- Meeting the people. Really enjoyed Gerri Goulet's stories
- The discussion
- getting to know each other
- discussion on culture
- Interaction
- Dancers & the presentations. Discussions
- The Dancers (x2)
- The hoop dancers
- The 7 teachings, and the Hoop dance

**8. What part of the workshop could have been improved?**

- There might have been a power point
- Excellent - good organization
- It was all good
- was good
- nothing
- it was great - not long enough
- To be on time
- It was excellent - Thank you
- A little more organized
- Nothing it was excellent

## Appendix B: Agenda

<b>Gathering at Northern Lights College</b>	
8:30 am	<b>Coffee and refreshments</b>
9:00 am	<b>Introductions &amp; Overview of the Day</b>
9:30 am	<b>Sadie Lukan &amp; the Riding Thunder Dance Group</b>
10:00 am	<b>Gerri Goulet, Business Strategy Manager of MHSD</b>
10:45 am	<b>Break</b>
11:00 am	<b>Discussing the values in the stories and dances</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What values do we hear and/or see in these stories and dances?</li> <li>• What are some examples of when these values have been put into practice in your relationships?</li> </ul>
11:45 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Presentations at Central Middle School</b>	
12:45 pm	<b>Dan Pope (Métis Nation British Columbia)</b> <b>Carol Painter (Métis Nation British Columbia)</b> <b>Cory Lizotte</b> <b>Jon Morrison (Northern Lights College)</b> <b>Gerri Goulet (Ministry of Housing and Social Development)</b>
2:45 pm	<b>Wrap up and closing</b>

## Appendix C: Participant list

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Gail Majeau	Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
Ginette Uhle	Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
Nadine Gagne'	Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
Guido Rupl	Northern Lights College
Tyler Strong	Riding Thunder Dance Group
Cheryl Shuman	BCSEA
Sadie Lukan	DC Métis Youth Project
Gerri Goulet	Ministry of Housing & Social Development
Colton Frieson	YO 360
Dale Supernant	YO 360
Jesse Freeman	YO 360
Lorelee Friesen	Northern Lights College
Cyndy Lorinz	Northern Lights College
Jackie Lafleur	Métis Nation BC
Esther LaGlace	
Doris Brocke	Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
Anna Bridges	Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
Theresa Gladue	Northern Lights College
Louise Isadore	Métis Elder
Blair Lekstrom	MLA
Doug Patterson	Northern Lights College
Bea Ward	Riding Thunder Dance Group
Shana Smith	Riding Thunder Dance Group
Elsie Oulette	Métis Elder
Mike Bernier	Councilor – City of Dawson Creek
Mark Woodman	Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
Malcolm Supernault	North East Métis Association
Shawna Beaulieu	Riding Thunder Dance Group
Cheyanne	Riding Thunder Dance Group
Marilyn Belak	Councilor – City of Dawson Creek (acting Mayor)
Tyrell Giroux	YO 360
Tyler L'Hirondelle	YO 360
Josie Elliott	
Sereena Wolfeo	
Carol Paynter	Métis Nation BC
Dan Pope	Métis Nation BC
Anne Whitaker	
Jayden Jennings	YO 360
Billie Laboucan	YO 360
Brent Neumann	Councilor – City of Dawson Creek
Robert Madsen	YO 360
Erin Reynolds	
Brad Lyon	Northern Lights College
Tammy Cooke	DC Native Housing

## **Appendix D: Resources on Métis History and Culture**

This appendix consists of a range of written materials related to Métis history and culture, as well as a series of websites that feature additional information on the Métis. The following written materials have been organized thematically and relate to different aspects of the history and culture of the Métis.

### **Questions of Métis Identity**

Devine, Heather. *The People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900*. 2004. Calgary: Univ. Calgary Press. *Chapter 1: Approaching the stories of the Desjarlais Family: methods and goals*: 1-18.

Foster, John E. "Some Questions and Perspectives on the Problem of Métis Roots" in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*. 1985. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. Brown (Eds). Winnipeg: Univ. Manitoba Press: 71-92.

### **The Emergence of the Métis Peoples**

*The People Who Own Themselves* Chapter 2: The social contexts of Europe and New France: 19-52. Chapter 3: From the St. Lawrence to St. Louis: the Desjarlais migration to the Mississippi and beyond: 53-74.

Peterson, Jacqueline. "Many Roads to Red River: Métis Genesis in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1815" in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*. 1985. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. Brown (Eds). Winnipeg: Univ. Manitoba Press: 37-72.

### **Métis Women**

Brown, Jennifer. "Women as Centre and Symbol of the Métis." *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3(1), 1983: 39-46.

Brown, Jennifer S. "Partial Truths: A Closer Look at Fur Trade Marriage" in *From Rupert's Land to Canada: Essays in Honour of John E. Foster*. 2001. G. Ens et. al. (Eds). Edmonton: University of Alberta Press: 59-77.

### **Métis Communities prior to the 1870 Uprising**

*The People Who Own Themselves* Chapter 4: The emergence of Freeman in Ruperts Land: 75-110

Ens, Gerhard. "The Red River Peasantry: Métis Economy and Society in the 1830's" in *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Métis in the Nineteenth Century*. 1996. Toronto: UT Press: 28-56.

### **The Seven Oaks Incident and the Riel Resistance at Red River**

*The People Who Own Themselves Chapter 5: Migration and Retrenchment: 1821-1869:* 111-140

Sprague, D.N. "Asserting Canadian Authority of Assiniboia" in *Canada and the Métis 1869-1885*. 1988. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Univ. Press: 33-52.

Dyck, Lyle. "The Seven Oaks Incident and the Construction of a Historical Tradition 1816-1970." *The Journal of Canadian Historical Association* 2, 1991: 91-113.

### **The 1885 Uprising: The Issues, the Battles, the leaders, the Immediate Aftermath & Trial of Louis Riel**

*The People who Own Themselves: Chapter 6: Treaties and Rebellion: 141-168. Chapter 7: Some difficult choices: The Desjarlais After 1885: 169-196.*

Beal, Bob and Rod Macleod "The Trial of Louis Riel" in *Prairie Fire: The 1885 North-West Rebellion*. 1984. Hurtig Publishers.

Beal, Bob and Rod Macleod "The Other Trials: Justice Unbalanced" in *Prairie Fire: The 1885 North-West Rebellion*. 1984. Hurtig Publishers.

### **Métis Communities after the 1885 Rebellion**

Ens, Gerhard "Métis Scrip" in *The Recognition of Aboriginal Rights: Case Studies 1*. 1996. Samuel Corrigan and Joe Sawchuk (Eds). Brandon: Bearspaw Publishing: 47-56.

Ens, Gerhard. "After the Buffalo: The Reformation of the Turtle Mountain Métis Community, 1870-1905" in *New Faces of the Fur Trade: Selected Papers of the 7th North American Fur Trade Conference, Halifax Nova Scotia 1995*. 1996. J. Fiske et. al. Lansing: Michigan State Univ. Press: 139-152.

Sawchuk, Joe. "St Paul Des Métis: The First Métis Colony: 1896-1909" in *Métis Land Rights in Alberta: A Political History*. 1981. Métis Assoc of Alberta, Joe Sawchuk et. al. Edmonton: Métis Assoc of Alberta: 159-186.

### **The Métis from 1900-1960's**

K.S. Coates and W.R. Morrison "More than a Matter of Blood: The Federal Government, the Churches and the Mixed Blood Populations of the Yukon and Mackenzie River Valley, 1890-1950" in *1885 & After: Native Society in Transition. 1986*. F.L. Barron & J.B. Waldram (Eds). Regina: Univ. Regina Canadian Plains Research Centre:

York, Geoffrey "From Manitoba to Massachusetts: The Lost Generation" in *The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada*. Geoffrey York. 1999. Toronto: McArthur and Co: 201-227.

Lavallee, Guy A. "The Michif French Language: Historical Development and Métis Group Identity and Solidarity at St. Laurent, Manitoba" *Native Studies Review* 1991, 7(1): 81-93.

### **The Métis from 1900's and 1960's**

Ken and Victoria Zeilig (Eds). "Agnes Boucher" in *Ste. Madeleine, Community without a Town: Métis Elders in Interview*. 1987. Winnipeg: Gabriel Dumont Institute: 80-103.

Ken and Victoria Zeilig (Eds). "Louis Pelletier" in *Ste. Madeleine, Community without a Town: Métis Elders in Interview*. 1987. Winnipeg: Gabriel Dumont Institute: 104-125

Film: *Places Not Our Own (Daughters of the Country Series)*. Winnipeg: National Film Board of Canada, 1986.

### **The 1960s and 1970s: Métis Definitions Crystallize, Organizations Form and the Fight for Legal Recognition Intensifies**

Sawchuk, Joe "The Métis Association of Alberta" in *The Dynamics of Native Politics: The Alberta Métis Experience*. 1998. Saskatoon: Purich Publishing: 49-68.

Hourie "The Struggle for Métis Recognition: Education and Survival" in *The Struggle for Recognition: Canadian Justice and the Métis Nation*. 1991. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications: 133-143.

## **Metis, Self-Government and the Future**

Chartier, Clem. “Aboriginal Self-Government and the Métis Nation” in *Aboriginal Self Government in Canada: Trends and Issues (2ed)*. John Hyles (ed), 1999. Saskatoon: Purich Publishing: 112-129.

Chartrand, Paul and John Giokas “Defining the ‘Métis People’: The Hard Case of Canadian Aboriginal Law in *Who Are Canada’s Aboriginal Peoples?: Recognition, Definition and Jurisdiction*. 2002. Paul Chartrand (Ed). Saskatoon: Purich Publishing: Chapter 8.

## **Critically Reading History**

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, “Imperialism, History, Writing and Theory” in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. 1999. London: Zed Books: 29-35.

**Also, see the following websites for more information on the Métis:**

- [www.mnbc.com](http://www.mnbc.com)
- [www.ainc-inac.gc.ca](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca)
- [www.metisresourcecentre.mb.ca](http://www.metisresourcecentre.mb.ca)
- [www.metismuseum.ca](http://www.metismuseum.ca)
- [www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)
- <http://mmf.mb.ca>
- [www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca/glossary](http://www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca/glossary)

## **Appendix E: LIRN BC and Partner Organizations**

LIRN is a collaborative approach to building on the capacities of rural, remote and northern British Columbian communities. The LIRN process encourages government (municipal, provincial and federal), First Nations, non-government organizations (community-based, regional and provincial) and businesses to work together to plan, deliver and evaluate a locally relevant learning initiative. LIRN is made possible through a partnership of federal and provincial governments, as well as non-government organizations that recognize the strengths and challenges of rural, remote and Northern BC communities. The LIRN partners also understand the importance of local opportunities to learn about and work on current issues, as well as assess, envision, plan and act for a better future.

As LIRN partners, the BC Rural Network, Canadian Rural Partnership, Service Canada, PeerNet BC, BC Healthy Communities, BC Healthy Living Alliance, and the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) have combined their expertise and resources in an effort to maximize community capacity building opportunities for people living in rural, remote, and northern parts of the province. The objective of the LIRN process is to create a safe space in which community members learn and work together in a manner that is locally relevant. On the following pages, we provide brief descriptions of each of the LIRN partners.

### **Canadian Rural Partnership**

Canadian Rural Partnership (CRP) is a federal initiative which supports rural communities by helping to identify the issues they are facing, by taking collaborative action to address these issues, and connecting community to community and community to government to share information on available resources and best practice in rural development. We identify issues by bringing rural community residents together for dialogue or at conferences. The information from these gatherings is shared with a federal/provincial Rural Team which can undertake collaborative action to address these issues and can provide the input toward influencing government policies and programs with a Rural Lens. We also share information from one community to another and from government to communities through listservs, newsletters, best practice guides, and program lists. For more information about the Canadian Rural Partnership, please visit our website at: [http://www.rural.gc.ca/team/bc/bchome\\_e.phtml](http://www.rural.gc.ca/team/bc/bchome_e.phtml)

## **Service Canada and the New Horizons for Seniors Program**

Service Canada is becoming the program delivery arm of the federal government. Over a dozen federal departments are working with Service Canada so it can become a single window of service and program delivery for the federal government. Service Canada is home to the Employment Insurance system, labour market programming to help unemployed people return to work, income support like Old Age Security and Canada Pension. Service Canada also coordinates the New Horizons for Seniors program, which is a program that provides funding for community-based projects that aim to encourage seniors to contribute to and become more engaged in their local communities. Service Canada is interested in strengthening linkages with communities for more effective delivery of federal programs and services. For more information about Service Canada and the New Horizons for Seniors program, please visit our website at: <http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/isp/horizons/toc.shtml>

## **Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) and the Community Development Education Program**

SPARC BC, a registered non-profit society and a federally registered charity, was established in 1966 and is a leader in research, public education and advocacy regarding issues of community development, accessibility, and income security. SPARC BC is a provincial organization with over 15,000 members and is governed by a Board of Directors from across BC. Our mission is to work with communities in building a just and healthy society for all.

The Community Development Education Program is one of our methods for realizing our mission. The Community Development Education Program aims to empower individuals and organizations by providing them with learning opportunities to identify local assets and issues, build local knowledge and develop skills and action-plans that contribute to effecting local consensus-oriented change. The curriculum resources and facilitation services of the Community Development Education Program are available to communities through the LIRN BC process. For more information about SPARC BC and the Community Development Education Program, please visit our website at [www.sparc.bc.ca](http://www.sparc.bc.ca).

## **PeerNet BC**

PeerNetBC has been helping people connect since 1986, providing resources for peer groups and peer-led initiatives. Our resources and services are available for community members and groups across British Columbia, including online, rural, multicultural and youth engagement initiatives. PeerNetBC is a non-profit, registered charitable organization.

PeerNetBC offers interactive and dynamic workshops focusing on the nuts and bolts of peer support. We concentrate on the process of peer support so that you can apply it to your own issue, community or project. Workshops are designed so participants learn from each other, gain knowledge through practicing skills in a safe environment, and meet others who are experiencing the same challenges or situations.

We offer a regular series of standard workshops several times a year for community members, and we develop customized workshops around many topics for community groups and organizations. If you'd like to be notified when public workshops are scheduled, please join our emailing list. If you'd like to arrange a customized workshop for your group, give us a call at 604-733-6186. Also, see our website: <http://www.peernetbc.com>

## **BC Healthy Communities**

BC Healthy Communities is part of the international Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities movement. We support communities and community groups that are taking a holistic and integrated approach to increasing the health, well-being and healthy development in their communities.

Worldwide, the Healthy Communities movement has identified some important building blocks for creating a health community: Community Involvement, Political Commitment, Inter-sectoral Partnerships, Healthy Public Policy. These building blocks are important tools for addressing multiple and interconnected determinants of health: social, environmental, economic, physical, psychological, spiritual and cultural.

BC Healthy Communities supports communities and community groups that are working on Healthy Community-related initiatives in a number of ways:

- Providing information on resources, tools and other Healthy Community initiatives
- Making referrals to relevant resource materials and organizations
- Facilitating/co-facilitating community meetings that engage diverse sectors
- Developing educational materials and resources
- Publishing the BCHC Healthy Communities newsletter
- Working in partnership to develop/maintain databases and resource inventories

For more information about BCHC and to find out how we might be able to support your efforts to create a healthier community, please contact us at our Central Office in Victoria, or call the Regional Facilitator for your area. Also, check out our website: <http://www.bchealthycommunities.ca/content/home.asp>

### **BC Healthy Living Alliance and the Community Capacity Building Strategy**

Led by the BC and Yukon Division of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Community Capacity Building Strategy is an initiative of the BC Healthy Living Alliance (BCHLA). The Alliance is working to improve the health of British Columbians through leadership that enhances collaborative action to promote physical activity, healthy eating, and living smoke free. The BCHLA has received funding through ActNow BC. Community capacity building aims to enhance the skills, abilities, resources, and commitment of communities and their members to care for each other, nurture unique talents and leadership, and act on challenges and opportunities the community faces. As a result, individuals and groups increase their ability to impact the health and vitality of their communities in a positive, sustainable manner through collaboration, education, communication, and cooperation.

The strategy is focusing on areas of the province that can most benefit from this approach to promoting health. This takes in rural and remote communities addressing the unique needs of aboriginal people, youth, new immigrants, refugees and low-income populations

For more information about the Community Capacity Building Strategy, please visit the following site: [www.bchealthyliving.ca](http://www.bchealthyliving.ca)