

CIF FEATURE STORY:

Thomson Aerobic Powwow Program

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Feature Story: Thomson Aerobic Powwow Program; Thomson Community School Council

The Thomson Aerobic Powwow Program was offered weekly and focused on improving the cardiovascular health, balance, and strength of participants through teachings of the rigorous routines of powwow dance. **Sessions were conducted by Terrance Littletent, a former world champion Hoop Dancer, who also educated participants on the regalia, meaning, and origin of traditional First Nation dances.**

The program was designed to target youth and adults living in the Heritage Neighborhood of Regina. The sessions were culturally affirming and inclusive. The Aerobic Powwow program was the only recreational fitness program to be offered in the Heritage area free of charge at that time.

“Initially the program was proposed to target youth and adults, however, on program nights, most participants brought their entire families,” shared Angel Hayden, Community Coordinator. **“This added another dimension to our program, it allowed for increased opportunities to engage families and facilitated our quest in building meaningful relationships within the community.”**

This unique program increased the physical activity level of participants, promoted and encouraged a healthy lifestyle, provided access to free recreational programming, encouraged community participation, and educated participants on Aboriginal culture and identity.

“ Participating in the Thomson Powwow Program built up my endurance, as you have to be very fit to dance Powwow. Attending the program also educated me on the meaning of the dances and what the dance moves are meant to reflect. It was a good program and I am glad that I was able to participate in it. ”

- Participant

