

CIF FEATURE STORY:

Reno Rascals After School Program

November 2017



Feature Story: *Reno Rascals After School Program (RRASP), Reno Rascals Early Learning & Child Care*

The CIF's funding support has enabled Reno Rascals Early Learning and Child Care to reflect upon and enhance their after school programming for school-aged children. Through the assistance of community volunteers they were able to offer a variety of new monthly projects, activities, and learning experiences which sparked a renewed interest for the children to participate. Children had fun learning new skills including Christmas cookie baking and decorating, preparing healthy and nutritious snacks, building with clay, gardening (including seeding, transplanting, making a wicking bed and hoop house), yoga, gymnastics, and soccer. More activities will be offered in the upcoming months!

"The enhanced after school program supports our young families and their school-age children within the community and surrounding area of Consul," shared Jean Wenaas, Director. **"Parents can be at ease while they are working or away from home knowing that their children are safe, willing, and happily participating in our after school program."**

Children are provided with a healthy, nutritious snack and have the opportunity to participate in a variety of indoor and outdoor age-appropriate group projects. These activities encourage fun, friendships, learning new skills and increasing confidence while collaborating with peers their age. **"We use mainly local resources, materials, and volunteers to assist staff in facilitating new and interesting experiences for the children. Teenagers in the community are also encouraged to plan and lead some special activities which gives them the experience, skills, and self-confidence to become involved as active community volunteers and leaders,"** said Jean.

"The goal to enhance our after school program through offering new activities and learning experiences sparked a renewed interest and increased participation for the school-aged children's group. Equally important, we realized this success was attained through our encouragement of community volunteers and facilitators' valuable input, both young and old, and their willingness to share their individual talents and expertise in certain areas. All parents, staff, and community members collaborate and exercise a mutual respect, trust, and cooperation for the best interests and well-being of the children," shared Jean.

"The RRASP program gave my daughter an opportunity to learn how to lead activities with younger children in a fun environment. I saw her confidence grow as she planned the sessions and spent time with the kids. It was a great growth opportunity for her. **"**

- Parent of teen facilitator who led the school age group in their building with clay activity.

