

Youth options



**Still strong
after
10 years...**

Many of the young men featured in this photo have been part of the Youth Options Program for 10 years playing pick-up basketball evenings at Abbottsfield Rec Centre.

Since 1998, the Beverly Towne Community Development Society has offered programs for youth. These programs were developed in response to requests from youth and youth encouraged to participate in the development and implementation of the programs to ensure they address their interests and needs. But the Society does not limit themselves to youth, they also have several Children's Programs for kids aged 6-12. But first, let's take a look at the neighbourhoods these programs serve.

The neighbourhoods of Abbottsfield and north Rundle Heights are unique in their structure as both are comprised solely of multi-family row housing and apartments with no churches or community based facilities to serve residents. The majority of housing is low cost, rental accommodation. Both neighbourhoods have a high percentage of single parent families

and above average numbers of children and youth, many who are isolated because of their economic situation. Often exposed to drugs, alcohol and violence from a young age few have developed positive relationships with adults and their peers. The majority are from single parent, low income families who struggle to provide basic necessities and are unable to pay for recreational activities for their children.

The Youth Options program began in 1999 as a joint initiative of the Edmonton Police Service and community organizations to address the issues of gangs and youth crime in Beverly. Meetings were held with youth in northeast Edmonton to gain insight into the issues they faced and what the community could do to help them make changes in their lives. Responses indicated youth were bored, programs were not of interest to them, and the cost of participating

in sports and programs that required travel outside their community not achievable due to cost. Youth Options began to offer youth the programs they wanted, at times best for them and held in a community location so they didn't have to travel. In 2001 Beverly Towne Community Development Society took over the project and added more activities such as drop in, late night programs and over the past 11 years programs added and changed programs to meet the ongoing needs of youth. Youth Options no longer focuses solely on youth who have been in trouble but is open to anyone between the ages of 13 -24 offering free drop in programs that focus on developing and strengthening the life, coping, interpersonal and group skills that enable youth to become active and valued members of their community.

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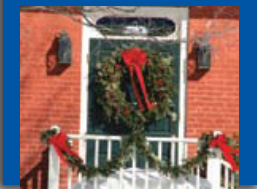
Be safe and sound at home 4



Decorate your tree like a pro 5



Open Houses 6



Be safe and sound at home in just seven days

(NC)—Making your home a safe haven for your family should be a top priority. But according to the Home Safety Council, less than one-third of homeowners make any safety improvements. Luckily, updating your home safety doesn't have to be a daunting task. Within seven days you can make your home safe, sound and secure.

Day 1: Bathrooms

Locate medicines and dangerous chemicals, like nail polish remover or mouthwash, and place them in a locked cabinet. Next, install grab bars to help prevent falls. Moen Home Care offers a variety of designer grab bars, including three grab bars with accessories. These "disguised" safety devices include a grab bar with a paper holder (to assist getting on and off the toilet), a towel bar (to hold towels while assisting getting into and out of the shower or tub) and a shelf (to keep shower items handy and keep a firm grip in the shower).

Day 2: Kitchen

Start your safety update by ensuring hazardous items are out of reach. This includes: knives, scissors, cleaning supplies and any cords from small appliances. Next, if you have young children, install childproof latches on all cupboards, oven doors and stove handles. Finally, keep a fire extinguisher within arms' reach of your oven.

Day 3: Hallways/Stairs

To prevent against falls, ensure there is bright lighting near stairs and remove or secure any tripping hazards from the area. Next, be sure working smoke detectors are in the hallways on each floor—and change their batteries every six months. Finally, provide secure railings on both sides of the stairs.

Day 4: Electrical/Heating

Place safety plugs in all electrical outlets. Next, create barriers around any hot surfaces, such as baseboards, radiators and fireplaces, to keep small hands from

being burned—while also ensuring that there is a clear distance from other objects that could catch fire.

Day 5: Bedrooms

If you're in an older home, be sure that the walls have a safe, non-lead paint. Next, look for any dangling cords from blinds and pin them up to remove strangulation hazards. Window guards are also available to prevent accidental falls from open windows.

Day 6: Family Room

Place all large equipment on a wall and make the wires and cords inaccessible. Next, secure any shelves or bookcases to the wall to avoid tipping hazards. Finally, if you have toddlers, be sure to add corner pads to any furniture with sharp corners.

Day 7: Rest and Enjoy

Now you can sit back and breathe a sigh of relief that your home is safe and sound for your family.



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More information is available online at moen.ca. www.newscanada.com

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Youth options

Continued from Front

In 2008, parents in Abbotsfield felt more children's program were needed

and thus began Alpha Kidz in May 2009. A program is for children ages 6-12 and based on the philosophy of Respect Yourself, Respect Others and Respect Your Environment. The program runs 5 days a week after school and begins every day with a sharing circle. There is also programs running during Teachers' Convention, Spring Break and summer programs. Children participate in fitness, crafts and games, a library program, junior cooks, field trips and special events. All programs include a healthy snack.

The programs at Beverly Towne Community Development Society continue to grow and change to meet the needs of the community. They have watched participants mature and become productive members of the community. Former Youth Options participants are now mentors and volunteers and some are currently working for the Society and other community organizations.



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