

National Child Day

November 20, 2021

The City of Winnipeg's Recreation Services Division has worked in collaboration with *Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education* to recognize National Child Day, marked every year on November 20.

Celebrated since 1993, National Child Day commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (November 20, 1959) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (November 20, 1989). The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international treaty that recognizes the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children, and provides us with a roadmap of what is needed to raise healthy and happy children.

“This year we are focusing on the right to be and to feel included regardless of identity.” – Equitas

This year's activities were intended to celebrate National Child Day!

Once again this fall, various Children's Free Play programs (ages 6-12) were invited to participate by building a *“Tree of Children's Rights”* at their sites. They were also invited to participate in NEW *“Race to Inclusion”* games. The activities were a great way to give children a chance to learn about their rights and responsibilities, and share their ideas on what is important to them with the broader community.



TREE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ACTIVITY STAGES

1. Learn about Children's Rights

Free Play programs were provided with a Tree of Children's Rights Booklet, prepared by *Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education*. The booklet featured an easy activity to get children thinking about their rights and expressing which rights are important to them. Recreation Technicians led their participants through the activity throughout the weeks of November 17-December 13, 2021.

2. Design Children's Rights Leaves

After completing the activity, participants created artwork about Children's Rights, and used what they learned to inform their designs for **Children's Rights leaves**.

3. Create and Share your Tree of Children's Rights

As a group, participants then created a Tree of Children's Rights in order to express what they had learned about rights, and share their ideas about rights with other children, adult influencers, and their communities.

“A tree was used for this activity for its symbolic meanings. The roots of the tree symbolize the work we do with children as being grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The branches symbolize our commitments to the protection of children's rights and finally the leaves are the expression of why children's rights are important, from children themselves.”

– Equitas

RACE TO INCLUSION ACTIVITY STAGES

1. Learn about Children’s Rights and Inclusion

Free Play Programs were provided a Race to Inclusion Booklet, Prepared by *Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education*. The booklet featured activities and challenges to support them in the promotion of inclusion at their sites.

2. Complete Race to Inclusion Activity

Free Play participants and leaders participated in activities such as “Saturn to Jupiter” and “Hello around the world”. The group games supported their development, awareness, and promotion of inclusion.

3. Have Discussion on the Promotion of Inclusion

Once the activities were completed, the group had a discussion on rights and responsibilities, and inclusion.

5 Free Play Programs, and 46 children

A total of 5 Free Play Programs and 46 children participated in the National Child Day celebration this year. Due to COVID-19, less programming was offered during this timeframe, leading to a reduction in overall participation from 2019.

All program locations were able to either post their Tree of Children’s Rights for the community to see and ask questions or participated in the Race to Inclusion activities and challenges.

Free Play Program Locations	Date	Number of Participants	Number of Leaves Created	Race to Inclusion Activity
Mayfair Recreation Centre	Nov. 20	12	16	
Broadway Neighbourhood Centre	Nov. 17	6	12	
Heritage Victoria Community Centre	Dec. 13	16	13	Saturn to Jupiter
East Elmwood Community Centre	Nov. 17	11	12	Saturn to Jupiter
Westdale Community Centre	Dec. 5	3	0	Hello around the world

The overall feedback from Recreation Technicians and participants was positive. Children reported learning about their rights, and had fun creating the artwork for their trees and participating in the activities!

Participating in this celebration allowed participants and our employees to join in the conversation and activities that highlight positive values, children’s rights, and inclusion.

This was also an opportunity to be a part of a national event in support of children’s rights!

Testimonials

“The leader’s favourite part of the activity was helping the kids put the leaves on the tree and seeing the whole outcome of the activity.”

– Broadway Neighbourhood Center

“The children really enjoyed the “Saturn to Jupiter” game and enjoyed learning about their rights and creating the leaves for the tree.”

– East Elmwood Community Center

“This is a fun game; can we play another round?” “I learned how to say “Hello” in Italian today.”

– Westdale Community Centre

“Some of the older kids really enjoyed the conversations around rights, and they got really passionate talking.”

– Mayfair Recreation Centre

“They enjoyed the “Race to Inclusion” game and if another child could not skip or hop or missed a goal in the obstacle course, they did not make fun of the child, rather, cheered them on to continue and finish their round so they could high five their team and continue the game.”

– Heritage Victoria Community Centre

