

Youth target of health plan

July 23, 2009

Port Colborne is partnering with Safe Communities Port Colborne, Port Cares, Community Living and the Port Colborne/Wainfleet Healthy Lifestyles Coalition to create a unique proposal to the Healthy Communities Fund by looking for ways to address local youth health and social infrastructure.

Local organizations are encouraged to apply to the fund in partnership to plan and deliver programs that improve health and safety at the community level. Programs must address multiple health risk factors, such as physical activity, healthy eating and substance abuse.

Lori Kleinsmith, program coordinator, Safe Communities Port Colborne and Port Colborne/Wainfleet Healthy Lifestyles Coalition, said health is a very important issue to local youth, and adults don't always understand their perspectives and take the wrong approach when working with them.

"Our goal is to provide our youth with an opportunity to explore their health issues and to guide them in bridging the gaps," she said.

Mayor Vance Badawey, board chair of Safe Communities Port Colborne, said this is the best approach to planning and implementing health promotion strategies for the city.

"The days of working in silos are gone. We must ensure that our community partners are able to maximize resources and services by finding ways to collaborate — working together to ensure overall health and wellness," Badawey said. "It has been made abundantly clear that the Niagara Health System has limited its interest in providing health-care services within Port Colborne and Wainfleet. Therefore, it is up to us to work with identified enablers and the ministry to enhance our community's access to health-care services through partnering with our local organizations.

"Over time, our intent is to offer a menu of health-care services to our residents. Simply put, the City of Port Colborne is building its own health-care system."

This article is for personal use only courtesy of NiagaraThisWeek.com - a division of Metroland Media Group Ltd.
