

Week of the Child fun for kids, parents

Hope is to increase awareness about children's issues and services, and celebrate the importance of children and families

Lindsay Kelly
Shield Staff

If you're a mom or dad with young children, get their costumes out and faces ready for painting, because this weekend marks the start of the Week of the Child in Sudbury.

The Week of the Child is an annual, week-long event comprised of different activities geared toward families with infants and toddlers. Activities will be held at different venues across the city from Oct. 19 to Oct. 27.

The week begins this Saturday with a children's parade. Kids are invited to meet at the Sudbury arena at 10 a.m. to dress up in costumes, decorate their bikes, wagons or scooters, and paint their faces for the parade. From there, they will walk along Elgin Street to Market Square, Sudbury's farmer's market.

The parade begins at 11 a.m., and all children are welcome, although those under 12 must have an adult with them.

After the parade, Market Square will be host to hayrides, crafts, more face painting and playtime on inflatable bounce-a-bouts, as well as a free hot dog lunch for the kids.

Some of the other children's activities throughout the week include skating parties, pictures taken with Santa, a pancake breakfast, a nature walk, storytelling, singalongs and gallery and museum tours.

Although there is plenty during the week for little ones to do, the activities featured are not just for children. There will be information available for parents as well.

The opening day will feature a car seat display and demonstration on how to install and use car seats properly, and Greater Sudbury Police officers will be fingerprinting children.

As well, the Sudbury and District Health Unit will have informa-

Week of the Child Highlights

Saturday, Oct. 19

Children's parade at Sudbury Arena
Hayrides, crafts, face painting
Free hot dog lunch

Sunday, Oct. 20

Tour of Northern Ontario Railroad
Museum and Heritage Centre

Monday, Oct. 21

Lunch and activities for children
The Hockey Sweater skating party

Tuesday, Oct. 22

Playgroup and pancake breakfast
Nature walk

Storytelling workshop

Wednesday, Oct. 23

Fall Fest to celebrate healthy living
Family supper for Donovan/Flour Mill
community

Thursday, Oct. 24

Art Gallery tour and painting game

Friday, Oct. 25

Rhythm and Rhyme singalong, stories
and lullabies

Saturday, Oct. 26

Readings and pictures with Santa

tion displays on the growth and development of children 0-6, and Rise and Shine Breakfast. There will also be information from Sudbury Manitoulin Children's Foundation, the Infant Development Program, Our Children Our Future and DoulaCare.

The Week of the Child Community Committee kicked off the event last week at a press conference, inviting all parents and their young children to participate in the events.

The Week of the Child Community Committee is made up of child-care centres, children's service providers and other citizens and organizations within the community. Together, they hope to increase awareness about children's issues and services, and to celebrate the importance of children and families.

Dave Battaino, executive director of the Sudbury chapter of Big Brothers, and a member of the committee, was on hand to welcome everyone in the community to participate in the events.

"The Week of the Child is a celebration that goes on across Canada," he said. "It's been going on for a number of years now."

Battaino emphasized the importance of the service providers, organizations and sponsors lending their support to the Week of the Child, and he urged families to also "come out and give these kids as much as we can during the whole week."

Mellaney Dahl, a DJ for the radio station Q92, was named honorary chair for this year's festivities.

"I am thrilled and very honoured to be the honorary chair of the Week of the Child this year," she said.

She commended all participating people and organizations for contributing their time and hard work in organizing the activities planned, and encouraged kids, parents and grandparents to come out to this year's activities.

A full schedule of the week's events and a list of venues can be found at www.city.greatersudbury.on.ca under the events section.