



➔ Merritt Community Fund 2016: \$40,000

Poverty To Possibility

ASK Wellness Operational

All That Kids Can Be

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kamloops & Region In-School Mentoring Program

School District #58 Active After School Program

School District #58 Visual Arts Program

Strong Communities

Nicola Family Therapy Operational

➔ Community Initiatives

Regional Initiatives

bc211 Online Resource Directory

➔ 2016 Impact – PacificSport After School Program

When School District 58's PacificSport after school program lost an art instructor, high school students stepped in to help.

"We were unable to find a replacement artist," says Josée Warren, of PacificSport. "After some thought, we approached the local high school."

It was a happy accident because the substitution was a great success. Now, the art program — aimed at teaching kids and youth to be themselves and make healthy choices — involves older students on a regular basis.

"Our Art After School program is not only teaching kids to appreciate art and learn a variety of techniques, but we are now mentoring high school students to work with children and share their love of art," Josée says.

The program helps kids be all they can be, serving more than 30 children, 16 of whom are ages five to nine and participating in Art After School.

Art teacher Shirley Reynolds has seen the first-hand benefits of the program. One art lesson involved creating self portraits. Stand-up mirrors allowed kids to notice individual differences in each others faces. They considered attributes like dimples, curly eyelashes, straight hair or long and round faces.

"It was amazing what this lesson in observation taught them," Shirley says.

At the end of the project, portraits were held up one by one to see if the children could identify the images.

"Every child captured several unique identifiers about themselves, which enabled the children to immediately tell me who created the images," Shirley says. "This created a lot of giggles."

Shirley knows art gives kids joy, but also relaxation.

"It is something they can do by themselves or cooperatively with others," she says.

Jackie, a program leader, recalls the transformation of an antsy, shy child who initially disrupted class.

"He didn't like art much, so I tried to make it fun for him," she says. "All he needed was a little push in the right direction and some praise from his peers and he started to love it. It was amazing to watch him grow and become the little artist he is now."



➔ Community Impact Council

At United Way, the money raised in a community stays there and is invested by **Community Impact Council** members who serve as local United Way champions and donors. They let us know emerging community issues, emergencies, connect us with leaders and resources and give us context when working locally.



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The great thing about being part of the impact council is to watch everyone work. Because I was new to the council, I was mentored through the process. It has been amazing to see the people who have sat on the committee for years and provide input on issues, events, and impacts we were having. They were so knowledgeable about the organizations in our community. I think I love it for that reason: learning. I love learning about the small organizations and their big impacts on the community. It's a great experience.

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— Lisa Moses, Teck Highland Valley Copper
Merritt Community Impact Council 2016