

Community policing: Building stronger communities together

Northern News Services

Did you know that the mandate of the RCMP includes community policing, which accounts for 50 per cent of their job?

As someone who moved to Canada from Germany, I initially viewed the RCMP simply as the police force. However, my understanding of their role deepened when I relocated to the Northwest Territories and took on a position supporting physical literacy in the region. It was then that I learned about the significant emphasis the RCMP places on community policing, and it sparked my curiosity.

What exactly is community policing? At its core, it involves a collaborative approach to law enforcement that aims to create safer and healthier communities. This includes:

- Contributing to safer and healthier Indigenous communities
- Supporting crime prevention, intervention, and enforcement initiatives
- Preventing and reducing youth involvement in crime, both as victims and offenders
- Developing tools, information, technology, and training for effective front-line policing
- Ensuring operational readiness for major emergencies or disasters

By engaging in sports and recreational activities, RCMP officers can foster a sense of safety and belonging within Indigenous communities. When officers participate in local events, they build trust and rapport with community members, which can lead to increased cooperation and communication.



THORSTEN GOHL

Thorsten Gohl is the co-ordinator of Physical Literacy NWT

This collaborative environment encourages residents to engage in healthy activities, ultimately contributing to the overall well-being of the community.

Sports and recreation programs can serve as effective crime prevention tools. By providing positive outlets for youth, these activities can reduce the likelihood of involvement in criminal behaviour. When RCMP officers are actively involved in organizing and supporting these programs, they can identify at-risk individuals and intervene early, offering guidance and support to steer them away from negative influences.

In simpler terms, community policing offers an opportunity for residents to engage with RCMP officers in meaningful ways. For me personally, it's through sports and recreational activities. It empowers officers to inspire youth in the community to be physically active, while also building capacity through their knowledge of sports and activities.

There are countless inspiring examples of community programming happening across the Northwest Territories. For instance, the RCMP has organized or supported bike rodeos in Fort Liard and Hay River, and they have been instrumental in minor hockey programs throughout the region. In Whati, I've witnessed fantastic initiatives from strength and conditioning sessions to basketball programs, all aimed at empowering youth.

In Fort Providence, the RCMP has taken the lead in supporting various activities during the winter holidays, culminating in the largest Santa Claus parade in the area. They have also stepped in to assist with high-performance



RCMP Const. Wesley Neil high-fives a youth in Whati. Community policing involves a collaborative approach to law enforcement that aims to create safer and healthier communities, writes columnist Thorsten Gohl. Photo courtesy of Thorsten Gohl

hockey and table tennis programs, showcasing their commitment to community engagement.

If you have stories of similar initiatives in your community, I would love to hear them! Please share your experiences with me at thor@physicalliteracy.info. I am eager to explore the positive and supportive programming that exists, whether it's driven by the RCMP or other community members.

Why not reach out to your local RCMP office and ask for their support at your next community event? It could be a carnival, a

hand games tournament, or a knitting session with elders. There's a good chance they will be eager to help. Just maybe avoid challenging them to a snowball fight competition, unless you're ready for a real showdown! And yes, a territorial sport organization for snowball fighting is still pending.

Together, we can continue to build stronger, healthier communities through collaboration and engagement.

Thorsten Gohl is the co-ordinator of Physical Literacy NWT.

Introducing eNewsletter Advertising Options

Strong brand awareness, delivered three times a week.

Local News

Newsletter

High Impact Ad

e-Impress

Options to Bundle

Why eNewsletters:

✔ One of the fastest growing tactics world wide.

✔ Inboxes; delivering messages with a personal touch.

✔ Drive traffic direct to your website via hyperlinks.

✔ Instant Brand Recognition across an extended audience.

✔ Opportunity to combine the eNewsletter marketing with additional reach via print, social, digital display and more.

✔ Full analytics to help you calculate your ROI.

Contact our advertising team for more information.

Email: sales@nnsl.com • Phone: (867) 873-4031