



Photo by PuckShots

A Partners Perspective

BY ADAM SCHOOLER, PAMHA VICE PRESIDENT AND REGISTRAR

Port Arthur Minor Hockey is proud to have been a partner with PRO Kids since the inception of the service. Each year we have children as young as 4 and as old as 12 participate in our programs because of the work done by the PRO Kids staff and supporters.

My own experience has been varied but excellent with the children placed by the PRO Kids. Each year we see children who have different abilities and reasons for participating. We will often see excellent athletes who compete at a high level who get the opportunity to continue to follow their passion for the sport. We also see children who have never participated in any type of organized sports join a team for the first time.

When thinking about PRO Kids and its impact, I was reminded of a 7 year old player who came to our hockey team two years ago. During our very first evaluation skate, this player's mother approached us and said she was worried about her son because he had never been on skates before.

We immediately said, "Don't worry we will take care of him". I am not sure that she was convinced, but she allowed her son to proceed onto the ice and just said, "Have Fun". She was right her son could not skate at all. He fell many times during that skate and there were other players that were literally skating circles around him.

But during that skate I noticed two things. Every single time her son fell, he got right back up and that each time he had a great big smile on his face. By the end of that first skate he was able to stand up and take a few steps before falling. When he got off the ice I asked him in the dressing room if he had fun and his reply was that it was "AWESOME".

I consider it lucky that this player was placed on the team that I was helping to coach that year. I learned that this was the very first time he had ever been on a "team", and that he was very timid and shy. By our team Christmas party he was the loudest during our team cheers and the last to leave the party!

Over the course of that season we

witnessed this youngster go from the player who could barely stand up, to being able to skate with his teammates, play in his first tournament, score his first goal, and yes even get his first penalty.

Each of these things allowed for this player to develop and participate with his peers. In fact I ran into this player at the 2018 Robin's Tournament. He is now playing at an older level and I asked him how he was doing. He still had that smile and said that his team needed to win one more game to get into the playoffs. He ran off in the arena with his friends and teammates and I thought how great it was to see how far he had come.

PRO Kids is responsible for thousands of these types of stories. Children who find something they can be passionate about and that leads to positive development for them and for all those who they are involved with.

I congratulate the PRO Kids Participants, Partners, Staff and Directors on 20 successful years and wish you all many, many more.

OUR VISION

That all children in Thunder Bay are able to participate in recreation activities, which boost their self-esteem and promote healthy growth through the learning of new skills, increased knowledge and personal development.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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RECYCLING PROGRAMS

RECYCLE YOUR EQUIPMENT

PRO Kids has partnered with Play it Again Sports in the most ingenious way! The value of your quality used sports equipment can go on the PRO Kids credit account. The PRO Kids Coordinator refers children who need equipment to access this account. This leaves the fitting to the professional sales representatives at the store and children are suited with equipment that meets required safety standards. Your equipment is effectively recycled through the store, and PRO Kids get the credit. Everybody wins!



RECYCLE YOUR CELLPHONES

Drop off locations include:
Tbaytel, 959 Fort William Rd
The Power Centre, 707 Memorial Ave
Touch Unwired, 1080 Lithium Dr



PRO KIDS IN 2018

APPLY ONLINE!

PRO Kids application form is now available online! To apply today visit: prokidsthunderbay.ca

A NEW LOOK!

PRO Kids celebrates its 20th year with the adoption of a new logo and visual identity. The re-branding has incorporated and maintained the feeling of strength, growth, pride and inclusion.



#PROKIDSIMPACT

Do you have a PRO Kids story to tell? If you have been impacted by PRO Kids as a parent, coach, teacher or donor, we would love to hear from you! Use #PROKIDSIMPACT to tell your experience on your social media platforms.

For more information,
call (807) 625-3212
Fax: (807) 625-1444
Email: prokids@thunderbay.ca

PRO Kids Celebrates 20 Years!

BY ALLY DROMBOLIS

Its official! PRO Kids has been serving families and youth in Thunder Bay for 20 years. Since its inception 20 years ago, PRO Kids has made 22,734 placements of children into activities. These programs help youth develop leadership and teamwork skills, enhance self-esteem, form relationships and social skills that are transferable to day to day life.

In 1998, the City of Thunder Bay Recreation & Culture Division acknowledged the importance of recreation and developed PRO Kids with the help of social service agencies, recreation activity providers, youth and other stakeholders.

"It has been such a pleasure working at PRO Kids over the years", says Laura Daniele, PRO Kids Coordinator since the introduction of the program. "There are so many positive things that occur. In addition to the benefits it provides to the kids, it gives parents a sense of hope and empowerment, knowing that their children can fit in like other kids and do something they enjoy in the community."



Cake cutting at PRO Kids 20th Anniversary Media Event

PRO Kids is able to operate due to the continued support of over 200 community partners who donate free and discounted spaces in their programs. In 2017 alone, \$217,559 in spaces were provided by Thunder Bay activity providers. PRO Kids matched these spaces by contributing an additional \$107,987 to registration costs last year. This allowed for the placement of 1,444 local children to access sports, arts and cultural activities.

PRO Kids would like to thank its partners, donors, volunteers, board, fundraising committee and various other stakeholders for their support over the last 20 years.

LH North's Annual Giving

BY LAURA DANIELE

PRO Kids strives to maintain solid, long-term relationships with our donors. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Tom McClement and Dave Heyens of LH North for their generous donation of \$5000.

Over the past few years, LH North saw an opportunity to support PRO Kids in assisting hockey players from families in financial need. Not only does this company work hard to build structures all over Northwestern Ontario, they are providing a bridge for all children to develop essential life skills through recreational activities.



(L-R) Tom McClement, Laura Daniele, and Dave Heyens

If you are interested in one of the many ways to donate to PRO Kids please visit our donation page at www.prokidsthunderbay.ca.

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