



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Communities working together to promote drowning prevention

Kindness and generosity shown by residents, City staff and a local business have helped promote water safety in a unique and fun way.

Recently, children from the Okanagan Indian Band - n̓kmapl̓qs i? sn̓m̓am̓aya?tn i? k̓l sq̓lx̓wt̓ət | Cultural Immersion School and the children from the OKIB daycare, called snc̓c̓amala?tn received a donation of new lifejackets that were used while enjoying a day at the beach.

The idea of the donation was initiated by Tina Naveri, a lifeguard at the Vernon Aquatic Centre who recently started working at the Cultural Immersion School. Naveri knew the school was planning a beach day and she wanted to make sure all of the children had their own lifejackets.

Naveri talked to her manager to see if something could be done to help. Fortunately, a generous citizen had recently made a donation to the Recreation Centre and asked that it be used to help someone in need.

“Recreation Services staff contacted the donor and asked permission to use the funds to purchase the lifejackets,” said Gary Lefebvre, Manager, Aquatics. “The donor said they liked the idea so much, they decided to double the initial donation. When they heard the story, some Recreation staff members also pitched in some money and then we talked to the local Canadian Tire Store. The store graciously helped get all the lifejackets we needed at a discounted cost, and they were delivered in time for the beach day. It was an amazing outpouring of care across the community and we are so glad we could be part of it.”

Okanagan Indian Band staff stated that the donation of the child-sized lifejackets to the OKIB daycare, called snc̓c̓amala?tn, is truly appreciated. Many OKIB members grow up on the shores of Okanagan Lake where they learn to canoe, swim, fish and boat on the lake, so the additional lifejackets will allow expanded opportunities for the children on the water.

OKIB staff were moved by the generosity of an anonymous donor for donating and then doubling the donation; to the staff at the Vernon Aquatics Centre for donating cash; and to Canadian Tire for providing such a deep discount on the price of the lifejackets.

July 18 – 24 is National Drowning Prevention Week and recently, the United Nations declared July 25 to be World Drowning Prevention Day (WDPD). The UN says “anyone can drown, but no one should.”

According to the [World Health Organization](#): “An estimated 236,000 people drown every year and drowning is among the 10 leading causes of death for children and youth aged 1-24 years. More than 90% of drowning deaths occur in rivers, lakes, wells and domestic water store vessels in low- and middle-income countries, with children and adolescents in rural areas disproportionately affected.”

As part of National Drowning Prevention Week, Greater Vernon Recreation Services offered lifesaving activities at Kin Beach, Lakeview Wading Pool and Lavington Outdoor Pool. To learn more about how to register for lifesaving courses or swimming lessons, please visit the Recreation Services website at www.gvrec.ca.



Children from the Okanagan Indian Band - *n̓kmaplqs i? sn̓m̓aḥ́ya?tn i? k̓l sqilxʷtət* | Cultural Immersion School