



AN INITIATIVE OF:
THE WINNIPEG INTERNATIONAL
Children's Festival

NORTHERN CAMP CIRCUS & MAGIC ★ PARTNERSHIP ★



15th Annual Circus and Magic Partnership (C.A.M.P.)
Northern Manitoba - March 23 - 27, 2015



PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Circus And Magic Partnership (C.A.M.P.) is an artistic intervention project initially undertaken by the Winnipeg International Children's Festival in 1996. The project's objective is to provide a positive and proactive arts and education opportunity for "youth-at-risk".

In 2001, The Winnipeg International Children's Festival launched a pilot project, a tour of remote Northern Manitoba communities by the Festival's award-winning C.A.M.P. program. The project was made possible with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Provincial Department of Northern and Aboriginal Affairs.

That first C.A.M.P. outreach program visited three Northern Manitoba communities: Cross Lake, Norway House and Wabowden. Beginning in 2002, the project was based out of one host community and youth from neighbouring communities were transported to take part in the program. Our organization, in consultation with our project partners felt that this centralized approach would enable us to serve more youth in need across a broader geographical spectrum. For 2015, the program producers, in partnership with The Province of Manitoba have deemed Grand Rapids to be a viable community with a legitimate need for alternative, self-esteem boosting programming.

Plans are now proceeding for the 2015 project which will run from March 23-27 in Grand Rapids, Manitoba and this year will offer skill training and performance development for 400-450 youth participants! In addition to youth participants from Grand Rapids youth from the following communities will be invited to participate:

- Cross Lake • Ilford
- Grand Rapids • Pikwitonei
- Snow Lake • Thicket Portage

We will also provide training for recreation and education personnel in using the circus and magic materials and leave the materials with the trained personnel in the Northern region.

The success of this innovative program has not gone unnoticed. Recognition, awards and features in both the print and electronic media continue to roll in. The program was recently the subject of a national feature being produced by Young People's Press in Toronto. In 1999, the C.A.M.P. program became the first project to receive both the Mayor's and the Premier's Volunteer Service Awards in the same year! Those awards acknowledged the program's commitment to volunteer orientation, training and community integration.





Awards for the C.A.M.P. program include:

- City of Winnipeg Police Service, Crime Prevention Award
- Provincial Department of Justice, Crime Prevention Award
- Minister of Justice & Attorney General of MB, Certificate of Recognition
- Mayor's Volunteer Service Award
- Premier's Volunteer Service Award

Since its' inception the program has served youth throughout Northern Manitoba. Over the Years, the Northern initiative has been hosted in the following communities:

2001 – Norway House, Cross Lake Wabowden

2002 – The Pas

2003 – Leaf Rapids

2004 – Fairford

2005 – Grand Rapids

2006 – Gillam

2007 – Berens River

2008 – Norway House

2009 – Flin Flon

2010 – Pine Creek

2011 – Moose Lake

2012 – Little Black River First Nation

2013 – Cranberry Portage

2014 - Wabowden



Circus And Magic Partnership (C.A.M.P.) Northern Project 2014

March 24 - 28, Wabowden MB. Project Final Report

In this, the fourteenth year of producing the C.A.M.P. project for Northern Manitoba we were able deliver arts and education programming to more kids than ever before! An enhanced group of financial partners allowed us to expand the program — hire more artists to deliver the goods and provide a once in a lifetime experience for over 450 young northerners!

A popular component this year was the continued development of a host community handbook. This information package in combination with a video about the project enabled staff and teachers from the host community to be completely prepared for the project and ensured that the project would achieve maximum results.

The adult training session was held on March 24th and involved teachers from the host community of Wabowden as well as teachers from Thompson. Everyone involved with the adult training component felt it was an extremely valuable part of the process. As the majority of the training materials (stilts, unicycles, tight wires, magic and juggling supplies) were left in the community, it was vital to have an adult skill transference element. Community coordinators were excited about the prospect of having continued access to the materials and plans were being developed with regional recreation personnel to establish a rotating system of community access to the gear. In the months that have followed the completion of this year's program, we have had several reports from Frontier School Division

representatives indicating that the gear is getting used constantly — the kids are still excited to continue to train and develop their circus arts skills. NEW THIS YEAR was an instructional video we shot during the training session and left with the participating teachers! We felt this tool would better enable the teachers to ensure that the materials will be used and that the kids training will continue.

The professional performance component of the project was a huge success. The talent and diversity of the artists were enjoyed by all and for most, it was their first exposure to the broad spectrum of artistic talent presented by the organization. Using a single location for all the project's performances and training components provides access for geographically isolated youth from throughout the region. Exposure to this format of arts presentation should also contribute to increased audience development in this area.

The youth participants were wonderful audiences — both for the professional artists and for the performances by their peers. The youth enjoyed the training components immensely, especially the fact that they could try ALL of the offered activities before choosing to specialize on specific artistic skills for their performance. Their performances were inspired and moving, accompanied by rousing music and presented in front of audiences that included their parents, schoolmates as well as children from Wabowden & Thompson.



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Based on the success of the single community host format enacted in 2002, the same approach was taken in 2014. Early on in the process, the Festival met with representatives from several Provincial Government Departments and with a representative from the Frontier School Division to discuss target communities. Criteria that were considered to be most important at this meeting were:

- The level of need of the host community based on factors including a significant number of youth- at-risk; negative socio-economic indicators; and the communities history of access to arts and education programming;
- Presence of suitable facilities to support the program;
- Presence of capable and enthusiastic recreation personnel both in the host community and throughout the surrounding region. This is annually an essential component to ensure that the materials left in the region are accessed and utilized following the program; and
- Cost effectiveness for all of the project partners.

For 2014, Wabowden was found by the majority of parties in attendance to meet the established criteria. In addition to youth from the host community, youth were invited from the following communities:

- Thompson • Ilford
- Cross Lake • Pikwitonei
- Snow Lake • Thicket Portge

Key elements of the project:

Adult training sessions held on March 24. These sessions, attended by recreation personnel, school teachers and community mentors, provided training in the safe usage of the project materials (which were left in the community as planned) and in professional teaching and training techniques. All the participants in this process were eager to learn and looked forward to continuing training youth in their communities following the completion of the program.

Program participants were divided in the following manner: For the first two-day session, March 25 and 26, youth from visiting schools participated in the program. For the second session, March 27 and 28, the students from Wabowden participated. A total of over 450 youth were involved throughout the week!

Presentation of performances by professional artists in Wabowden on March 25 and 27. Performances were open to the public.



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Artist Selection including their province of origin and artistic discipline was as follows:

Dean Bareham, AB – Stilts

Mike Battie, BC – Unicycle

Columpa Bobb, MB – Clowning/Theatre

Anders Boulanger, MB – Magic

Peter Boulanger, BC – Acrobatics

Robin Chestnut, MB – Rola Bola/Juggling

Colin Franks, ON – Diabolo

Phil LeConte, ON – YoYo/Plate Spinning

Rebecca Leonard, ON – Swinging Trapeze

Bob Palmer, SK – Tight Wire

Ninon Parent, BC – Aerial Silk

Ana Shepherd, ON – Acrobatic

Lee Zimmerman, USA – Marionnettes

Neal Rempel, MB – Program Director

Ethan Osland, MB – Production Assistant

Number of Youth Participants	459
Number of Audiences	550 (240 & 310)
Number of Training Participants	18
Number of Artists	13
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	1040





"I have been teaching tight wire walking at the C.A.M.P. program for approximately 13 years. I believe strongly in the value of the program and what it brings to the communities involved. The highest recommendation I can give is that the campers come back. Year after year. To a school. During their spring break no less."

The C.A.M.P. program challenges youth in ways they may not have experienced before. Campers sometimes perceive facing challenges in their everyday lives as a negative. This program helps them develop a positive attitude to dealing with challenges; opportunities to gain perspective on life choices, learn perseverance, and long term goal setting"

— BOB PALMER (FLYIN' BOB)





“The C.A.M.P. learning experience is unique in that it comes entirely packaged in the form of fun. The kids are absorbing important lessons like maintaining focus, the value of hard work, being well-prepared and other applied problem-solving techniques, all the while laughing and making new friends. I never hear the kids talking about how much work they had to do, I hear them talking about how much fun they had. Higher self-esteem, a sense of pride and a strong work ethic are more like a side effect, a bonus that they take away from the program without even realizing it.

In fifteen years of working with the kids from C.A.M.P., I’ve witnessed several complete transformations. The shyest kid in the room on Monday ends up stealing the big show on Friday. More than once I’ve seen a kid take the stage one way, and come offstage another; they become addicted to receiving applause and being appreciated. They learn that in order to do well in front of an audience, they have to practice and make a strong effort...they have to behave themselves, they have to get along with the other students/performers. Of all the addictions a person can pursue, getting applause for a job well done is a fairly healthy one.

One of my favourite elements of the program is that so much of what C.A.M.P. teaches is by example. We put on that very first show and typically to great response; the kids pick up on the way that all the performers/instructors treat each other and back each other up. It’s very clearly a team effort and they can see that, even if it isn’t being pushed as a lesson.

Burned into my memory is the sight of this one student, who was described to me by his teacher as someone who couldn’t really communicate. “He’s smart, but he doesn’t talk much; he’s autistic.” I never met that kid. I put a puppet on each of his hands and he just marched all around the room, doing both sides of the conversation in two distinct, very funny voices. And if you listened to what he had those characters say, you gained valuable insight into the inner workings of this kid’s mind. His classmates were amazed.

I’d like to add that overall, The Circus and Magic Partnership is the single most important and rewarding thing I’ve ever done.” – LEE ZIMMERMAN (THE PUPPET GUY)



“Working at C.A.M.P. opened my eyes to the harsh realities of at-risk youth in Winnipeg. I don’t know how much I taught the kids; but I do know they taught me a lot.

But I took other things away with me. Like the memory of a boy named Dallas, 10, who spent hours working on song lyrics for the final performance. After basking in his well-deserved applause, he tracked me to an empty hallway and hugged me tight.

‘Thank you for believing in me’, he whispered.

I don’t know what became of him. But as I sat in the same classrooms in 2009, watching kids laugh as they teetered around on unicycles, I was reminded that while there are some things no child should ever see, there are some joys every child deserves to have.

At C.A.M.P., they get them – sometimes for the very first time.”

— MELISSA MARTIN, THE METRO NEWS



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