

Right To Play Partners with Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu First Nations

Youth programs starting in two Labrador Innu First Nation communities with support of Indigenous Services Canada

(SHESHATSHIU, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, March 15, 2019) – Right To Play, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation and Mushuau Innu First Nation are proud to announce a new and innovative partnership that will empower children and youth in the communities of Sheshatshiu and Natuashish, Labrador, in 2019.

The communities are working to overcome challenges related to the mental health of their young people with the support of Right To Play’s Promoting Life-skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) Program and funding of \$536,000 from Indigenous Services Canada. This program will be the first time Right To Play will be collaborating with Indigenous communities east of Ontario, as well as the first extension of the PLAY program to Innu First Nations communities.

Established in 2000, Right To Play has headquarters in Toronto, Canada and runs programs in 15 countries across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and North America. In Canada, Right To Play’s Promoting Life-skills in Aboriginal Youth program was launched in 2010 and currently partners with over 85 Indigenous communities and urban organizations.

The PLAY program trains and equips Indigenous youth workers to implement play-based after-school programming for Indigenous children and youth. Community Mentors teach crucial skills to improve the health, employability, healthy relationships and educations of Indigenous youth, tailored to the circumstances of each community’s young people.

“The Right to Play program is a very important initiative involving the youth of our community,” said Chief John Nui of Mushuau Innu First Nation. “For an isolated community such as Natuashish initiatives such as this go a long way to complement the efforts of our Chief and Council to prioritize youth oriented programs and initiatives. The population of our community is skewed to the young age group and we are focused on providing quality programs for our most vulnerable members. We are pleased to participate in this initiative, especially on its training component and we look forward to a constructive and cooperative effort.”

“On behalf of all Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation, we are very happy that we can work with Right To Play to bring this program into our community,” Said Chief Eugene Hart of Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation. “Mental Health is a very important issue for our community and I am personally pleased to see this program implemented as it helps to build life skills in our youth that will help them for years to come.”

“We’re excited to work with Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu First Nations to expand the PLAY program to Sheshatshiu and Natuashish,” said Rose Lipton, Director of Canada Programs at Right To Play. “Young Indigenous people deserve high-quality after-school programming that

helps them flourish. With the support of Indigenous Services Canada, this partnership will help improve the opportunities for Innu youth to succeed and thrive.”

“I am proud that the Government of Canada is supporting the Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu First Nations’ partnership with Right To Play,” said the Honourable Seamus O’Regan, Minister of Indigenous Services. “This is the kind of partnership that will help advance the priorities of Indigenous communities, and will bring benefits that will ripple throughout Labrador and the Province.”

About Right To Play

Right To Play is a global organization that protects, educates and empowers children to rise above adversity using play. By harnessing play, one of the most powerful and fundamental forces in a child’s life we help 1.9 million children each week to stay in school and out of work, to prevent life-threatening diseases like HIV and malaria and to stay safe from exploitation and abuse. We are the only global development organization focused exclusively on using play to transform the lives of children and youth impacted by poverty, war, disease and inequality.

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