



The Grind Pembroke
126 Pembroke Street West
Pembroke, ON K8A 5M8
Tel. 613-732-9423
the grindpembroke@gmail.com

2018 September 05

News Information

Valley Warriors Hockey program for children with special needs

Another Grind Pembroke offering for at-risk youth

The Grind Pembroke is gearing up for an October 13th launch of its latest service for at-risk community members in Renfrew County – a hockey program for special needs kids as part of its Youth Services programming. Boys and girls from 5-12 years of age with autism, intellectual disabilities and other developmental disabilities will now be able to learn how to play Canada's national game, regardless of hockey or skating ability and experience.

Under the watchful eye and support of a cadre of dedicated staff comprised of first responders, including police, fire fighters and paramedics, plus community members, registered children will be thrilled to discover that they too can learn to play hockey with one-on-one coaching and mentoring in a fun, supportive and family-friendly environment. The program is designed to build confidence, self-esteem and dependability while allowing parents to relax, network and enjoy cheering on their hockey heroes! The program will focus on skills development, team work, cooperation, socialization and the value of therapeutic activity.

Program visionary and executive director of The Grind Pembroke, Jerry Novack, is encouraged by the response to date. "While we have a limit of 20 participants, there is still room and we welcome additional applications. Aside from the inherent benefits that our young participants will acquire in participating, they will also experience the thrill of playing games against the Ottawa Police Association's Special Hockey Heroes program, after which we've modeled our program. Although not guaranteed, there is also the possibility of our team playing in a year-end tournament in Rochester, N.Y."

The season will start on October 13, 2018 and run until March of 2019 each Saturday from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Pembroke Memorial Centre. Special needs children from throughout Renfrew County will be eligible to register. The registration fee is \$200.00 for the year, which includes liability insurance through "I Play Hockey". Cheques should be

2.

made payable to “The Grind Pembroke”. Anyone interested in registering their child can find all of the required forms and additional information on-line at www.valleywarriors.ca. Applications can be dropped off or mailed to: The Grind Pembroke, Client Services Office, 126 Pembroke Street West, Pembroke, ON K8A 5M8.

Additional volunteers are also needed. Deadline to register is September 24th. To receive a volunteer package, interested adults should email their request to [info@valley.warriors.ca/](mailto:info@valley.warriors.ca).

In the interests of inclusivity and accessibility, The Grind Pembroke recognizes that not all families with special needs children will be able to cover the registration fee or provide their child with the necessary hockey gear. As a result, the Grind Pembroke is collecting gently used and new hockey equipment. Equipment donations of all sizes are welcome, including hockey sticks, skates, shin pads, hockey pants, shoulder pads, elbow pads, gloves, goalie equipment and helmets. A watch out though regarding helmets – only those with a valid, unexpired CSA sticker can be accepted.

Community sponsors are also invited to make donations to cover the registration fee for those children who would otherwise be excluded because of inability to pay. “Since joining the Grind team as a volunteer a couple of years ago”, said David Studham, “I’ve been so impressed with the heart and dedication displayed by all those involved with delivering programs and services to marginalized community members. The Valley Warriors Hockey program is but the latest offering that fills a gap in community servicing. I am honoured to make the first donation towards the creation of a **Valley Warriors Hockey Challenge Fund** and I issue a challenge to interested businesses and community members to join me in making sure that no special needs child who wants to participate in this wonderful program is excluded due to inability to pay”.

The Grind Pembroke is a not-for-profit charitable organization that aids marginalized community members, including youth and adults. This volunteer-based organization, with the support of generous community and business donations, delivers its programs and services from its home base in downtown Pembroke through its Coffee House Outreach, Shelter Services and Clients Services Office. It is currently marshalling the necessary resources to embark on yet another service – renovating a donated house in Pembroke for transitional housing purposes. This Transition House will support homeless clients and their supporting health and social agencies to work through life stabilization plans on the client’s journey to becoming self-sufficient and contributing community members.

For further information, please contact:
Jerry Novack,
Executive Director, The Grind Pembroke
613-732-9423