

YOUNGSTOWN

SOUTH

Youngstown powered by big-hearted volunteers

With just 170 residents and no nearby major centre, Youngstown has had to figure out how to create its own fun. Behind its success stands an all-volunteer community club that draws all ages into being active together, sometimes on less than a dime. “The most noticeable aspect of all our active living programs is that they are all run by volunteers who have very little access to funding,” says Jaime Campbell, a member of the club and 2011 ChooseWell Champion.

During the summer months, the community club runs programs in junior ball, softball and soccer. Each year, a group of young men hosts a 16-team softball tournament that is very well attended, attracting people from all surrounding areas. The club hosts an annual fishing derby at a nearby lake, inviting all comers to try their hand at something new. Dances and other musical events also draw the community together. Come winter, the menu shifts to curling bonspiels, junior curling and youth hockey. In addition, community members occasionally take the initiative to organize and promote a daytrip out of town so people can enjoy swimming, water sports and other activities not available in the village.

Youngstown also offers opportunities for spontaneous fun. Basketball hoops are available for community use, whether casual or organized. The village boasts an older golf course where people are free to take a swing or two at any time. As well, open skate nights and pick-up hockey games once or twice a week make everyone welcome to come out and participate.

“One of the most noticeable and commendable aspects of our community is that the activities put on by our volunteers are almost always open to all ages and promote intergenerational participation,” Jaime says. “We have a lot of cross-over in our small community that allows people of all ages to come together in a friendly and energetic manner.”

“Youngstown, Alberta may be small, but it demonstrates a lot of heart in attempting to keep our town a fun, friendly and active place to live!”

Jaime Campbell
Youngstown

Dipping their toes into ChooseWell waters for the first time in 2011, Youngstown volunteers took advantage of community events to distribute ChooseWell tips and resources. The program also helped the village take its own pulse, Jaime says. “ChooseWell has helped us become more aware of our strengths and weaknesses as an active and healthy community. Where we succeed in some areas, we lack in others, and this program has given us the opportunity to realize our successes and focus on our needs.”

As a result, Youngstown volunteers will be putting even more energy into at least two areas: helping tweens/teens be more active and encouraging the community as a whole to eat more healthily.

Youngstown in Brief

Population	A village of 170 within Special Area No. 3, population 1,266
Location	130 km east of Drumheller on Hwy 9
ChooseWell Team	Youngstown Community Club
Recognition	Reducing Barriers to Healthy Living for Tweens and Teens
Top Tip	Small towns with big hearts can accomplish a lot