

Alberta's Promise can benefit Fort Macleod

FRANK MCTIGHE

MACLEOD GAZETTE EDITOR

Nathan Cross wants to see little red wagons more prominently displayed in Fort Macleod.

The red wagons will serve as proof that Fort Macleod is supporting children and youth.

"The red wagon symbolizes Alberta's Promise," Cross said. "If you see that in a business somewhere, in a town hall, in a non-profit's office, that says this organization supports children."

Cross, who is manager of strategic partnerships and community engagement for Alberta's Promise, was in Fort Macleod Wednesday.

Cross made a presentation on Alberta's Promise at the Fort Macleod Interagency meeting at the health centre.

The program is similar to America's Promise, which was launched in 1997 by former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Alberta's Promise was established in 2003 under the Klein government, with the premier's wife Colleen Klein as the first chair.

"The mission was very simple," Cross said. "It's to inspire partnerships for kids. We work with businesses and non-profits in communities across Alberta to recognize those who are doing wonderful things, to inspire others to get more involved."

Alberta's Promise works to encourage businesses, organizations and communities to partner in support of children and young people.

The program is based on five promises to children and youth:

- I promise to nurture the growth and well-being of children in their early years and to support parents.
- I promise to provide support and guidance to children and youth through mentoring, coaching and volunteering.
- I promise to help provide safe, caring communities in which children and youth can grow.
- I promise to inspire a passion for knowledge and skill development throughout life; in the classroom, in the workplace, in the community.
- I promise to support children and youth to become active citizens, innovators and leaders in



Photo by Frank McTighe

Nathan Cross is manager of strategic partnerships and community engagement for Alberta's Promise.

their communities.

"Research has shown that kids who receive more of these promises have a better chance to succeed in life," Cross said.

Cross said every program for children fits somewhere with Alberta's Promise.

"We're interested," Cross said. "We would like to work with it and promote it."

Cross is part of a six-member team based in Calgary working with the 1,800 partners.

Agencies are non-profit organizations that deliver the bulk of their programs to children and youth.

Builders include businesses, corporations, service clubs, professional associations, and foundations that support children and youth programs through financial contributions, in-kind gifts or volunteer initiatives.

"Some business partners provide support," Cross said. "Others take a real leadership role."

Communities are cities, towns, counties, municipal districts, Metis Settlements, First Nations and other municipalities committed to making their community a safe and caring environment for children and youth.

Benefits to being part of Alberta's Promise include raising awareness of local programs and inspiring businesses and agencies to get involved with youth.

Kids First Family Centre director Susan Simpson said Alberta's Promise makes sense.

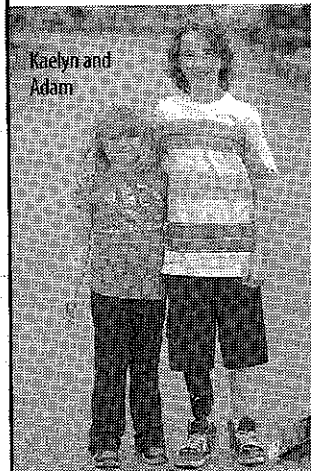
"We would consider becoming a partner in some way," Simpson said.

Fort Macleod town councillor Trish Hoskin also saw value. "I like the idea of showcasing our projects. We have so much."

For information about becoming a partner visit www.albertaspromise.org.

"Helping kids," Cross said. "That's what it's all about."

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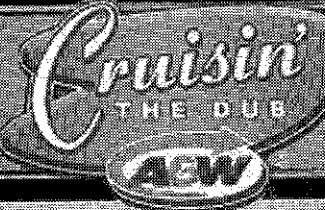
Please register by Friday, June 13 to be advertised in June 18 edition of The Macleod Gazette.

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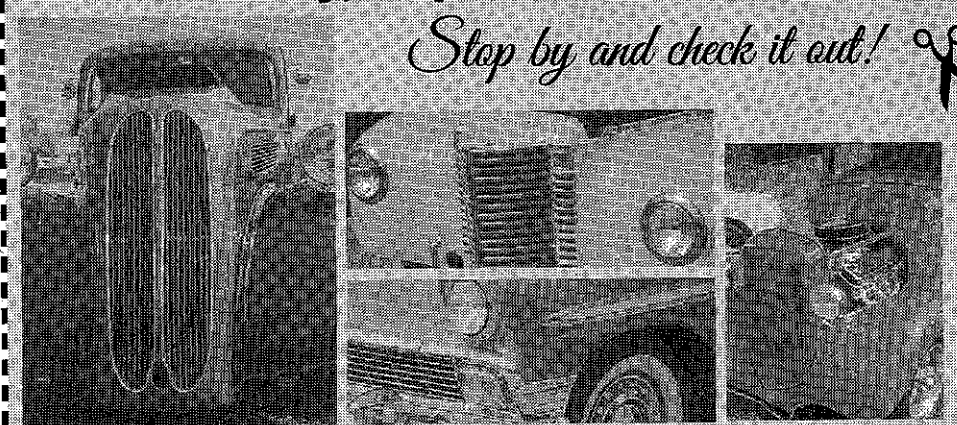
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