

# 4-Directions Development – Red Lake, MN

# SNAPSHOT

## Overview

Since 2016, 4-Directions Development has developed multiple programs that provide one-on-one guidance, classes, and financial loans to help the population of small business owners in Red Lake, Minnesota reach success through effective business planning and management.

## Mission

“Our services were established to help achieve the development of successful small business owners in the Red Lake Economy. These services include: Technical Assistance, Education, and Financing” – 4-Directions Development website



## Constituency

- Native American/American Indian of all ages

## Local Conditions & Critical Issues Impacting 0-5 Childhood Health in Red Lake

### Alcohol & Drug Abuse

### Safety of Elders & Children

**Low-Income, Limited Financial Capability**—15.7% of children under 18 live in poverty.<sup>1</sup>

### Lack of Access to & Affordability of Healthy Foods

“Every family would love to buy healthy food to feed their families, but unfortunately, on a low budget, you can't afford to buy those healthy things. Those lower-priced food items are just jam-packed with sugar and oil and all that stuff. And it's just not healthy.” –Sharon James, Executive Director

### Prenatal Health

“We need to take care of our children as they're developing, even before they're born. So, again, it's getting that mother to be healthy and not [doing] things that are hurting the baby.”

### Childcare

“There's never enough daycare. I'm constantly hearing parents say, 'I don't have no childcare. I can't get to work. I can't go to school. I can't participate in community events because we don't have that childcare.' So that's a constant need.”

### Transportation

“Another barrier I see is transportation. People have to rely on the elderly nutrition program bringing their daily meal. Some people can't afford to go to the grocery store, so they rely on others to shop for them. Some people don't have the budget for gas or insurance, or to maintain a car. So transportation sometimes is a hindrance to getting to that.”

## Key Indicators of Childhood Health in Red Lake

# 61.8%

of children, aged 24-35 months, in Red Lake receive the **full series of immunizations.**<sup>1</sup>

# 5.3%

of children are **born premature** (less than 37 weeks gestation).<sup>1</sup>

# 12.7%

of children in Red Lake are **obese.**<sup>1</sup>

## Accomplishments in Wellness & Safety

### • Pop & Weight-Loss Challenges

“There were a couple families that talked about how they wanted to cut pop out of their diet on a regular basis, and the whole family achieved that. So it was the adults and the children that no longer drink pop. Another gentleman, he joined our warrior weight challenge, and he said he was motivated by the medical history of his father that had passed away due to all these things, the obesity, the heart trouble, the diabetes. All those diet-related diseases caused him to really look at himself and change his habits. He was one of our top models in that weight loss challenge. And that challenge wasn't just about weight. It was about decreasing your weight, decreasing your blood pressure, and decreasing your blood sugar.”

## Accomplishments in Wellness & Safety Continued

- **Cooking Classes**

*“Our cooking classes are just really accepted in the community. We can't accommodate everyone that would like to come in to the cooking class. We're trying to figure out how can we set up some kind of camera system so that not everybody has to be around the prep table to learn. They could be sitting back classroom style and still see the cook prepping and teaching. And so that way we would be able to connect with more people. But right now our cooking classes is a maximum of 15, and that includes youth 12 and older. So that cooking class is teaching individuals that normally don't cook. They just buy those unhealthy pre-packaged, put it in the microwave or the oven, and then eat like that. And so this preparing healthier foods is reaching those children. So that's another success that we think is going very well for us.”*

## Current Wellness & Safety Efforts

### Family Wellness Programs

*“This year we really tried to focus on getting more of the kids involved...the family that shops and cooks for those zero to five age groups [is] making better selections, learning how to cook better, and focusing on healthier food options rather than the non-healthy food options.”*

### Project Grow

*“We help people grow their own gardens. We help till their gardens. We provide free seeds and seedlings to help them start their gardens. And we see a lot of youth participating with that. The grandchildren are helping grandma, or the little boys and girls are helping their parents. And they're getting excited about it. We see young kids taking care of their own garden. They want to have their own box of vegetables or something. And they're even starting to get into, interested in cooking. We reach over 400 families that are growing their own gardens. So that is a major, major accomplishment, where they are growing healthier foods rather than buying that processed food at the store.”*



## Community Defined “Best Practices” to Improve Childhood Health

### 1. Partnerships

*“We can't do all of this by ourselves. I have a staff of six people. And they are spread so thin as it is, that if we didn't have those partnerships and community members that are helping us do these things, we would never be able to do what we're doing. So those partnerships are providing staff time, they're providing resources, and then some of them are actually providing funding to help us do these things.”*

### 2. Communication

*“The second success strategy that we use is communication. That marketing is very important. So we have Facebook, we have fliers, we have people out there talking in the community, and we have stakeholders and our partners talking about the foods initiative in the community. So we are being recognized nationally. We are being called to be the knowledgeable person to come and speak, whereas, when we started, we were calling everybody and anybody to get that knowledge and to have them come and share and speak with us. We have grown and evolved the food initiative very quickly. I think it's because of that communication and marketing.”*

### 3. Community Support

*“And the third one, I would say, is the community support, not only from the tribal leaders - the whole tribal council is very supportive of the foods initiative. They watch what we're doing, they love what we're doing, and they're constantly there saying, ‘What can we do to help?’ ...having that community and tribal leadership support is another major success strategy.”*

## Allies/Partnerships Working on Children's Health

- Red Lake Department of Natural Resources – Red Lake, MN <http://www.redlakednr.org/>
- Red Lake Comprehensive Health – Red Lake, MN <http://www.redlakenation.org/tribal-programs/health-services/comprehensive-health>
- Red Lake Chemical Health Programs – Red Lake, MN <http://www.redlakenation.org/tribal-programs/health-services/chemical-health>
- Red Lake Nation Foods – Red Lake, MN <https://www.redlakenationfoods.com/>
- Equay Wiigamig – Red Lake, MN <http://www.redlakenation.org/tribal-programs/human-services/womens-shelter>
- Intertribal Agriculture Council – Billings, MT <http://www.indianaglink.com/contact-us/>
- University of Minnesota Extension – St. Paul, MN <https://www.extension.umn.edu/>
- The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership – St. Paul, MN <http://www.health.state.mn.us/ship/>
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – St. Paul, MN <https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/economic-assistance/food-nutrition/programs-and-services/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program.jsp>
- US Department of Agriculture – Washington, DC <https://www.usda.gov/>
- First Peoples Fund – Rapid City, SD <http://www.firstpeoplesfund.org/>
- First Nation's Development Institute – Longmont, CO <https://firstnations.org/>



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