



***Remarks for
Hon. Rodney MacDonald
Minister of Health Promotion***

East Dartmouth Recreation Center Society Funding

***Wednesday, September 21, 2005
Caledonia Road Junior High
7:00pm***

Thank you Jim. Simon. Councillor Younger. Members of the East Dartmouth Recreation Centre Society. Parents, residents and community members. Thank you for taking the time to join us here tonight.

I am proud to be here tonight, because it's opportunities like these that demonstrate how Nova Scotians are the most dedicated, resourceful and genuine people in the country. The East Dartmouth Recreation Centre Society recognized a need in their community, and by working together they have taken the action necessary to see that it gets done.

Nova Scotia Health Promotion was created to make Nova Scotia a safe and healthy place to live, work and play. This is not an easy task. It is not one that can be achieved overnight, or one that can be accomplished by the work of a few dedicated people.

For Nova Scotia to reach this goal it will take the work of communities such as East Dartmouth. It will take the time and efforts of volunteers,

from all walks of life, coming together to get things done. Government can provide the support, but people like you will make the real difference. Thank you and congratulations for all your hard work.

As Minister of Health Promotion I am privileged to have to the opportunity to travel around the province and see first hand how positive change can be achieved when people, communities, and all levels of government work together.

Statistics show us our children lead the country in obesity and physical inactivity rates. Although this is troubling news we are aware of it and are implementing new programs and expanding those that are working to help Nova Scotians to get healthier.

This year the healthy living tax incentive was launched, which gives families a one hundred and fifty dollar tax credit when they register their children in sports, recreation and physical activity programs.

Sport Animators have been hired and placed in participating school boards across the province to bridge the gap between school and community sport and recreation activities.

\$500,000 dollars has been invested this year in physical activity grants in communities across the province to help groups form or expand existing healthy living programs.

\$2.6 million dollars has been invested in recreation facility development grants. These grants provide opportunities for construction of new facilities or renovation of existing ones.

We are in a battle against obesity, nutrition, chronic disease, personal injury, substance addiction, and tobacco use. It's a battle we can not afford to lose. Nova Scotia Health Promotion has been given the role of air cover and support. But we need troops on the ground to make this cultural shift happen.

We need more troops like the people of East Dartmouth, who recognized the need for a community centre and have worked hard to get it built.

Your hard work will pay off. People will live healthier lives in part because of the community centre. A healthy person is a happy person, a productive person, a more balanced person. Healthy people are better able to deal with daily stress. By having a community centre it will help create a renewed energy and spirit within the community. Children, families, and seniors will have a safe place to gather and meet and that will lead to more people being connected to their community.

Tonight I am here to announce an investment. It's an important investment for all the reasons I have talked about here tonight. It's an investment in the health of the people and the community of East Dartmouth.

I am proud to present a cheque in the amount of \$1.1 million dollars for the development of the East Dartmouth Community Centre. This centre will become the home for the East Dartmouth Boys and Girls club. The boys and girls club, who have been operating from various facilities around Dartmouth, will soon have a home to call their own.

Before I present the cheque it's important to recognize some people, who without their efforts and dedication this project would not be happening.

Thanks to the East Dartmouth Recreation Centre society. In particular, Simon Gillis and John Burton who made some very convincing presentations to cabinet ministers and the Premier.

Thank you to Jim Cormier, from the East Dartmouth Boys and Girls Club.

Thank you to HRM and Andrew Younger. We must continue to look for more opportunities for various levels of government to work together.

Thank you to Carol Davis Jamesion from health promotion for all her work on this project.

And most of all thank you to the community. Without your desire and support to get active and be healthy in a safe environment this project might not have survived its journey. I hope this investment will represent the turning point and will allow the focus to shift to next phase toward completion.

So without further delay I would like to present this cheque in the amount of one point one million dollars to Simon and the East Dartmouth Recreation Centre Society.

Congratulations.