

local news

Donning denim against sexual assault

AMANDA RICHARDSON
Today staff

Shining a light on the reality of teenage sexual violence and taking a stand against sexual assault, the Fort McMurray Family Crisis Society is hosting the 2012 Denim Day event.

Mary Thomas, the community awareness and special events co-ordinator with the FMFCS, says there is a long history to

Denim Day, beginning with the overturning of a court case in Italy in 1998.

"There was an Italian court which got a case overturned based on the fact that the 18-year-old girl that was raped must have given consent to the man because she was wearing tight jeans at the time and he couldn't have taken her out without her consent," explained Thomas. "That's when people started protesting against this

idea that dress is what can lead to something like the rape of a teenaged girl."

Thomas hopes an event like this will help to bring awareness to local girls who may not realize the prevalence of sexual attacks.

The student event will be held at the Fort McMurray Boys and Girls Club with a poster painting competition, a quiz and a creative denim decorating contest that is being facilitated by both the public and Catholic school

districts. Prizes will be awarded to the winners of the three competitions. The event will also include discussions about sexual assault violence and opportunities for the students to ask questions.

The day will culminate in a dance open to teens between 12 and 14.

For more information, contact the FMFCS at 780-743-46914.

amanda.richardson@sunmedia.ca



AMANDA RICHARDSON/TODAY STAFF

Celebrating one year

Fort McMurray's breastfeeding support group held every Monday at the Syncrude Sport and Wellness Centre celebrated their first anniversary April 4. Members of the group, and several of their breast-fed babies, gathered at a fun and food filled event Monday to celebrate the auspicious event.

New Parkinson helpline available

AMANDA RICHARDSON
Today staff

In the hopes of providing more widely available support and information to those in need, Parkinson Alberta Society has announced the launch of its new PD Helpline.

The helpline will serve as a means to connect Albertans living with Parkinson disease and their caregivers and health care professionals across the province to information, resources and much needed expertise.

"As the only charitable organization in Alberta providing support and education for people with PD, it is imperative that we reach people to let them know this help is available to them," said John Petryshen, CEO of Parkinson Alberta in a release. "There are over 8,000 people in our province living with PD."

Petryshen says more than 8,000 people in Alberta are currently living with Parkinson disease and that many are not able to access the help they need in order to properly manage their condition.

"They don't need to live alone with PD," he continued. "We can help. All they need to do is start the conversation; but we need help reaching them to let them know. Parkinson Alberta Society developed the PD Helpline specifically to be a main source of information for people with Parkinson disease in Alberta, their caregivers, and family members."

Parkinson disease is a progressive condition affecting the brain with symptoms often misunderstood and mistaken as a normal part of the aging process. Parkin-

son is believed to affect one in every 300 adults, affecting their ability to walk, talk and swallow.

The PD Helpline is a free and confidential service for specialized help and information to aid in the management of Parkinson disease, including access to Parkinson Alberta Society resources and experts in the Parkinson disease community.

The province-wide, toll-free phone number for the hotline is 1-877-243-9992.

amanda.richardson@sunmedia.ca

Quiz: What do you know about sexual assault?

The Fort McMurray Family Crisis Society wants to test your knowledge about the myths and facts surrounding sexual assaults. Send your answers in to the FMFCS for a chance to be entered to win a prize.

Sexual Assault Program
P.O. Box 6165
Fort McMurray, Alta.
T9H 3W7

Sexual assault is not a common problem.
True/False

A person who was sexually assaulted "asked for it" in some way.
True/False

If there are no physical signs of a struggle, it is unlikely that a sexual assault has occurred.
True/False

Women say they have been sexually assaulted to get back at the guy or to protect their reputation.
True/False