

Cape Breton's Family Place – Inverness Garden Project

“families working together to build healthier families through gardening and healthy outdoor engagement”

Family Place

Cape Breton Family Resource Coalition Society is a family-centered, non-profit, registered charity operating since 1993 by a volunteer Board of Directors. The organization was formally incorporated in March of 1994 and has operated in Inverness County since 1995. Informally, the organization operates and is best known as Family Place Resource Centre or simply Family Place.

Family Place works to develop, adapt, administer, facilitate and/or deliver programs and services that promote the well-being of families with young children on Cape Breton Island and beyond. In a large part, this work is accomplished by providing family friendly gathering spaces within Cape Breton Island. Bringing families together in a healthy, child-friendly environment allows families to build support networks and increases opportunities for collaboration.

Family Place conducts its work in a participatory manner. It is focused on creating supportive environments, encouraging participation and involvement, and building capacity. Work occurs at the individual, project, community and/or system level. Collaboration with other agencies, organizations, boards and government departments that share responsibility for healthy family development is critical to our work.

The 2017 – 2018 fiscal year has seen Family Place offer 31 programs in Inverness County in the communities of Cheticamp, Inverness, Judique, Mabou, Margeree, Margeree Forks, Port Hood, St. Joseph du Moine. These programs saw participants from 35 of the County's communities.

Inverness Garden Project

Guided by values of competence, respect and fairness, the Inverness Garden Project will facilitate opportunities for enjoyment, learning, and enhanced food security through gardening and outdoor experiences.

Family Place will work with community partners to turn the unused back lot of its Central Avenue, Inverness location into a place of beauty...a place to experience the joys of gardening and being outside. This space will be available to program participants and visitors alike.

With the gentle guidance of instructors, children, together with their parents and caregivers, will create kitchen gardens based on basic gardening principles and be introduced to the simple joys of being outside. Programs will be family-focused and include experts from the community as well as other hands-on learning opportunities.

As produce becomes available, families will share in the vegetable and herbal crops that they have worked to produce. Accessibility to healthy food choices will be increased within our community as the gifts of the garden are shared.

Children and adults will have the opportunity to experience local cooking traditions as the learning moves from the gardens to the kitchen. Healthy food preparation and preservation techniques and traditions will be shared with participants.

The principle of sustainability and the science of gardening in a way that is compatible with our Cape Breton climate will help ensure this legacy project continues to feed the hearts, minds, and bodies of all who experience it for years to come. Gardening throughout the four seasons will be explored as we work to reconnect participants to all the good the soils of Cape Breton have to offer.

The anticipated total costs related to this project are \$6000 of which Family Place will invest \$3000. Family Place requests Inverness County Council to consider contributing the remaining \$3000 to help bring this worthy project to life.