



"The Creator's game has so much to offer!"

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Thanks to **Spirit of the Stick**, helping communities in need just became a whole new ball game.

This recently established, not-for-profit charity is dedicated to using lacrosse to create a positive, empowering experience for communities in need in an atmosphere that is inclusive, supportive, and safe. The goal is simple: to provide vulnerable children and adolescents with an opportunity to grow emotionally, physically, psychologically and spiritually through Canada's first national sport, lacrosse.

The Spirit of the Stick initiative grew from a trip Jim Veltman, former captain of the Toronto Rock, made to Attawapiskat, near James Bay in 2008. To celebrate his retirement from almost 20 years of professional lacrosse, Veltman decided to reach out to those in need by providing lacrosse instruction and donated equipment to children and youth in this remote First Nations community.

"Though the living conditions there are sub-standard, the joy in the kids was not," said Veltman. "Many of them were extremely shy at first, but were very quickly smiling, laughing and having a great time once they were on the floor with a lacrosse stick in their hand. It was amazing to see the effect of the game on those kids."

The overwhelming support Veltman had in organizing the trip was contagious enough to start the charity with like-minded and kind-hearted lacrosse enthusiasts.

Organizers of **Spirit of the Stick** hope to provide the same positive influence through lacrosse for other communities. **Spirit of the Stick** is currently organizing lacrosse clinics for vulnerable children and youth in the Greater Toronto area. Information about these initial projects will be announced shortly. As well, Spirit of the Stick will announce details about how interested communities can apply for future clinics.

"**Spirit of the Stick** hopes to make a difference in the lives of children in need using the game of lacrosse in a way that would make the Creator proud," Veltman added. "To see the joy on children's faces is all the motivation volunteers and supporters need to ensure its success."

For more information about Spirit of the Stick, visit www.spiritofthestick.com or contact Christine J. Kurt, Co-Chair (905)764-1005/ info@spiritofthestick.com.