

GRANDVIEW, MANITOBA

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Friendly Corner Bake Shop

Bread, perogies, and CED? Who knew? This story begins 30 minutes west of Dauphin in the small community of Grandview, Manitoba. In 1987, as part of a provincial housing project titled “Welcome Home,” seven people living with disabilities came home to live in Grandview from various locations throughout Manitoba.

Grandview Residential Services Inc. (GRS) was created with a goal of educating, supporting, and working with people living with disabilities. GRS has expanded since 1993 to five residences, two day programs-Bakeshop and Activity Center, a Supported Independent Living Program, a retirement program, supportive housing for persons with intellectual disabilities, and other residential and day programs.

Shortly after it was established, GRS began exploring ways to expand beyond these essential quality of life requirements. GRS also considered the possibility of creating additional activities to help keep participants active and engaged in the community,

while also generating some extra income for GRS and their programming costs.

GRS began with a craft program, where participants created crafts and then sold them to the community. As they began this social enterprise initiative, a number of problems were encountered. First, they found that craft supplies were more expensive than anticipated. Next, they found that sales were not at the level that they had hoped for. In fact, they were struggling to cover the cost of the supplies.

In order to finance the purchase of the craft supplies, GRS also began to sell loaves of bread and perogies at their sales events. These tasty products began to sell out consistently, and they started receiving regular orders for both of these items. This sparked an idea.

On March 1, 1993, with the support of the board of directors, GRS created a restaurant by purchasing and renovating a vacated furniture store. Thus, the Friendly Corner Bake Shop was born. This initiative has since created great exposure for the participants and facilitated relationships with the broader community. In addition, it has helped foster understanding, acceptance, and a sense of community between program participants and clientele. →

➔ Although it has taken some time to work through “growing pains” related to staff training and development, the Bake Shop is thriving! Currently, it is staffed by eight full time workers who rotate positions and responsibilities, and supports 15 more people in the Bake Shop. Understanding the value of relationships, particularly in a small community, staff at the Friendly Corner Bake Shop have found that the best way to gain exposure and create a positive attitude towards their programming was to have the community meet the workers at the Bakeshop.

The other side of the Bake Shop building is used for supportive housing for 11 people living with disabilities. This means that when participants working at the Friendly Corner Bake Shop are at the retiring age, they can transition to programming at a nearby space, where they can

still drop by to say “hi” in an environment that is familiar and dear to them.

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The key to the Bake Shop’s success has been a strong and supportive Board of Directors, an accepting community, and workers who are trainable, eager, and talented. As well, determination to create a full range of supports and social and economic opportunities for this community within their community has led to this multifaceted approach to create great quality of life for people living with disabilities. Housing, employment development, supported living, and social en-

terprise all make up the various tools and strategies within their CED framework.