

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****May 11, 2020****SPL gathering donations to support vulnerable youth and families**

Saskatoon Public Library (SPL) is gathering donations of toys, games, and activities to build care packages for vulnerable youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kits are being developed for kids ages 0 to 18 and are intended to make it easier for young people to stay at home and have fun while following physical distancing protocols.

New and sealed toys, games and books can be dropped off at the front doors of Rusty Macdonald Branch library (located in the Lawson Civic Centre at 225 Primrose Drive) on Fridays from 10 am to 4 pm until the end of May. Other materials like art supplies, skipping ropes, sidewalk chalk, and outdoor games are also welcome. The library is unable to accept used items, anything requiring batteries, or anything plush or made of fabric.

SPL is working with other community organizations to make and distribute these activity kits as part of the Saskatoon Inter-Agency Response. The Inter-Agency Response is dedicated to meeting the needs of people who are especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic due to housing issues and food insecurity.

“Supporting youth and vulnerable individuals has always been one of SPL’s primary objectives, and it has been really encouraging to see so many local organizations and individuals come together for this important work during the pandemic,” explained Amanda Lepage, SPL’s Senior Manager of Welcoming Initiatives. “This is just one of the many ways SPL has adapted to meet community needs while libraries are closed, and we’re continuing to develop additional initiatives.”

To date, nearly 300 kits have been made through personal and business donations, though many more are needed. For more information about the Inter-Agency Response, please visit: <http://saskatooninteragencyresponse.ca>.

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