

Bike Rodeo in town with safety tips

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Wainwright Family Resource Network (FRN) hosted its annual Bike Rodeo in town on July 4 during Transportation Week, part of their summer programming. Over 30 kids took part this year. Families brought their own bikes and helmets, while FRN provided bells, reflectors and safety checks.

The event ran from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the BSS track field, with 10 stations designed to help kids practice biking skills through play.

Stations included obstacle courses, stop signs, and a crosswalk setup where kids learned how to walk their bikes safely across the road.

Nuri Lara, FRN facilitator, said each station had a purpose. "Every station teaches the kids a different ability," she said. "Like the stop sign—kids learn to stop and wait for people walking. They learn how to wear their helmet properly, how tight it should be, and how to steer safely around obstacles."

"The main thing is, you want them to learn how to balance—even if they bump into a person, animal, or object," Lara explained.

Facilitator Courtney Jago-Gregory agreed, adding, "It also raises community awareness about bike safety in town."

Nika Aalbers, a summer student with the Wainwright RCMP, also helped organize the event. "We've done this bike rodeo together with the Family Resource Network for three years now," she said.



Kids line up for the ride as facilitators Courtney Jago-Gregory and Nuri Lara explain the safety rules.

photos Sukie Su

"They're all meant to teach kids how to ride their bikes safely and practice some of their skills, like turning and watching out for others."

Lara added, "I just love to see the kids on their bikes going crazy and just doing their thing. It's so fun to watch."

Kids split into smaller groups to rotate through the stations. "It makes things easier and gives everyone more time at each station," Lara said.

"Now that we're really into summer, it's a good chance to get out, refresh some of the skills, and go over the rules of the road," said Robert Barker, a local parent.

With his kids getting older and wanting more independence, Barker said events

like the bike rodeo help reinforce safety when parents aren't around. "They seem to be having fun—that's the point," he said. He heard about the event through a Facebook post and appreciated the opportunity for his kids to learn while having a good time.

At the end, kids entered a draw to win a gift basket filled with small prizes. "It's just a fun bonus for them," said Aalbers. "I hope everyone has a safe summer—especially when you're out riding your bike."

Lara noted the event was part of FRN's themed summer programming for Transportation Week. "Yesterday we built our

own cars—just crafty toy ones. We've also got Dinosaur Week, Ninja Week, and Superhero Week coming up."

Along with the draw, kids were treated to snacks including juice boxes and other goodies.

Lara also shared a hope for the future: "I wish Wainwright was safer for people who bike. We don't have bike lanes, and sometimes cars don't respect cyclists. I wish we had more of a bike culture here."

"I hope everyone has a safe summer when you're riding your bike," Aalbers concluded.

EDGE



Facilitator Courtney Jago-Gregory draws for prizes alongside summer student Nika Aalbers, wrapping up the event with snacks and giveaways for kids.

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