



News Release
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YMCA recognizes Hickman Automotive Group for generous playground donation

St. John's, NL – The Ches Penney Family YMCA recently received a donation from the Hickman Automotive Group to build a new playground, and the results have been outstanding. With the donation of \$100,000, the Y built a space for children to explore the fundamentals of *play* in an environment which encourages imagination, socialization and increased physical activity. Today, during the official grand opening of this new playground, the YMCA had an opportunity to recognize Hickmans for the kind and generous donation.

“Our partnership with the Ches Penney Family Y has been a fantastic opportunity to give back to the community in an exciting way,” said Jonathan Hickman, owner and operator of the Hickman Automotive Group. “We are thrilled to provide such a space for children and families in the local community, where they are encouraged to play in an inclusive and safe environment. Seeing projects like this one come to fruition is very gratifying for us.”

Some special features of this playground include: a wheel chair accessible ramp, one double slide, one single slide, a boulder walk, a manipulative gear station, a musical piano station, a steering wheel station and a climbing pole. It also includes four feet of regulated fencing, a separate infant space measuring 753 square feet, and a separate preschool space measuring 4,131 square feet. In keeping with the green-theme of the entire facility, the surface around the playground is made from recycled tires.

“We are extremely grateful to the Hickman Automotive Group for making this space possible,” said Chris Roos, President and CEO of the Ches Penney Family Y. “At the Y we place great importance on children learning through play. This playground creates a perfect environment for children to really interact, socialize and really develop. The four-year commitment from Hickmans has not only allowed us to build this playground, but we can maintain it for years to come.”

Steve Bartlett, General Manager of Hickman Chrysler, spoke at today's event and presented Chris Roos with a cheque for \$100,000.

Also on-hand at the grand opening was Troy Croft, Executive Director of Sport Newfoundland and Labrador. Troy spoke to the overall importance of children having access to spaces where they can learn through play, as this is key to fundamental learning and ensuring that children can grow to lead active and healthy lifestyles.

As well, St. John's City Councilor Sheilagh O'Leary was present today. Councilor O'Leary spoke, not only as a member of council, but as a parent who is thrilled over the YMCA's new playground.

It was an important event, celebrating community giving and the joy of allowing children to learn through play.

The Hickman Automotive Group is a family owned and operated business, which was established in 1905 by Albert E. Hickman. Now in its fourth generation of ownership, this organization is committed to meeting the needs of customers and the community. For the past number of years, the Hickman organization has supported and provided the funds to construct children's playgrounds in Newfoundland and Labrador as a part of the Playgrounds for Kids program.