

**Richard McGuire**

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**From:** Jason and Kate Ruwet [jakruwet@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2012 11:46 AM  
**To:** Richard McGuire  
**Cc:** Kevin Finnegan; Cindy Provost  
**Subject:** Request from Building Bright Futures of Williston

Dear Mr. McGuire,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Kate Ruwet, and I'm the Community Development Coordinator for Building Bright Futures of Williston/St. George. You can find more information about our organization (which is state-run) at [www.buildingbrightfutures.org](http://www.buildingbrightfutures.org). You may remember us as Early Childhood Connection, as well. We focus on 4 primary domains for families of children aged birth-5. Those areas are: Welcome Baby, Playgroups, Early Literacy, and Transition to Kindergarten. You may know us from our Babytime Playgroup at the library, or our Open Gym Time at Green Mountain Gymnastics, or our yearly Welcome Baby Socials and Transition to Kindergarten Socials, or our Pajama Storytimes at the library.

To be brief, our funding from BBF is extremely limited. We are only given \$1,511.00 per year to carry out all of our activities. In past years, we were able to get \$2,000 each year from Kevin Finnegan at Parks & Recs to go specifically towards our open gym. Unfortunately, we were told we could not get the funding for that this year. For this current school year only, we are using up our reserves on our budget (that we've had from years past when we had a higher budget). Once this is gone, we will not be able to keep our open gym running anymore, unless we can access the funds elsewhere.

Williston/St. George is in a tough situation, as our BBF funding is based on population, so we are given far less than larger towns like Essex & S. Burlington. Other smaller towns (Milton, Winooski, Hinesburg, etc.) are very heavily subsidized by their towns. For example, Hinesburg BBF receives \$12,000 each year from their town. Therefore, Williston/St. George BBF is actually the worst off financially of all the towns in Chittenden County.

Our Open Gym is beloved by many families in our town...I know it was a lifesaver for me when I was home with my 3 little ones who are all in school full days now. It provides a safe place for parents & children to come together and socialize, play, and exercise. It promotes community building and helps people access resources they might not otherwise know about. It would sadden many residents greatly if this could no longer continue.

I would like to respectfully request that we be allotted \$2,500 out of the town budget to keep this program running. Our last rate of \$2,000/year had been in place for many years, and with costs rising, we have had to cut our number of sessions to only 22 per year, which we would love to increase. Also, our facilitator, Cindy Provost, has been doing this for very little money and we would like to give her a small raise if possible.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if you would like to discuss this further with me. I'm hopeful that we can work together on this!

Sincerely,  
Kate Ruwet  
Community Development Coordinator  
Building Bright Futures of Williston  
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