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Birthday party is fitting theme for 50th anniversary edition of University of Lethbridge Play Day

It's a year-long celebration at the University of Lethbridge in honour of our 50th anniversary, so it only makes sense that the Play Day 2017 theme is one big family birthday party.

The sixth annual Family Day play event takes place Monday, February 20, 2017 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the University's 1st Choice Savings Centre for Sport and Wellness. Initiated in 2012 as a way to celebrate family and the benefits of play, the U of L has found a willing partner in 1st Choice Savings and Credit Union in promoting community wellness.

"It's hard to believe we've been doing this six years now and every year it seems to reach another level," says University of Lethbridge President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Mike Mahon. "We're extremely grateful to have the support of 1st Choice Savings and Credit Union and the hundreds of volunteers who enable us to put on this family friendly event."

Play Day activities this year include tried-and-true favourites such as the bouncy castle, climbing wall, floor hockey, basketball, face painting and swimming, along with a suite of new ASPIRE zones that will challenge and excite family members. These zones include activities related to the University's Let's Talk Science program, Brain Awareness Week, the Centre for Oral History and Tradition, Destination Exploration, biology, AGILITY, art and creativity and the history club.

Jason Sentes, President and Chief Executive Officer of 1st Choice Savings and Credit Union, says Play Day has become a community tradition they are proud to have helped establish.

"We put great value on the opportunity for families to connect with one another through play activity, and we always look forward to partnering with the University in presenting this event to the southern Alberta community," says Sentes.

Play is essential for physical and emotional growth, for mental, intellectual and educational development, and for acquiring social and behavioural skills.

“It’s so important for families to recognize the value of play and of family bonding time,” adds Mahon. “We all have busy lives and face demands that take us away from our families, so it is essential to take some time and find a balance that incorporates simple play into our day. Community wellness begins when we take care of ourselves in this way.”

And the best part of Play Day – it’s all free! Admission and parking are free and people are encouraged to bring gym shoes, comfortable clothing and a swimsuit to maximize their opportunity for fun.

To view online: <http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/birthday-party-fitting-theme-50th-anniversary-edition-play-day>

-- 30 --

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