

Community Involvement & Educational Opportunity News

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APRIL – MAY – JUNE

Vancouver Housing Authority

Have You Gotten a Letter From Us?

If you are in Public Housing, you may have recently gotten a letter from us asking you for your Community Involvement hours for 2010. Are you unsure what that means, or wonder what you need to do? Here are your answers!

If you received VHA assistance (either Section 8 or Public Housing) during 2010, you were required to participate in some kind of community involvement for eight hours **each month** you got assistance (for a yearly total of 96 hours). If you got assistance for only 10 months, your total requirement was 80 hours.

You should have gotten an “Exemption

Form” from us in the mail. This form lists reasons you may not need to meet the community involvement requirement. If you believe you are exempt from this requirement, you **MUST** complete this form and have it approved by the VHA. If you need an Exemption Form, please call us and we will send it. Make sure to provide all of the information it requires.

Please remember that our staff is separate from voucher and property management staff. You need to send your community involvement information directly to our department or we won't get it. Also remember that if

you do not do the community involvement hours required, you are not meeting your voucher or lease requirements and you could potentially lose your housing. It's very important for you to turn in your log sheets.

You have until the end of 2011 to make up any 2010 hours you missed. Just keep a separate log of your make up hours and turn it in with your 2011 hours. *Your next due date is the 15th of April.*

And don't hesitate to call 993-9556 if you have questions, would like information about volunteer or work opportunities, or if you need a form sent to you.

Are You the Parent or a Caretaker of a Child?

Budget cuts are going around, and if you have kids in school they are definitely affected. Even if you don't have kids in school, we all benefit from children in our community getting a good education. But there's something you can do about this, and it doesn't take years to make a difference!

You can volunteer in your neighborhood school. Teachers have larger class sizes than ever, but no longer have the help of paid teacher's assistants. Mrs. Beck, from Marshall Elementary, talked about a big project they're doing right now; how not having an assistant means that she can't take time out from the

whole class to give a single child the help they need right now. It doesn't take a teaching degree or even a GED; if you can help a child cut and paste, then your work is valuable!

What do volunteers do? They: go on field trips, make charts, make props for plays, do bulletin boards, put away library books, do crafts, read to kids, make copies, help on the playground or after school activities, eat lunch with kids, answer phones...

Parents have things they can do for themselves, too. The Children's Home Society has several parent workshops,

including: *Conscious Fathering* (More than just basic baby care, the Conscious Fathering Program offers men insight into preparing for those precious first few months of baby's life.) *Parent Trust Support Groups* (Focused on parenting children 0-18 years. Drop-in; no registration required. Free children's program for children ages 0-12 of parents participating in group.) *Bringing Baby Home* (a 6-week program based on the research of Dr. John Gottman that will help you successfully navigate through the transition into parenthood.)

Call Children's Home Society at 695-1325.

Volunteer Opportunities

Silver Buckle Ranch uses the connection between horse and rider to help youth develop critical life skills: responsibility, integrity and respect for self, others, and property. Trainings are held quarterly. Volunteers assist with barn and horse handling, class assistants, ground work and exercising the horses.

EOCF is looking for volunteers to assist their Safety Committee with data review and entry. Volunteers are asked to commit to a 7-8 hour day once or twice a month.

Americans Building Community (ABC), a local non-profit focused on community development, is leading the plans to create a Tool Library which will provide free access to home and garden tools for residents of West Vancouver, and will provide education, guidance and opportunities for community connections. The Tool Library is currently seeking volunteers, as well as tool donations. If you would like to help

with the development of the tool library, join the committee, which meets the second Monday of every month at 5:30 p.m.

Vancouver School District is looking for lunch buddies. *Male buddies are especially needed!* Spend an hour a week sharing lunch and encouraging a local youth.

Volunteer Connections will need assistants at their 50+ Connections Expo on April 17th. Assist as a greeter, donation assistant, information booth assistant, exhibitor greeter, bingo card stamper or general event tasks.

Volunteer Chore is seeking volunteers to provide transportation for low-income and elderly clients to medical appointments. Mileage reimbursement provided.

Call 694-6577 for more info about the above or to sign up; visit www.bsc-wa.org for more opportunities.

Research Assistant: Do you want to

gain work experience, try out something new, be creative, improve writing skills, or impress somebody? You'll help write, edit, and administer short surveys around Fruit Valley. No experience necessary, just like talking to people, be good at listening. Training provided if wanted. You can work mostly from your home.

Garden Mentor: Great if you like food gardening and being outside in the summer. You'll do garden activities for a few hours every week (you pick the hours!) teaching Fruit Valley families about gardening and using home-grown food. You'll also get to take home some of the fruits and vegetables you help grow. At Fruit Valley Elementary School Garden during Summer Break (June-August) Background checks required. No experience necessary. Training provided. 18+. *For these Fruit Valley opportunities, call or email Amanda, 993-9572, ALawrence@vhousa.com.*

