

Neighbor to Neighbor

Useful News from the Vancouver Housing Authority
and the Clark County Resident Council

March 2010
Volume 10 Issue 1

Quality Preschool Experiences for Young Children

At no cost to eligible families

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Preschool and Childcare

- ♥ Birth to 5 years old
- ♥ Full-time and part-time
- ♥ Services to pregnant women
- ♥ Home-based or center-based at many locations across Clark County
- ♥ Call 360-567-2720

- ♥ Parenting support and activities
- ♥ Individualized family goals for parents

Program Benefits

- ♥ Nutritious meals and snacks
- ♥ Individualized education goals for children
- ♥ Support services designed to meet the individual and varied needs of families



Educational Opportunities for
Children and Families
10621 NE Coxley Drive,
Suite 207
Vancouver, WA 98662

Also Offering:
Child Development Screenings
& Referrals for children with
possible developmental delays.
Birth to 5 years old. Open to ALL
families. Call 360-896-9912,
extension 463.

Claim All Your Tax Credits

You may be eligible for the Earned Income Credit (EIC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) on your 2009 Tax return.

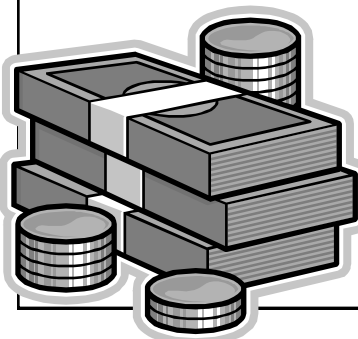
Did your family earn less than \$43,279 and have three or more qualifying children? **You can get an EIC up to \$5,657.**

Did your family earn less than \$40,295 and have two qualifying children? **You can get an EIC up to \$5,028.**

Did your family earn less than \$35,463 and have one qualifying child? **You can get an EIC up to \$3,043.**

Did your family earn less than \$13,440, have no qualifying child and are between the ages of 25 and 64? **You can get an EIC up to \$457.**

AND... Many families that earned more than \$3,000 may qualify for the Child Tax Credit refund – up to \$1,000 for each qualifying child under age 17.



**Want more information?
Call the IRS toll-free at 1-800-829-1040.**

Vancouver Housing Authority
694-2501

RISE & STARS Community Center
737-2950

VHA Maintenance
694-4506

Visit VHA on the web @
www.vhousa.com

Tips at Tax Time

Before you file

Always take advantage of tax credits: The **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit (CTC), Child and Dependent Care Credit and Educational credits.**



Commercial tax preparers usually charge on average \$350 to prepare most simple tax returns. The **Community Housing Resource Center (CHRC)** uses IRS trained volunteers who provide tax preparation services at **NO CHARGE**. Free tax preparation is available from February 2 through April 15, 2010.

Do **NOT** use rapid tax refund services, which are actually **LOANS** with **VERY HIGH** interest rates. These Refund Anticipation Loans (RALs) are advertised as “fast cash” or “quick cash refunds”.

Use direct deposit for the fastest way to get your tax refund. Be sure to bring your bank account information with you wherever you have your taxes prepared.

Call the Community Housing Resource Center at 360-690-4496 ext. 102 to schedule a **FREE tax preparation appointment**. The Center uses electronic tax filing with the IRS and you get your tax refund within two weeks – sooner with direct bank or credit union deposits.

Have you seen the hottest new show on TV?

On Housing Matters TV in March, learn about the VHA's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program; also, Family Unification Program vouchers provide affordable housing and keep at-risk families together. Watch Housing Matters on Comcast channels 21 & 23 or at www.vhausea.com/about/housingmatters.html.

Section 8 Updates

What Happened to My Annual Review?

This year some participants in the Section 8 program are receiving a different Annual Review packet than they are used to receiving. The reason for the change is that VHA has begun doing annual recertification only once every three years for families on fixed income. You are a fixed income family if every adult in your household is receiving Social Security or SSI. You do not need to do anything until you receive your paperwork from us. When you do receive your paperwork, please complete the forms we send you and return them by the due date.

Who Do I Call in Section 8?

In order to be more efficient Section 8 has been divided into new team-based caseloads. Each team has three people who share the work and will be available to help you with any questions about your subsidy. Except for special voucher programs, like Family Unification (FUP) or VASH, the teams are based on the head of household's last name. A list of the teams and their phone number is below. :

If your last name begins with A-G, call Voucher Team A at 993-9547

If your last name begins with H-O, call Voucher Team B at 993-9550

If your last name begins with P-Z, call Voucher Team C at 993-9546

If you are in the VASH or Family Unification (FUP) Voucher Programs, please call Denisse at 993-9542



Homeownership Opportunities!

Vancouver Housing Authority has developed several programs to help low-income families become homeowners. These include:

Single Family Homes for sale: VHA has an inventory of several single family homes available for sale or lease to purchase. These homes are for families who are ready now to become homeowners. In order to qualify you need an income of at least \$25,000 a year. We can provide you with down payment assistance of up to 20%. Home prices currently range from \$155,000 to \$185,000. Please see our website www.vhausea.com for the list of available homes.

Section 8 Homeownership Program: VHA can pay a portion of your monthly mortgage costs with a Section 8 voucher. This program is available to current Section 8 tenants and those on the Section 8 waitlist who are close to being mortgage ready. Qualified families typically have at least \$25,000 in annual income.

For more information, contact Saeed Hajarizadeh at 360-993-9510.

VHA RISE & STARS COMMUNITY CENTER YOUTH PROGRAM

500 OMAHA WAY, VANCOUVER, WA 98661 737-2950

Activities for Youth in grades K - 12

Open to youth living in VHA Section 8 and Low Rent housing. Parents must come in and complete a registration form before their child can attend activities. For information and to register call 737-2950.

Permission slips required for all field trips.

Please note: In compliance with state law, some children will be required to use booster seats or car seats with harnesses when on field trips in our van.

Due to the limited number of seats available, children may occasionally be excluded from trips.

Schedule is subject to change.

Youth 3:00—5:00 PM—Kindergarten thru 5th grade					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3:00—4:00 PM	Snacks				
3:00—5:00 PM	Homework Help, Board Games & Game Room				
	4:00—5:00 PM Computers	3:30—4:30 PM Science Club	4:00—5:00 PM Computers	3:00—5:00 PM Cooking Class	4:00—5:00 PM Computers

Teens 6:00—8:00 PM—6th grades thru 12th grade					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
6:00—8:00 PM	Smart Choices 14—24 year olds Youth Area 11—13 year olds	Gym	Teen Craft	Gym	Open for Teens
7:00—8:00 PM		Computers	Computers		Computers

Special Activities for March...

March 29-April 2

Spring Break won't be a break from the fun at the Community Center!

Come to the Center for snacks, games, sports and more...and don't forget to sign up for our five fabulous field trips:

1. The Discovery Museum at the World Forestry Center (Portland)
2. The Tulip Festival (Woodburn, OR)
3. The Gone Wild Spring Break Party at the Oregon Zoo (Portland)
4. Spring Break Activities at the Fort Vancouver Regional Public Library (Vancouver)
5. Activities at the Naydenov Gymnastics Center (Vancouver)

For Families:

Bookmobile at the Community Center. Wednesday, March 3rd, 17th & 31st, 2:00—4:00 PM.

Family Soup & Story—The Luck of the Irish. Monday, March 22nd, 6:00—8:00 PM. Food, stories & activities. All ages.

Swim. Wednesday, March 24th, 6:00—8:00 PM.

For Youth:

PALS Basketball & Speed Camp. Wednesday, March 17th, 6:00—8:00 PM. Call Kurt @ 992-0214.

“Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus”, Northwest Children's Theater. Friday, March 19th, 6:00—10:00 PM. Call Kurt @ 992-0214.

For Adults:

Ruth Reichl, editor-in-chief of *Gourmet* magazine, Portland Arts & Lectures at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. Sunday, March 28th, 7:30 PM. Call Kurt @ 992-0214.

RISE & STARS Community Center Happenings

500 Omaha Way Vancouver
For more information call 737-2950

CCAPS

(Community Center Adult Program Sponsors)

1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month, 11 AM. Call Sharon @ 992-0205 for more information.

CCRC Meeting

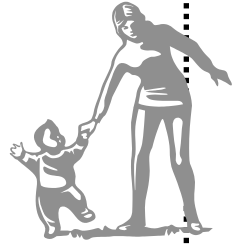
(Clark County Resident Council)

Meets quarterly. Next meeting is May 11th at 11 AM. Call Kathi @ 992-0203 for more information.

VHA Board Of Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, March 24th, 10:00 AM
2500 Main Street, Vancouver
Meetings are open to the public

Moms, Dads and other family caregivers:
DROP IN and

PLAY...
SHARE...
DISCOVER!



Play & Learn

A fun, interactive way to spend time with your 0-5 year old.

Thursday mornings,
10 AM to Noon
VHA RISE & STARS
Community Center
500 Omaha Way

For more information
call Sharon @ 992-0205.

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
VANCOUVER WA
PERMIT NO. 609

Vancouver Housing Authority
RISE & STARS Community Center
500 Omaha Way
Vancouver, WA 98661
360-737-2950