

**Kitsap Community
Resources**

845 8th Street
Bremerton, WA 98337

360-478-2301
www.kcr.org



**KITSAP COMMUNITY
Resources**

A Community Action Partnership. Helping people. Changing lives.

Inside KCR

Winter 2009

From the Executive Director, Larry Eyer



2008 delivered many new challenges for our community and our nation. KCR staff and volunteers saw firsthand the impact of the economic downturn on many of our area families. In November 130 local families sought emergency housing; in December unemployment insurance claims doubled compared to this time last year; currently over 1600 Kitsap homes face foreclosure; and all KCR programs serving low-income residents are full and overflowing.

The good news is that you and our Kitsap neighbors have responded with generosity and creativity. You gave generously to KCR and to our Christmas Angel program. The Kitsap Sun's Bell Ringer raised its second-highest amount ever for area food banks. United Way and the Combined Federal Campaign continue to see strong support.

In December dozens of volunteers worked tirelessly to keep our community's Severe Weather homeless shelter open during the snowy and frozen days and nights. Throughout the year volunteers from churches participating in One Church One Family have provided homes and mentored homeless families in partnership with KCR. Members of South Kitsap Soroptimist Club have renovated and furnished shelter units in that part of the county. And Kitsap County recently partnered with KCR to provide Safe

Parking, a location where homeless families can live legally and safely in their cars until other housing can be secured. We are very grateful to our community.

One key responsibility of KCR is to identify unmet needs of Kitsap County low-income residents and to develop strategies with public and private partners to address those needs. We have begun our strategic planning process to identify our top priorities and goals for the next four years. Decisions reflecting KCR's mission and values will be made based on community needs and priorities. We invite you to contact us about what you see should be included in our community action plan. To do so, contact Kathleen at khackney@kcr.org or 360-473-2003.



Rick and his family find warmth at the Severe Weather Emergency Shelter at the Kitsap County Fairgrounds in December. Image Courtesy of: Carolyn J. Yaschur, Kitsap Sun

Donor Profile: Local Donors Provide Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners

All of the families in KCR's Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing units enjoyed a holiday dinner for Thanksgiving and Christmas this year thanks to the generosity and culinary talents of several different local community donors. Members of Silverdale Lutheran Church, Central Kitsap Presbyterian Church, and Bremerton Seventh Day Adventist Christian Church provided several meals, which were delivered by volunteers of the One Church One Family program. The Puget Sound Chapter of the National Association of Superintendents, representing the production work force of Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, cooked and delivered dinners as well.

In addition, the Coast Guard Auxiliary Stocking Program provided Holiday stockings to all the children in the Emergency and Transitional Housing programs. They created hand-sewn stockings filled with toys and practical gifts (socks, tooth brushes, etc.) based on the children's age and gender.

Thank You to Our Donors Who Responded to the End-of-Year Appeal

We apologize for any omissions and extend our appreciation to all of you who support Kitsap Community Resources.

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
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Don't miss out on our bi-monthly e-newsletter that contains even more news from KCR. To sign up, go online to www.kcr.org and complete the Newsletter Sign-up Form. Or just send your e-mail address to khackney@kcr.org.

Super Saturday Information Fair: Feb. 21, 2009

The Asset-Building Coalition (ABC) of Kitsap presents Super Saturday at West Park Community Center from 12-4:30 pm. Local ABC partners will provide free tax preparation, information about starting a savings account, credit counseling, housing counseling, starting a business, financial aid for college, and more!

Christmas Angel Meets the Needs and Holiday Wishes of Over 2200 Low-Income Children

KCR and the Christmas Angel Program would like to thank you for your support this year. Without you, we could not have fulfilled the Christmas wishes of many children in our community. Some words of thanks from those served include:

“May God bless you as you have blessed my children with your generosity this Christmas. Without you, my children wouldn’t have much of a Christmas at all.”

“Thank you for all of your help during our time of need. I understand the economy is in turmoil, and it is hard to give when you have so little. I pray that God gives me the opportunity to pay your kindness forward.”

“Thank you very much. We have had a really rough year this year, and this means a lot.”



KCR AmeriCorps members spent countless hours organizing gifts and clothing donations for the Santa Shop.



KCR Accomplishes 98% Participation Among Head Start Students in Dental Care Program

Kitsap County has struggled in the last few decades with high numbers of tooth decay among children. One cause may be the lack of fluoridated water in some areas.

KCR’s Head Start program has succeeded in sending almost every student to a dentist twice a year through some innovative partnerships within the community. KCR is now able to refer every child within a short period of time to dental services within Kitsap County.

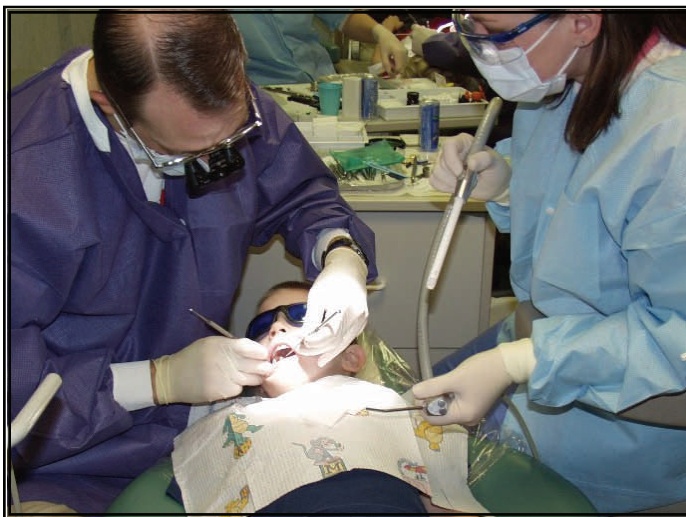
Peninsula Community Health Center has graciously made Head Start children a high priority. The ABCD (Access to Baby and Child Dentistry) program through United Way contracts with registered dental hygienists to provide preventive oral health care. The Smile Mobile is staffed by volunteer dentists and hygienists who treat about 140 children at no cost to the families or program.

KCR Health Services Manager Marion Hudson serves on the Board of Directors for Peninsula Community Health Centers and has been an active advocate in securing dental care for all of the children in KCR programs, including the WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) nutrition program.

“It is good to know that the dental needs of our children in the community are being met,” Hudson said. “Local dentists have stepped up and represented their community well.”

KCR is the only program in the state of Washington that has achieved a level of more than 70% of Head Start students seeing a dentist regularly.

Head Start is a comprehensive preschool program for low-income children and those with special needs. It provides children with a developmentally appropriate early childhood education.



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Our mission is to create hope and opportunity for low-income Kitsap County residents by providing resources that promote self-sufficiency.

Asset-Building Coalition of Kitsap County Launches EITC Awareness Campaign

The Asset-Building Coalition (ABC) of Kitsap is hoping to educate all of those in Kitsap County about the benefits and qualifications for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). By directing families to the 12 AARP free tax assistance centers, ABC hopes to see Kitsap residents take advantage of the refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. By using free services and the direct deposit option, they can avoid unnecessary charges and advance fees as well.

The coalition, supported by KCR Financial Education Coordinator Kristi Basse, consists of community partners including KCR, Kitsap Credit Union, American Financial Solutions, Bremerton Housing Authority, Kitsap County Consolidated Housing Authority, Washington CASH, Olympic College, United Way of Kitsap County, Habitat for Humanity, Republic Mortgage, AARP, DSHS, and the IRS.

Veteran's Assistance Serves Over 500 Kitsap County Vets

Joseph, a U.S. Army veteran diagnosed with cancer, contemplated taking his own life after social security garnishments left him with no money to pay the rent and no hope of how to survive. KCR connected him with the Veteran's Transitional Housing Program in Retsil, where he found stability that helped him find a job and hope for the future. He now lives in Chicago with his family, but to this day, he credits the Veteran's Assistance program at KCR for saving his life.

KCR has served over 500 clients since the program began in August 2007 through support from Kitsap County Veterans Assistance Funds. Veterans can receive rental and mortgage assistance, utility bill assistance, and assistance for food, transportation, medical and prescription costs, burial costs, and other approved needs.