

Community Connections

ORCAS COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2023



Resource Center Awarded Diaper Grant

We're excited to announce that the recently awarded Department of Commerce grant will support the purchase of diapers, wipes, ointments, and other essential baby hygiene products for the Resource Center's well-established Coates Cabinet program.

Initial research suggests that over 30 Orcas families could potentially benefit. We appreciate the opportunity to be involved and look forward to expanding our program offerings. Stay tuned for further updates!



COATES Programs Help Meet Basic Needs *Keeping Islanders Clean & Warm*

Hygiene poverty is a hidden crisis silently undermining many aspects of life. Its impact on confidence and self-esteem often acts as a deterrent, dissuading people from participating in education, social interaction, and employment opportunities – crucial elements for personal growth and success.

In 2017, The Resource Center established the Coates Cabinet program to combat hygiene poverty and foster well-being. Clients are provided with the opportunity to shop for essential household and personal hygiene items on a monthly basis, such as toilet paper, paper towels, laundry soap, deodorant, and shampoo.

As an offshoot of Coates Cabinet, we developed Coates Closet – a winter essentials program for those in need. Islanders finding it hard to make ends meet can receive a winter coat along with additional items based on availability, such as gloves, hats, scarves and socks.

Closet shopping is available during designated “Coat Clinics”, like those held recently during the month of November, or by contacting our office for an appointment.

These valuable programs are possible with the help of volunteers and supporters, including the Coates Family Foundation. THANK YOU for strengthening our community!

ORCAS COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER



A Proactive Approach Supporting Our Island Seniors



Attaining old age is a significant achievement and a reason for gratitude. Nevertheless, today's senior citizens encounter various hurdles, including financial instability and difficulties accessing healthcare services.

The Resource Center acknowledges the value of our community's elderly population and emphasizes the importance of a strong support system to promote well-being.

We offer assistance and strive to help seniors age with dignity. Embracing our island's most vulnerable populations, we are here for all islanders who may find themselves needing a little help. Our goal is to support our neighbors on their path to physical and mental health, stable housing, food security and more.

The Resource Center, along with our community partners such as the Orcas Senior Center, San Juan County and the Orcas Island Food Bank,

partner together to make this happen. We encourage our senior clients to learn about the many valuable programs in our area.

More than half the population of Orcas is over the age of 55

A proactive approach providing welcoming and resource based programs for our elderly, is part of our mission to foster a healthy community by connecting Orcas Islanders with the services needed to thrive and achieve equitable well-being.

A genuine look inside the Resource Center...



VIEW OUR VIDEO HERE!

Making A Real Difference

"El centro de recursos ha estado ahí para mí en los momentos más cruciales de vida, cuando creía que no había solución el centro de recursos estaba ahí para guiarme y ayudarme a mí y a mi familia. Estoy muy agradecido por ello."

"The Resource Center has been there for me in the most crucial moments of my life. When I thought there was no solution, they were there to guide and help me and my family, I am very thankful for this!"



Abdon Contreras-Barrios

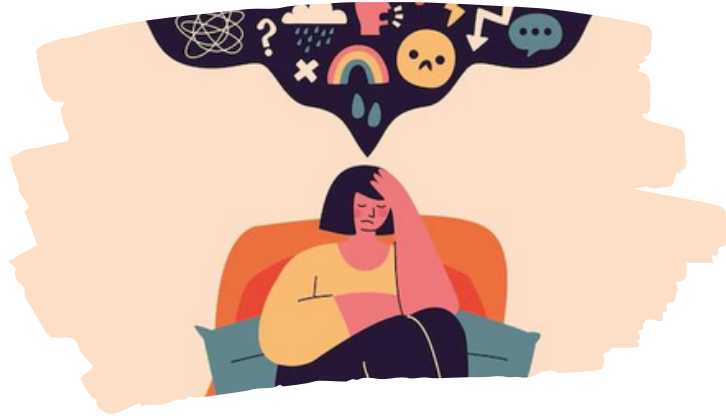
Together with unwavering support from the Resource Center, Abdon has navigated language barriers and the challenge of securing access to vital healthcare. Receiving restorative vision surgery has been life-changing and enabled him to continue work in local restaurants and provide for his family.

Abdon's success is a testimony to the significance of the comprehensive scope of services the Resource Center offers as a safety net for our community. We're here to help our island neighbors in time of need!



Mental Health Matters

Community Wellness Program



Maintaining positive mental health and addressing mental health conditions is crucial in today's world, impacting many aspects of our lives. Mental well-being empowers us to navigate challenges, build meaningful relationships, and make informed decisions.

The Orcas Community Resource Center offers help to those struggling with mental health. Many of the services we offer are linked to supporting mental well-being.

Finding the right person to talk to can be overwhelming. The Resource Center makes sure islanders are not alone when searching for a therapist who best suits their needs. Staff can determine what options are available, provide a list of contracted therapists, and check insurance policies.

Through the Community Wellness Program, eligible clients are matched with a therapist. If it's an amicable fit, up to 14 sessions are available and subsidized by

the Resource Center through county funds. We can refer to people who specialize in youth counseling for younger residents so don't let age stop anyone from reaching out!

"Thank you - the Community Wellness Program is awesome! It has given me the ability to receive therapy at an affordable cost, helping to better my quality of life."

Many people aren't aware that these types of programs exist. Let's get rid of the stigma - talk to your friends and neighbors about mental health. Ask the important questions - Are you feeling overwhelmed or alone? Who do you have in your corner? Don't wait. If you or someone you care about needs help, please contact us OR - call, text or chat the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

There is hope.



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

John Ehrmantraut

John grew up in Ohio and served as a hospital corpsman in the US Navy, followed by a lengthy career in Human Resources. After decades spent living in sunny Southern California, he landed on Orcas nearly three years ago to be closer to family.

Our community is doubly fortunate! John volunteers at both the Orcas Senior Center and the Orcas Community Resource Center. At the Resource Center, he works twice a month greeting clients with a warm smile as they shop for essential hygiene and cleaning products through the Coates Cabinet program.

Volunteering enables John to remain active, stay connected, and be informed about programs and activities available in our community. John believes the rewards he receives from volunteering his time equal, or even perhaps outweigh, the value received by the organization.

"I encourage anyone with time to volunteer to get involved. The rewards you'll receive from service are priceless!"





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Securing A Permanent Home *Exciting Progress!*

Our ongoing collaboration to establish a unified safety net for those in need has taken us one step closer to a permanent home for the Resource Center, Food Bank, and Islanders needing affordable housing provided by OPAL Community Land Trust.

The Pea Patch Lane land purchase, with initial fundraising hosted by the Orcas Island Community Foundation, will allow for a non-profit campus that demonstrates how islanders approach problems with ingenuity and synergy. We will soon embark on a design process with island neighbors of diverse backgrounds to find practical solutions that meet community needs.

A permanent home for the Resource Center will anchor a place for social services and help foster a healthy community with additional support for islanders living in unstable or substandard conditions. The Food Bank looks forward to a much-needed expanded facility, furthering its mission of nourishing our community through food access, education and advocacy. OPAL anticipates the construction of approximately 20 new rentals for low and very-low-income households, another step in creating a stable supply of affordable housing.

*"We hope those who are here in the coming decades
will be grateful that the community invested and
took the steps to create a beautiful and vibrant campus."*

Hilary Canty - Executive Director, OICF

Stay tuned for upcoming activities to unify our community and bring our vision to fruition. We look forward to putting our innovative skills to work!

YOU CAN HELP!



scan here & donate today

Contact Us!



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