



Dear Residents and Program Participants,

I hope this newsletter finds you all staying well and still following health guidelines as we navigate through this challenging time.

Here at McLaren we are fortunate not to have experienced an outbreak among staff or clients. We have however cancelled our 20th Anniversary Sparkle Fundraiser event in July and as many of you know the Pride Parade is also not happening. I was just chatting with a resident on the phone here at Helmcken House and we all have to find our comfort level as businesses, parks and public spaces start to open up again. It's an anxious time for many of us.

McLaren Housing Society will be making some modifications in the way we

operate and this will be communicated to you all in the coming weeks. As always we will do our best to provide supports to you in the best way we can given these strange times.

For now, know that we are here for you and staff will be in touch regarding annual rent reviews in the near future for those of you who are due to have one.

Take care everyone!

Sincerely,

Kim Stacey,
Executive Director
McLaren Housing Society of B.C.

The Little Things Make a Big Difference

It will be a while before COVID-19 is behind us. Until then restrictions on large gatherings and travel will remain. But some things will become a little easier.

Guidelines will be in place for businesses and organizations to ensure your safety. We're not through this yet, but there are important things you can do to protect you and your loved ones, neighbours and colleagues. The little things make a big difference.

- Stay informed, be prepared and follow public health advice
- Practice good hygiene
 - Frequent hand washing
 - Avoid touching face
 - Cough into your sleeve
- Stay at home and away from others if you're feeling ill
- Maintain physical distancing outside your household
 - No handshaking or hugging
 - Small numbers of contacts
 - Keep a safe distance
- Clean your home and workspace more often
- Consider using non-medical masks when physical distancing isn't possible
 - On transit
 - Shopping

Together, we can take these actions to keep the curve flat, while doing more to improve our personal well-being and strengthen our connections in our communities.

Visit [BC's Restart Plan](#) for the latest information.



QMUNITY

BC'S QUEER RESOURCE CENTRE

Virtual Brunch Fundraiser for IDAHOT Sunday, May 17th, 11am - 1pm

Join QMUNITY for the 16th annual International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOT) breakfast, online as we turn it into a fabulous virtual brunch! With this year's theme "Breaking The Silence" presented by Vancity and a benefit for QMUNITY. We're putting together a fun two-hour online brunch EXTRAVAGANZA. Everyone's welcome! There will be drag performances, art, dance entertainment, and much more! Free or by donation.

Click [HERE](#) to Register



Services from AIDS Vancouver

Supplementary Grocery Program

Registered clients of AIDS Vancouver living on a low income (contact 604-696-4676 or contact@aidsvancouver.org for registration details) can support a healthy, secure diet by picking up free groceries at the entrance to 1101 Seymour Street, every two weeks on a set schedule (see calendar [HERE](#))

Community Case Management Program

If you are living with HIV/AIDS, you can count on AIDS Vancouver's Case Management program. We work to help you achieve stable and sustained health, and a better quality of life. The program provides information, support, and care coordination for you and your family. AIDS Vancouver's Case Managers work to meet your unique needs through thorough assessment and care planning. We link you to services and resources. We can also advocate for you to address barriers



to your health. Our immediate focus is on food, shelter, income, and emotional support—throughout the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. Contact our Case Managers at 604-696-4676 or contact@aidsvancouver.org.

Online HIV Helpline

AIDS Vancouver's Online HIV Helpline is a great way to connect with knowledgeable HIV-expert volunteers during this unique time of social distancing. Visit the [helpline](#) to ask any HIV-related questions anonymously, and from the safe distance of your own home.

QUEST | food exchange

During the Covid-19 pandemic, please be advised that if your Quest Food Exchange client card has expired or is due to expire, Quest will honour all cards for one additional year beyond the current expiry date. There is no need to go into one of their markets to have your client's card renewed at this time.

Follow us...



Click [HERE](#) to donate to McLaren Housing Society

Charitable Registration:#10768 3328 RR0001

Grounding Techniques

After a trauma, it's normal to experience flashbacks, anxiety, and other uncomfortable symptoms. Grounding techniques help control these symptoms by turning attention away from thoughts, memories, or worries, and refocusing on the present moment.

5-4-3-2-1 Technique

Using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique, you will purposefully take in the details of your surroundings using each of your senses. Strive to notice small details that your mind would usually tune out, such as distant sounds, or the texture of an ordinary object.

What are 5 things you can see? Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface, or an object you never noticed.

What are 4 things you can feel? Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin, or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture, and other physical qualities.

What are 3 things you can hear? Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out, such as a ticking clock, distant traffic, or trees blowing in the wind.

What are 2 things you can smell? Try to notice smells in the air around you, like an air freshener or freshly mowed grass. You may also look around for something that has a scent, such as a flower or an unlit candle.

What is 1 thing you can taste? Carry gum, candy, or small snacks for this step. Pop one in your mouth and focus your attention closely on the flavors.

Categories

Choose at least three of the categories below and name as many items as you



can in each one. Spend a few minutes on each category to come up with as many items as possible.

- Movies • Countries • Books • Cereals
- Sports Teams • Colours • Cars
- Fruits & Vegetables • Animals • Cities
- TV Shows • Famous People

For a variation on this activity, try naming items in a category alphabetically. For example, for the fruits & vegetables category, say “apple, banana, carrot,” and so on.

Body Awareness

The body awareness technique will bring you into the here-and-now by directing your focus to sensations in the body. Pay special attention to the physical sensations created by each step.

1. Take 5 long, deep breaths through your nose, and exhale through puckered lips.
2. Place both feet flat on the floor. Wiggle your toes. Curl and uncurl your toes several times. Spend a moment noticing the sensations in your feet.
3. Stomp your feet on the ground several times. Pay attention to the sensations in your feet and legs as you make contact with the ground.
4. Clench your hands into fists, then release the tension. Repeat this 10 times.

5. Press your palms together. Press them harder and hold this pose for 15 seconds. Pay attention to the feeling of tension in your hands and arms.
6. Rub your palms together briskly. Notice and sound and the feeling of warmth.
7. Reach your hands over your head like you're trying to reach the sky. Stretch like this for 5 seconds. Bring your arms down and let them relax at your sides.
8. Take 5 more deep breaths and notice the feeling of calm in your body.

Mental Exercises

Use mental exercises to take your mind off uncomfortable thoughts and feelings. They are discreet and easy to use at nearly any time or place. Experiment to see which work best for you.

- Name all the objects you see.
- Describe the steps in performing an activity you know how to do well. For example, how to prepare your favourite meal, or tie a knot.
- Count backwards from 100.
- Pick up an object and describe it in detail. Describe its color, texture, size, weight, scent, and any other qualities you notice.
- Spell your full name, and the names of three other people, backwards.
- Name all your family members, their ages, and one of their favourite activities.
- Read something backwards, letter-by-letter. Practice for at least a few minutes.
- Think of an object and “draw” it in your mind, or in the air with your finger. Try drawing your home, or an animal.

Share Your Experience

We invite and encourage you to contribute to this bi-weekly newsletter. You can share your personal experience in facing the challenges of COVID-19.

Submissions may be in any artistic format: stories, poetry, drawings or photos. Anonymity is assured if preferred by the author.

To submit for publication, please drop off at the 2nd Floor Office at Howe Street or Helmcken House or send by email to barbf@mclarenhousing.org by noon on Fridays.



New COVID-19 Support for Seniors

The newly introduced one-time, tax-free payment is available to the following people.

- \$300 for seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension
- \$200 for seniors eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)

Anyone who receives both the OAS pension and the GIS will be eligible for both payments for a total one-time payment of \$500. The payments will be applied automatically. Click [HERE](#) for more info.



Cheese & Vegetable Frittata

Perfect for any time of day. Makes 4 servings. Prep Time: 10 min. Cook Time: 15min.

4 cups (1 L) mixed vegetables, fresh or frozen

6 eggs

1/2 tsp (2.5 mL) dried basil

1/4 tsp (1.25 mL) salt

1/8 tsp (0.5 mL) pepper

1 tsp (5 mL) vegetable oil

1 medium onion, sliced

2 garlic cloves, minced

3/4 cup (175 mL) shredded cheese (any kind)

Instructions:

Step 1: Bring 2 cups (500 mL) salted water to boil in medium saucepan. Add vegetables and cover. Cook just until tender, then drain.

Cut any larger vegetables.

Step 2: Whisk eggs, basil, salt and pepper in small bowl.

Step 3: Heat oil in 10-inch (25 cm) non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 4 minutes.

Step 4: Stir in cooked vegetables. Pour egg mixture over vegetables in skillet. As mixture sets around edge of skillet, with spatula, gently lift cooked portions to allow uncooked egg to flow underneath. Cover and cook until bottom is set and top is almost set.

Step 5: Sprinkle cheese over top. Cover skillet with lid and cook for another minute to melt cheese.

Step 6: Cut frittata into wedges to serve.

Visit eggs.ca for more recipes



Watch adorable sea otters on the Vancouver Aquarium's live cameras

Virtual Entertainment

[LGBTQI2S Dignity Project
Film Vignettes](#)

[San Diego Zoo - Live Cameras](#)

[Tiny Desk Concerts](#)

[Vancouver Aquarium
Live Cameras](#)

[Museum of Anthropology
from Home](#)

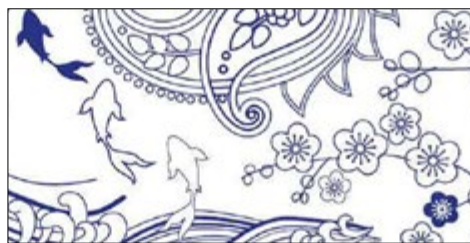
[Vancouver Symphony Orchestra's
YouTube Channel](#)

[Vancouver Public Library
Family Events](#)

May is Asian Heritage Month

Asian Heritage Month is an opportunity for all Canadians to learn more about the many achievements and contributions of Canadians of Asian descent who, throughout our history, have done so much to make Canada the amazing country we share today. The theme for Asian Heritage Month 2020, "Asian Canadians: United in Diversity", was inspired by the long and rich history of these Canadians who continue, even today, to enrich our country and make it a more vibrant, inclusive and compassionate society.

You can download the **FREE** printable and colourable Asian Heritage Month poster [HERE](#)



ExplorASIAN 2020 Virtual Festival

When: Ongoing until May 31

Where: [Facebook.com](#)

What: A month-long series of events celebrating Asian Heritage Month, including musicians Vince Mai, Noriko Kim Kobayashi and Kage performing the explorASIAN theme song. Full festival program is available at [explorasian.org](#).



Useful Links:

CATIE – Canada's resource for HIV and hepatitis C information has many useful COVID-19 resources including articles and webinars. Click [HERE](#) to visit their website.

HealthlinkBC – You can access all the latest COVID-19 updates and a Symptom Self-Assessment Tool [HERE](#)

Heritage Vancouver is always updating their interactive map and list of neighbourhood businesses that are open during the COVID-19 pandemic. Access the map [HERE](#)

CBC has COVID-19 coverage from across the country and around the world [HERE](#), including the latest stories on public health.



Do you need support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Here's a great resource for provincial and federal assistance [HERE](#)

May is Speech and Hearing Month

1 in 6 people has a speech, language or hearing disorder.

Many of us take our ability to communicate for granted. Yet the ability to speak, hear and be heard is much more vital to our everyday lives than most of us realize. Each year, Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC) dedicates the month of May to raising public awareness about communication disorders and the professionals who can help.



Hearing

TIPS for talking with someone who has a hearing disorder:

- Get the person's attention by saying their name or touching their arm before you start talking.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard, but do NOT shout. Shouting distorts the speech sounds.
- Be patient and provide the person with some extra time to respond. Hearing and processing sounds may take a bit longer.
- Avoid putting anything around your face and mouth when you are speaking (e.g., pens, phones, hands). People with hearing loss use visual cues to help them understand the message. People without hearing loss also use visual cues!

- Create an ideal listening environment: move away from noise sources and choose a place with good lighting.
- Position yourself across from the listener rather than beside. Look at the person when talking.
- During group discussions only one person should speak at a time.
- Smaller group discussions are ideal. Listening in a large group setting can be difficult.
- Reduce background noises that may be distracting (e.g., turn off the radio or TV).
- Stick to one conversation topic at a time. Avoid quick shifts in conversation topics.
- Keep sentences and questions short.
- Allow extra time for responding.
- Ask questions with yes/no answers. Open-ended questions are more difficult to respond to.
- Be an active listener. Pay attention to eye gaze and gestures. Take a guess (e.g., "Are you talking about your dog? Yes? Tell me more.")
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Do not speak louder to get your message across unless the person has a hearing loss.

Speech & Language

TIPS for better communication:

- Speaking with someone who has a communication disorder may require extra time and patience.



Speech-Language &
Audiology Canada
[Communicating care](https://www.sac-ac.org/)