



**McLaren Housing**  
Society of British Columbia

Issue No. 4 – June 1, 2020

# COVID-19 UPDATE



## Dear Residents and Program Participants,

I hope this newsletter continues to find you and your loved ones safe and well.

As we move along into Phase 2 with the latest government guidelines for opening again, I would like to thank all of you for doing your part in maintaining COVID-19 protocols of wearing masks in the common areas and maintaining social distance. I would also like to thank the staff at McLaren Housing Society who have continued to work during these difficult times. Along with all of you we are dealing with adjusting to the impact of COVID-19 but are relieved that we have had no reported cases of staff or residents being sick. This is not to say though that we set aside caution.

In the next few weeks, staff will gradually return to work at Helmcken House and Howe Street with protocols in place regarding physical distancing and wearing masks & gloves in common areas.

You will be contacted by letter if your Annual Income Review is due, with instructions on the process for this which includes updating additional information. New applications are being accepted, but only by fax or mail and we will begin to fill any program/building vacancies starting in June if the numbers of COVID-19 cases continue to drop.

Finally, the newsletter has received growing interest and positive feedback. We are continuing to explore creative ways of connecting with you and we would like to invite you to send us ideas, recipes and information.

Until the next newsletter, be well, be calm, stay safe and enjoy some sunshine!

Sincerely,

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

## Online activities:

### Physical Activity

[Yoga with Adriene](#)

### Online Learning:

[MCN's Ultimate Guide to Museums](#)

[Art Galleries & Museum](#)

[Yellowstone National Park](#)

### Miscellaneous:

[My Quarantine List](#) – a grassroots website with free entertainment links, educational and stress-relieving resources

### Movies & Television

[Hoopla](#) - offered in partnership with local public libraries. You can borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics and TV shows on your computer, TV, tablet, or phone. Titles can be streamed immediately or downloaded to phones or tablets. Website offers "Kids Mode," where only children-friendly selections are displayed.

### [National Film Board of Canada](#)

[Kanopy](#) – partners with public libraries to offer digital content (including films, children's series and documentaries) for library card holders.



## Annual BC Housing Rent Subsidy Reviews

Howe Street residents selected by BC Housing to participate in a rent subsidy review will receive letters by mail detailing what they need to provide. If residents require assistance with this annual process, please connect with staff at the main office – 2nd floor.

If you are in one of our portable subsidy programs or live at Helmcken House, you will receive a letter about your annual BC Housing rent subsidy review soon.

As always, these will take place at Helmcken House. For these reviews we require proof of gross monthly income for all household members, such as:

- Confirmation of income from the Ministry of Social Development;
- Confirmation of income from the federal Old Age Security or Canada Pension Plan or private pension;
- Three recent pay stubs;
- Proof of any other income sources;
- T4, T5 from 2019

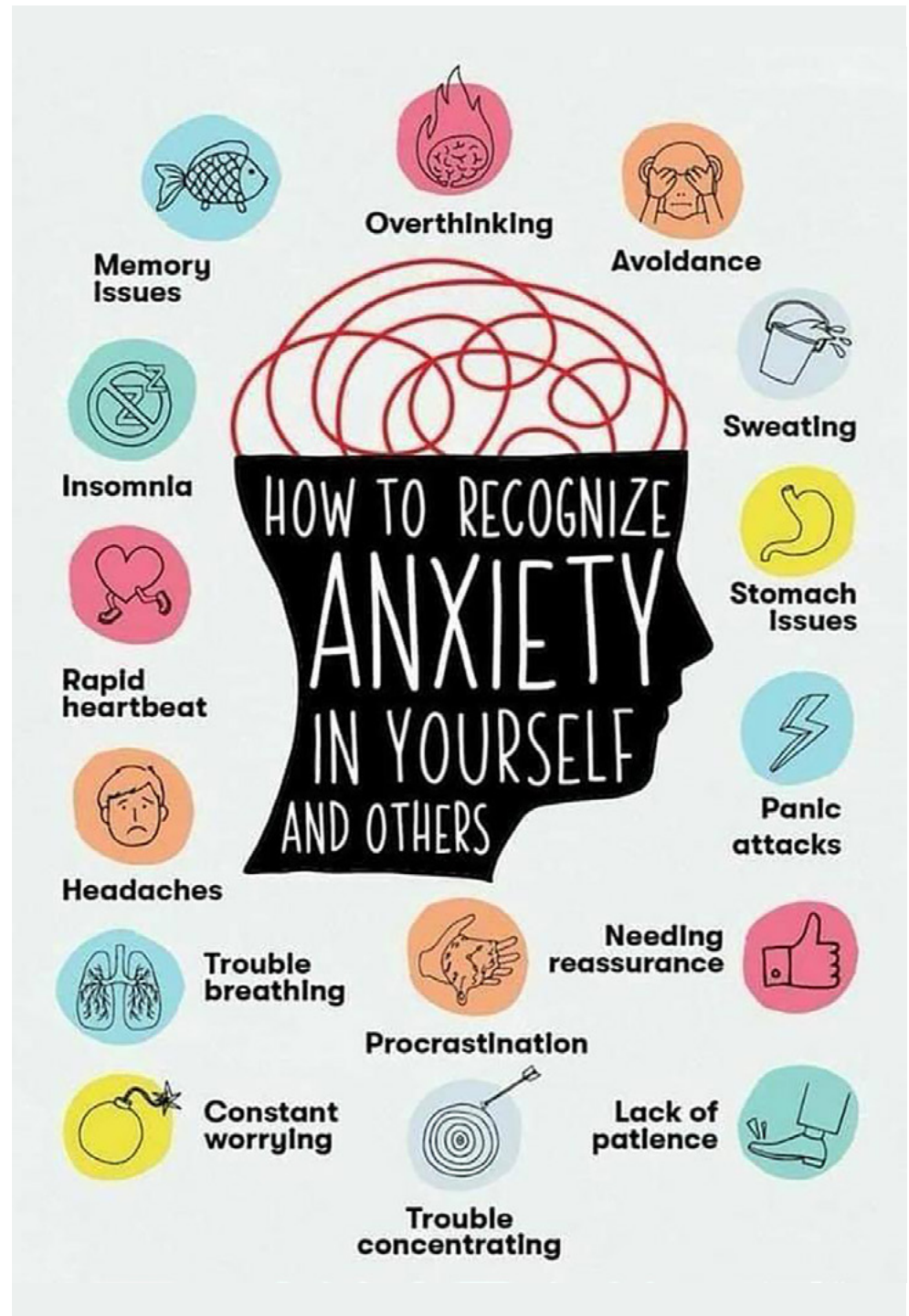
This year we have new protocols in place for the annual review which you will need to follow. When you arrive for your appointment:

1. Drop off financial information to Barb in the 2nd floor office
2. Proceed to the lounge to meet with Sharon or Katie. They will update your contact information and you will do a short questionnaire. (These anonymous surveys are important for our funding.)
3. Return to 2nd floor office to sign your application for rent subsidy.

## How To Recognize Anxiety in Yourself and Others

Often people wonder where anxiety and depression come from, or how to identify signs that someone is suffering from anxiety. Check out the infographic below to help identify signs you might recognize in yourself or others.

**The next page explains the CARD system for coping with fears and anxiety.**



Our housing and support services are funded by:



## The CARD System for Coping with fears and anxiety

Everyone feels anxious or afraid sometimes, but there are things you can do to reduce your fear and anxiety. The CARD System (Comfort, Ask, Relax, Distract) provides groups of strategies that you can play to cope with stressful situations. Originally used to help reduce fear and pain from medical procedures, CARD can also be used in situations that cause fear or anxiety. Playing your CARDS will give you strategies to help you with fear and anxiety.

**COMFORT:** Having negative thoughts and feelings is normal, and they usually go away over time. Try to be courageous and learn to be the 'boss' of your own worry. **ASK:** Talk to someone you trust, such as a family member, friend or health-care provider. Ask them questions about your worries and how they can help you feel better. **RELAX:** Be patient with yourself and do activities to keep yourself calm and relaxed. **DISTRACT:** Try to keep normal routines and limit the amount of time you spend focusing on whatever is making you anxious or afraid.

### Suggestions for playing your cards:

#### COMFORT:

- Validate your thoughts and feelings

("It's normal to be anxious and afraid sometimes.")

- Think about what you can do to cope with anxiety and fear.
- Create a comfortable environment for yourself.
- Create daily routines that give you predictability and control.
- Do activities that you find calming, such as reading or solving puzzles.
- Empower yourself ("I am stronger than I feel")
- Avoid focusing on negative thoughts and feelings.
- Be mindful of the conversations you have with family or friends.
- Be mindful of your media/TV choices and their impact on you.

#### ASK QUESTIONS:

Talk to someone you trust. Ask them about your worries and ways to feel better:

- Do other people feel this way?
- How do other people deal with these types of feelings?
- How can I fall asleep easier at bedtime?
- How do I keep a regular routine when I feel this way?

#### RELAX:

- Do things that you enjoy to help you feel more secure and connected.
- Practice taking deep belly breaths.
- Listen to a mindfulness or relaxation activity.
- Practice positive self-talk ("This may be hard, but I can get through it!").
- Practice being grateful (Think of 5 things you are grateful for while brushing your teeth).
- Be physically active. This is important to help us relax (playing catch, stretching, biking, walking).
- Be flexible and adjust expectations if needed.

#### DISTRACT

- Spend time doing and talking about things that are important to you such as sports, dancing, or art.
- Go for a walk or bike ride and pay attention to what you see, smell, hear and feel.
- Play games.
- Watch movies.
- Listen to your favourite music.
- Read books.
- Colour, draw, do crafts, scrapbook.
- Work on puzzles.





## Vancouver Pride unveils new look, virtual event lineup for 2020 festival

By Vincent Plana

Courtesy of [The Daily Hive](#)

The Vancouver Pride Society (VPS) has unveiled a brand new look ahead of its 2020 festival, which will be held virtually for the first time ever.

In mid-April, rather than cancelling its massive parade and various other events over the summer, VPS announced that it would shift its celebrations to a series of online events.

On May 14th, the society introduced all-new branding tied around the theme “Story of Change,” designed with the help of Carter Hales Design Lab.

“Over the past few months, we went through a design process to discover a new visual identity that would better reflect the personality of the Vancouver Pride Society,” explains a statement from VPS. “This new design would help to communicate the changes at Vancouver Pride.”

One of the biggest adjustments to VPS’ new look was the decision to remove the rainbow.

The Society explains that the rainbow flag has gone through several changes since being designed in 1978, including myriad flags to represent different aspects of the community.

“Rather than embracing a flag that



represents just one segment of our community, we have identified a bold and bright look that speaks to who we are as an organization: passionate, caring, quirky, sassy, and ready to grow in 2020 and beyond,” says VPS.

Their revamped brand identity is accompanied by a brand new website and smartphone app, both of which will be made available in early June. And while the new brand colours don’t include a rainbow, a rainbow flag will continue to be flown during community events.

Andrea Arnot, executive director for the VPS, explains that the organization has gone through a transformation — not

just due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but over the past several years.

“VPS has gone through a metamorphosis over the past five years,” says Arnot. “We changed how we serve and advocate for our community and we wanted a fresh, new look that reflected our journey.”

### Virtual events for Pride 2020

A week-long events lineup has also been revealed for Virtual Pride 2020. Highlights of this year’s festival include a Virtual Pride Parade Stream, a dedicated day of queer weddings at Vancouver City Hall, and a Pride edition of the Public Disco.

VPS is also partnering with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra to produce a talent show, as well as with the Vancouver Writers Festival to produce a queer Writers Showcase.

Additionally, a Downtown Pride Art Walk will take place from July 20 to August 3.

Pride can not be cancelled,” Arnot emphasizes. “Only reimagined.”

**PRIDE**  
vancouver  
pride  
society

**Our Story of Change**

Click [HERE](#) to read their Story of Change

Look for more information on their new [website](#) in early June



## How to Make a No-Sew Face Mask with At Home Materials

Canada's chief public health officer has recommended Canadians wear non-medical face masks when maintaining a two-metre distance isn't possible. Masks should be worn on transit, in stores and in areas where people are gathered.

If you would like to make a fabric face mask, but don't have a sewing machine, here are [5 ways](#) to make a no-sew face mask with materials you can find at home (such as bandanas and hair ties).

## 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](mailto:barbf@mclarenhousing.org) by noon on Fridays.



## Black Bean Salsa *Makes 3 cups*

- 1 (398ml) can black beans rinsed & drained
- 1 medium bell pepper seeded & diced
- 1/2 cup (125ml) corn kernels (thawed if frozen)
- 1/4 cup (50ml) diced red onion
- 2 garlic cloves chopped fine

- 1/2 cup (125ml) finely chopped cilantro
- 1/4 cup (50ml) fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons (30ml) extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

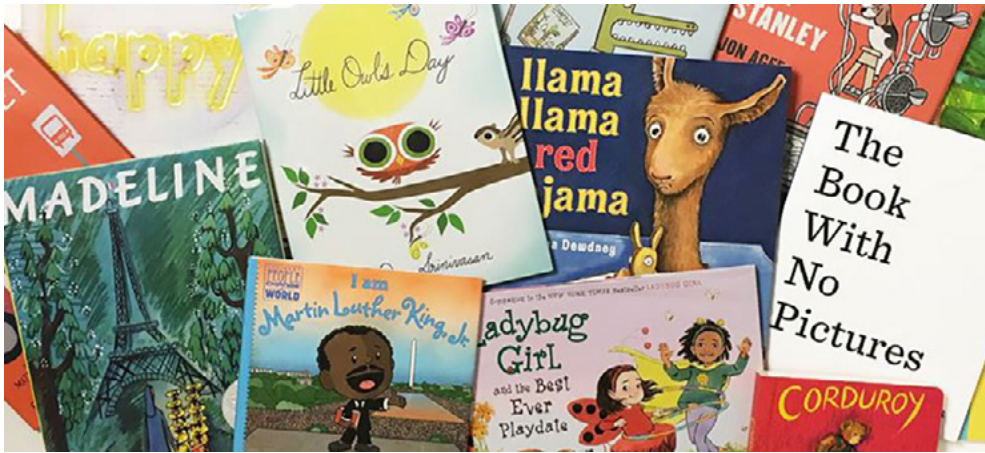
**Mix in these delicious additions and turn it into a salad:**

- Avocado • Cherry Tomatoes
- Spinach or Mixed Greens

### Instructions:

In a medium bowl, combine beans, red pepper, corn, onion, garlic and cilantro. Combine lime juice and oil, stir into bean mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste. Chill





## Free activities for kids

### YMCA kids and youth sports:

The YMCA is offering [free video tutorials](#) for kids and youth to keep them engaged in sports and fitness while in isolation with their families. They also offer yoga for kids along with breathing exercises.

### At-home learning:

Scholastic is offering [online project tutorials](#) for kids and pre-teens to keep them busy and learning during this period.

### Museum, parks and zoo tours:

Several museums are offering virtual

tours allowing kids to visit the museum from the safety of their homes. Canadian museums, zoos and parks such as the Royal Ontario Museum, the Canadian Museum of History, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Calgary Zoo, Banff National Park, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and the Art Gallery of Ontario all offer virtual visits on their websites.

### Virtual live-readings and storytime:

Publisher PenguinKids is offering live-readings of children's books on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

## Safe Seniors, Strong Communities

BC has expanded the 211 service to connect seniors with volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic to be staffed 24 hours a day with a live operator.

If you are a senior (65+) who is looking for volunteer services OR if you are someone wanting to volunteer to help seniors in need you can register by simply **dialing 2-1-1** or filling in an online form at [www.bc211.ca](http://www.bc211.ca)

The program matches seniors who need support with non-medical essentials, to volunteers in their community who are willing to help.



### Available services include:

- Grocery shopping and delivery
- Meal preparation and delivery
- Prescription pickup and delivery
- Phone and/or virtual friendly visits

## Sex in the time of COVID-19: Insights from the sexual health sector

Leading voices in sexual health speak about how their organizations are meeting the needs of people looking for guidance on sex—both online and in person—in the time of COVID-19. Watch the webinar [HERE](#)

## 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](#)

**AIDS Vancouver** – visit the AIDS Vancouver [website](#) to register for the supplementary grocery program, contact case managers if you need support or to use the online HIV Helpline.

**BC Centre for Disease Control** – Find information about HIV and COVID-19, how to protect yourself and your community [HERE](#)



## Do you need support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

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