



**OPEN HOUSE
MINISTRIES**
We're a family shelter

Connections

October 2020

SHELTER UPDATE: EDUCATION

School is in Session at OHM

Open House Ministries has been busy this fall with changes for school aged children. Delayed reentry to classrooms in our local school district due to COVID-19 has brought new challenges to our campus, adding new opportunities to grow. Our wonderful staff has been transforming the third floor of the McClaskey Family Resource Center into study areas and learning stations for students of all ages. Tables are spaced in sections, grouping kindergarden, middle school, and high school students.

"It's been a challenge to get all the kids up and going with Zoom meetings from different schools," stated Vikkilyn Rolfs, the student resource center aide. "I'm so grateful to all the parents who can be with their kids and help them navigate the process."

Children have been given their own cubbies for supplies on the third floor while they're in the study space, keeping everyone safe and working efficiently. Staff members have worked hard to make the space welcoming, creating a school-like atmosphere for children to work in with

classroom structure. Each morning starts with the pledge of allegiance before students settle in. There are educational charts and maps posted around the room and break areas have been arranged for students to relax in.

We appreciate your support and we know our children are grateful to have a student resource center equipped to keep their education on track. They are looking forward to returning to their on-campus schools and friends but until that time they are all moving forward and learning through local school district programs.

Thank you for your prayers for the families and children at Open House Ministries as they make these difficult adjustments. We know many are going through the same struggle, doing their best to balance daily commitments with school demands. Giving these children the opportunity to continue with their education while they stay at the shelter is one more way Open House Ministries is serving families and the greater Vancouver community.



Parents are working closely with their children, helping with classroom connections in the new learning center.

Diapers and a Dinosaur

Sometimes unusual things happen at Open House Ministries. We were blessed last month by a caravan pulling up to the Kendall Resident House, decorated in balloons and packed full of diapers for our resident babies.

Staff and residents watched as cars and vans parked all along 12th street, drawing attention from people in the neighborhood. When the doors opened and the diaper brigade began, a very funny member of their group popped out and surprised our kids. We were entertained as this large character took his place, passing boxes of diapers through the line and up the steps of the resident house.

It was a welcome sight as box after box stacked up on our doorsteps, and we are grateful knowing our pantry is well stocked with this necessity for our families. The dinosaur then made rounds, keeping a safe distance, and created a silly moment for the kids before everyone in the brigade piled in their cars and moved onto their next destination.

Open House Ministries has been blessed many times this year by caring organizations sharing their gifts, time and talent with us. I want to thank Crossroads Community Church for giving so generously to our families. We know how much it means to have basic needs taken care of and the impact of giving is deeply felt by our residents.

Thank you for praying for the residents, volunteers, and staff at Open House Ministries. There are many challenges for each family in the house, and your prayers are felt as we grow in faith and trust in Jesus. Please stay safe.

Blessings,

Renee Stevens

Renee Stevens

Executive Director

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.

~ Psalms 126:3



Members of the Crossroads Community Church delivered diapers with their funny dinosaur.

TAX-WISE GIVING

If you are 70 1/2 or older, you can give your required minimum distribution (RMD), or any amount up to \$100,000 from your IRA as a tax-free rollover gift and help provide life changing housing for homeless families in the Vancouver area. Consult your financial representative.

Call Ross or Jean at 360-737-0300 or email ross.merriitt@sheltered.org with any questions and more details.

Please consider Open House Ministries in your will or trust.

SHELTER NEEDS

- Clorox wipes and hand soap
- Lysol disinfecting spray
- Canned and boxed non-perishable foods
- Bulk school supplies • Socks and underwear for men, women, and children

Thank You!



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