



El Cajon Collaborative Council
November 3rd, 2009 Meeting Notes

Meeting Purpose: *To engage service-delivery staff and community members in resource sharing, networking, and action to benefit the children, youth and families of the El Cajon Community.*

- I. Pam Toohey, facilitated introductions and began the meeting with updates on the following collaborative activities:
 - The Thursday “Be Well” classes have been postponed due to low attendance. Lea is looking for additional locations which might be interested in hosting a health/wellness class.
 - The Newcomer Support Workgroup meets this Thursday, November 5th at 10:30, at the Cajon Valley USD offices. The workgroup has been focusing on the lack of ESL resources available for newcomers and on planning more education opportunities for newcomers. Importantly, there is a Summit on Refugee Education and Employment on Friday, November 6th from 9-12 which is a very important event for anyone who is interested in seeing more resources dedicated to newcomer services in our area.
 - Community Services for Families (CSF) program reported 26 voluntary and 17 prevention cases as well as need for food and clothing resources.

II. Presentation – Food for Families on a Budget

Tami Gaines from the County of San Diego, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) shared information and answered questions on how to apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). She noted that to apply you can call (866) 262-9881 or go into the County Family Resource Center at 220 S. First Street in El Cajon – at the beginning of the month they often have very high call volume as well as towards the end of the month. They have seen a 38% increase in applications since last year.

It was also noted that the staff from Neighborhood Healthcare can go to a location and help someone apply for food stamps and other public assistance programs. See the Council contact list for contact information.

Corey Russo from the Golden SHARE Foods program shared information about his once a month food distribution program which is also available at www.goldensharefoods.com. The program accepts food stamps and generally saves about 50% on food costs from normal grocery store purchases. They have a Thanksgiving package available this month for only \$36 which provides turkey, stuffing, rolls, potatoes, apples, pumpkin pie, onions and more. They rely on host sites for distribution and are always looking for more host sites.

III. Community Announcements, Resource Sharing & Other News

Alex Limon from Motivating the Teen Spirit announced two opportunities to see her program in action, coming up this weekend. More information is available on the organization website www.motivatingtheteenspirit.com

Mike McKay from Catholic Charities shared that he works with refugee resettlement services, which offers assistance to newly arrived refugees with public assistance, employment, cultural orientation and housing. Last year approximately 5,000 refugees came into San Diego County and about 4,100 of them were from Iraq. Most of the Iraqi refugees are settling in the East County area.

Community Announcements, Resource Sharing & Other News - continued

Romalyn Watson of the East Region HHSA shared that there is a flu clinic on Thursday, November 5th in El Cajon from 9-3pm at the Ronald Reagan Community Center. They will be administering seasonal flu and H1N1 flu vaccine (pregnant women, children, caregivers and healthcare workers only) for free to the community.

Brenna Ring of the Rancho San Diego Library announced a water wise gardening workshop and other events, like a edible book contest and a homework workshop in English and Arabic. Additionally, she shared information on events at the El Cajon library branch including their 2nd Saturday series which will feature Persian cooking in November and a social gathering in December. More information on all library events can be found at www.sdcl.org.

Erica Nagy of the El Cajon Community Development Corporation (CDC) announced their November Saturday Clean-Up on the 14th from 9-11AM and the upcoming El Cajon Parade of Lights in December.

Scarlett Seals of the Redwood Head Start program shared information about their low-income preschool program for 3 and 4 year olds. Admission is based on the needs and circumstances of the family and they do offer some home based education support services.

Susan of the East County Career Center announced they now have a satellite office in the Spring Valley library. They have an upcoming event where job seekers will have the opportunity to hear more from potential businesses and network. More information can be found at www.eccc.guhds.net.

Gwen Johnson of the Bethlehem Food Pantry noted that they are having a fundraiser at Rubio's in El Cajon on Saturday, November 14th. She passed out fliers that are needed.

Amber Johnson from FamNet San Diego announced that their FamilyPalooza event is this Saturday, November 7th in the downtown El Cajon Prescott Promenade.

Julie Eramo from CASA shared that at their recent prescription drug take back day they gathered old prescription drugs from about 30-40 different individuals.

Officer Dan Hansen of the El Cajon Police Department announced the opportunity to outreach to the community in partnership with the Police Department at their upcoming Operation Silent Night. They are renting a space at the Westfield Parkway Plaza and expecting about 3,000 individuals to come through. They are offering the space to community groups to come in and present information and do outreach! Contact Dan Hansen to participate!

Rocio Abarca of Neighborhood Healthcare shared that First 5 of San Diego has made free dental health services available to children and pregnant women who do not have dental insurance. Check with your local health clinic or the Neighborhood Healthcare dental clinic in Lakeside for more information.

Next Meeting: POTLUCK! December 1st, 2009

