

February, 2012

# Child & Youth Development Services

## TREASURING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

By Susan Neufeld (Director of Child & Youth Development, HTHF)

I remember when I interviewed for my position with Hope Through Housing Foundation. I had worked in after school programming for about 8 years and thought the position with Hope would be familiar territory for me. Admittedly, I was interested but not necessarily excited about making what I thought would be a lateral move.

Ten minutes into my first meeting with George Searcy (Executive Director for Hope), that all changed. Hope was different: they offered after school programs where children and families live. On site of the apartment communities! In the heart of neighborhoods where free services are needed! All I could think was “this is super cool and I really want this job.”

Five years later, working in the hearts of neighborhoods still inspires me. By being where kids live, we have the opportunity to build solid relationships with families, create community, and help kids see their surroundings differently. We have the chance to help them discover the assets in their neighborhood: that there are people and places that are good, inspiring, and supportive.

The theme of February is Treasuring Your Neighborhood. In this newsletter, you'll get ideas for exploring your surroundings and seeing the positive in your communities.

Here's an easy start: next time you pull up to the learning center, stand outside for 2 minutes. Ask what good you see: who is there? What is happening? What are people doing? Chances are you'll quickly have a fresh perspective: the grass is green. Kids are smiling. Parents are chatting. Good things are happening...things that deserve to be recognized and treasured. Have fun!



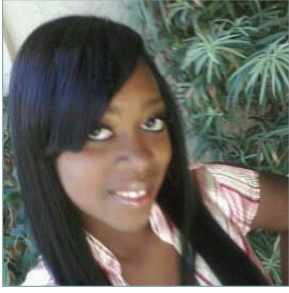
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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Peace Corner: Peace in my Community
- Idea Corner: Love is in the Air
- Tools of the Trade: Flawless Homework Time
- Get info about our upcoming trainings as well as how to earn a Rocker Coin or two

## MEET OUR STAR STAFF



Denisha Bennett

Congratulations, Denisha Bennett!  
(Program Staff at Citrus Grove in Rialto, CA)

This month's star staff focus is Team Spirit. Denisha has shown her team spirit consistently since she has joined us by making herself available to go wherever the team needs her. Her willingness to help out other sites as a substitute when they are in need has been incredibly supportive and helpful. For that, we are grateful and want to give a big THANK YOU and YOU ROCK!!

Get to know Denisha:

- Favorite color: **PINK**
- Favorite food: Mexican
- Favorite/Dream Vacation: Bahamas
- What she is most proud of: Her 3-year old son

Her favorite part about working with youth: Making a difference in their lives whether it is just a smile or a pat on their backs.

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*“Children are great imitators. So give them something great to imitate.”  
- Anonymous*

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### PEACE CORNER

#### Peace in My Community

- Have youth write praise notes to property management staff, take photos and display them on the praise board in the leasing office.
- Ask property management staff to provide a list of things that youth can help out with around the property.
- Have youth make cards for seniors at a local senior property. Hand deliver them if possible.
- Walk to a local park and pick up trash— don't forget some gloves!
- Go to your local city hall and find out if there are any community service projects your site can get involved in.

-Submitted by Lamar Simmons & Debra Viola

### PEACE BUILDERS SPOTLIGHT

Bravo Mobile Home Park, Riverside, CA

The staff at Bravo have been working hard to teach their youth how to be Peace Builders. They recently did an activity where groups of youth did skits that portrayed non-peace building behavior. The other youth watching the skit then had the opportunity to suggest alternative behaviors based on the Peace Builders skills they have learned. What a great way to practice those Peace Builder principles! The more practice youth have, the more likely they are to exhibit those behaviors in their everyday actions and conversations.

Paula Reynolds, Site Coordinator at Bravo, has identified some Peace Builders out in the community to visit her site. Miles of Smiles, a charitable dental organization, will be coming out to the site to do free dental exams with the youth and talk about the importance of good dental hygiene.

In addition, the Bravo After School Program regularly promotes community involvement through their many events held throughout the year. In the photos below, you can see the smiling faces at their recent Taco Tuesday Event. Way to keep the peace Bravo!



Bravo Peace Builders!



Youth at Bravo working together

# A TOUR OF HOPE

## EISENHOWER AFTER HOURS

Submitted by Laura Fitzpatrick (Coordinator of Program & Staff Development, HTHF)

Eisenhower High School is home to our 21st Century ASSETS- funded High School after school program. The program, currently in its fourth year, serves on average about 110 high school students a day. Dominique Johnson, Program Coordinator of the High School program, and his staff work hard to provide a variety of opportunities and resources to support the success of students. It is important to the staff that students not only do well academically, but also develop positive social and life skills.

To support academics, the program provides students with resources, such as text books, internet access and school supplies to study and complete their homework. Staff are available to assist students with their work and are able to provide a list of teachers who tutor after school for those who need additional help. Four teachers are hired to provide tutoring for the male and female athletes on campus. Dominique and his team, along with the National Association of Peer Counseling Advisory, are particularly excited about being able to provide peer to peer tutoring for students in the program beginning this semester.

In addition to the academic support offered students, there are a variety of extra-curricular activities to meet the needs and interests of the students. Extra-curricular activities provide creative outlets to students as well as provide a place to develop skills and talents outside the classroom. Activities include Ballet Folklorico (Hispanic Folk Dance), Filmmaking, Eisenhower Radio, Hip Hop Theatre, Student Internships and Culinary Arts with Food Handler's Certificate. The Student Internship Program is an opportunity that Hope Through Housing is particularly proud of. Students who participate in this activity spend several hours a week at our Citrus Grove After School Program for K-8th grade students. The Eisenhower students are able to provide staff and youth with much needed support while gaining experience in an actual workplace and earning additional class credits.

Watching the students who participate in program grow and succeed provides all the fuel staff need to continue to come up with new and exciting ideas. Dominique says, "students have built stronger relationships with staff and are able to better communicate and share their problems, accomplishments, and stories. Student's behavior has improved along with their sense of accountability pertaining to their academics." Developing deeper relationships with students allows staff to better tailor programs and activities to fit the needs of the youth. Hope through Housing is proud and excited to see this program continue to grow and provide unique opportunities to Rialto's high school youth.



Above: IKE Dance Team performing.



Right Top: Students enjoying a snack and getting some work done on the computers.



Right Bottom: Dominique Johnson and staff Kim Wingson advertising the program during lunch.

## IDEA CORNER

### Love is in the Air

- Butterfly Love @ [crafts.kaboose.com/valentines-day-crafts.html](http://crafts.kaboose.com/valentines-day-crafts.html)



- Play Steal My Heart– fill a bowl with large and small conversation candy hearts, give 3-5 players each a pair of chopsticks then give them 1-3 minutes to steal as many hearts as possible, give 1 point for the large hearts & 2 points for the small! [squidoo.com/valentine-party-games](http://squidoo.com/valentine-party-games)

- Curtain of Hearts– have youth write praises for their peers @ [family-fun.go.com/valentines-day](http://family-fun.go.com/valentines-day)



- Tootsie-Pop Butterfly Cards @ [sheknows.com/holidays-and-seasons](http://sheknows.com/holidays-and-seasons)



- Enjoy a tasty banana boat for snack @ [parenting.com/article/fun-banana-boat-dessert](http://parenting.com/article/fun-banana-boat-dessert)



## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

### Flawless Homework Time

Here are some tips and ideas to help at homework time

- Consider utilizing assigned seating during HW time. This allows you to group youth by grade level, attention level, or for behavior management purposes.
- Create HW Supply Boxes—fill them with everything youth need to complete their HW (crayons, pencils, rulers, erasers, protractors, etc.) and place one at each table.
- Implement silent minutes—for the first 10 minutes of HW youth may not talk or ask questions.
- Use help tags— one side says “stop,” the other: “go.” This enables youth to keep working while signaling for help.



- Write 3-4 “choice activities” on the board. These are the only options for youth who are finished or don’t have HW. Note— they should be varied, but not too enticing !
- Hold a mini lesson when several youth are struggling with the same concept.

## NEIGHBORHOOD TREASURES

### A COMMUNITY SCAVENGER HUNT

All sites who complete their community scavenger hunt will be entered into a raffle for one of 2- \$100 Discount School Supply shopping sprees for their site! The deadline to enter is Friday February 24th. The winners will be announced in the March Newsletter. All tasks must be completed to enter, including submission of photos where noted.

1. How many adults live on your property?
2. How many kids live on your property?
3. How far away and where is the library located?
4. Create a map of your neighborhood that shows a 1/2 mile circumference with your property at the center. Label important businesses and/or community buildings. Take a photo of your creation.
5. Collect a leaf from 7 different trees in your neighborhood. Take a photo of your leaves.
6. What is the closest retail store?
7. Collect a flyer for the next community event your city is putting on. Fax or email with submission.
8. How many steps is it from the door of your site to the sidewalk?
9. How far away is the nearest bus stop and where are 3 places you can go on the bus?
10. Take a photo that represents the best thing about your community.
11. Take a photo of something you’d like to improve in your community.
12. How many parks are in your community?
13. Explore your community’s website and list 5 things you learned.
14. Fill in the blank: We love our community because\_\_\_\_\_.

## UPCOMING PROGRAM EVENTS

You are cordially invited

Sweetheart Dinner @ Monterey Village: February 9th from 5:30-7:00pm  
Pasta dinner and a special Valentine’s dessert

A City of Love @ Rancho Verde Village: February 14th from 4:00-6:00pm  
This is a Peace Builder’s Event. We’ll be making Valentine’s grams for the elderly

Valentine’s Day Party @ La Quinta: February 14th from 5:00-6:00pm  
Come join us for goodies and Valentine’s fun

Valentine’s Party @ Renaissance Village: February 17th from 3:00-5:00pm  
Valentine’s crafts and Chocolate Marshmallow Lollipops

Valentine’s BINGO Party @ Bravo: February 24th from 6:00pm– 8:00pm  
\$2 BINGO Cards + Food and Prizes

I Scream You Scream, We All Scream For Ice Cream!  
@ Impressions at Valley Center:  
February 24th at 2:30pm  
Come enjoy an Ice Cream bar and watch Charlie and the Chocolate Factory



# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ALL YEAR LONG

## IDEAS TO STAY INVOLVED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

### January

- Organize a coat drive in which old coats are donated for use by those in need

### February

- Volunteer to return shopping carts during return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month
- Make a New Kid Survival Kit for youth who start school or program mid-year

### March

- On Johnny Appleseed Day, deliver apples to homeless shelters
- On Saint Patrick's Day, don't just wear something green, plant something green



*“If you want children to keep their feet on the ground, put some responsibility on their shoulders.”*

*- Abigail Van Buren*

### April

- Conduct an Easter Egg Hunt for the young children in your community
- Work with seniors or other residents to help them with chores on National Youth Service Day

### May

- Deliver May Day Baskets to seniors in the community
- Plan a memorial day program for the community

### June

- Get rid of June Gloom and brighten up someone's day by delivering flowers

### July

- During National Cheer-Up day, share smiles and cheer as many people up as you can
- Stay hydrated. Deliver water bottles to those who spend the day working in the sun

### August

- Donate school supplies to those in need during Back to School Month
- Extend friendship to someone new on Friendship Day

### September

- Thank your community for their hard work, plan a Pasta Party

### October

- Make Halloween Safety Kits and deliver them to youth in the community
- Work with RSTs to plan a community clean up day on Big Help Day in October

### November

- Recognize Veterans in your community by making thank you cards

### December

- Contact a local tree farm about donating a Christmas tree to a nursing home, homeless shelter or needy family and decorate it
- Go caroling around the community or a local senior center



## IMPORTANT DATES

2/7- Site Coordinator Meeting

2/9- Homework Help Webinar;  
1pm-2:30pm

2/10- Peace Builders Training @  
Paseo de Oro;  
9am-1pm

2/17- All Staff Training @ Rancho  
Verde Village; 1pm-  
5pm

2/20- President's Day Holiday

2/24- KidzLit & Virtual Vacations  
Training @ Paseo de  
Oro; 9am-1pm

\*Bring your Staff Binder to the All  
Staff Training on the 17th & get a  
Rocker Coin!



## FEBRUARY FUN FACTS

Flower: Violet and Iris  
Stone: Amethyst  
February is: Plant the Seeds of Greatness Month  
National Bird Feeding Month  
Potato Lover's Month  
Return Shopping Carts to the  
Supermarket Month  
Days of Interest: 2- Sneeze Day  
7- Greet Your Neighbor Day  
14- Ferris Wheel Day  
15- Susan B. Anthony Day  
20- Love Your Pet Day  
21- Mardi Gras  
23- Tennis Day



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HOPE through HOUSING  
FOUNDATION

## TRAINING LOCATIONS

### Rancho Verde Village

8837 Grove Avenue  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
Parking: Any uncovered spot

### Villaggio on Route 66

10220 Foothill Boulevard  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
Parking: Any uncovered spot

### Paseo de Oro

432 West Mission Road  
San Marcos, CA 92069  
Parking: East Lot, staff spots or West  
Lot, 90 minute parking (we allow  
breaks to move cars if necessary)