



*A Community Action Partnership. Helping people. Changing lives.*

## From the Executive Director, Larry Eyer



Low-income families in Kitsap County face many challenges. For many, one of the greatest right now is homelessness. We have seen a sharp rise in requests for emergency housing in the past six months. Even though we have increased our capacity to house families at KCR, the need far surpasses our available resources. There are over one hundred families currently waiting for shelter. Complicating the problem is that funding for services has been reduced by several funding sources.

We very much appreciate our community partners—One Church One Family, Bremerton Housing Authority, Kitsap County Consolidated Housing Authority, Olympic College, Kitsap County and South Kitsap Altrusa Club—each of whom are working with us on new and creative ways to serve homeless families. These organizations have helped us to extend services well beyond what we could do otherwise.

## KCR Partners with Olympic College to Assist Students in Need

In addition to providing new students with program brochures and attending the Health Fair at Olympic College, KCR is also involved in the “Students in Need Group” (SING), which is addressing economic and housing issues that students face. Students are experiencing difficulties paying for childcare, transportation, and even food, as more students are turning to food banks to meet their needs.

Professors and counselors are hearing of homeless students living in their cars or at campsites. Olympic College’s Vice-President of Student Services, Rick MacLennan, hopes to remove as many barriers as possible for these students, so that they can focus on the most important issue: their education.



Rick MacLennan leads the SING meeting.  
Image Courtesy of *The Olympian*

## KCR ECEAP Participates in “Life of Preschooler” Pilot Project

The Department of Early Learning is working with the Talaris Institute of Seattle to distribute 150 “Life with Preschooler” kits to ECEAP (Early Childhood and Education Program) families in a pilot project to test its effectiveness. KCR’s ECEAP locations at Almira and Silverdale were selected as participants. Each kit includes a parenting guide and video, a children’s book entitled *The Way I Feel*, a child’s backpack, a child’s apron that says “I’m Ready to...be Creative,” rhyming cards puzzle, and an “I can do it!” growth and activity chart with stickers. ECEAP parents also receive a weekly flyer, which highlights one of the components in the kit and have the opportunity to discuss how they are using the kits with their children at home.



Image Courtesy of the Talaris Institute

## Energy Assistance Receives Additional Funding from LIHEAP and Puget Sound Energy

This heating season KCR anticipates serving more than 3,000 low-income families with energy assistance. Services include a once-per-year credit or payment to help pay heating costs, energy conservation education, and in some circumstances, repair or replacement of furnaces or homelessness prevention assistance. The need for energy assistance is clearly higher this year. Thus far this season, all home heating fuel costs have been up. It is unclear when recent lower oil prices will result in lower home heating costs. Both Puget Sound Energy and Congress, through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, have increased the amounts of energy assistance available to serve Kitsap households this year. KCR is also trying new techniques, such as web appointments, to serve families in need faster.



# KCR REPORTS

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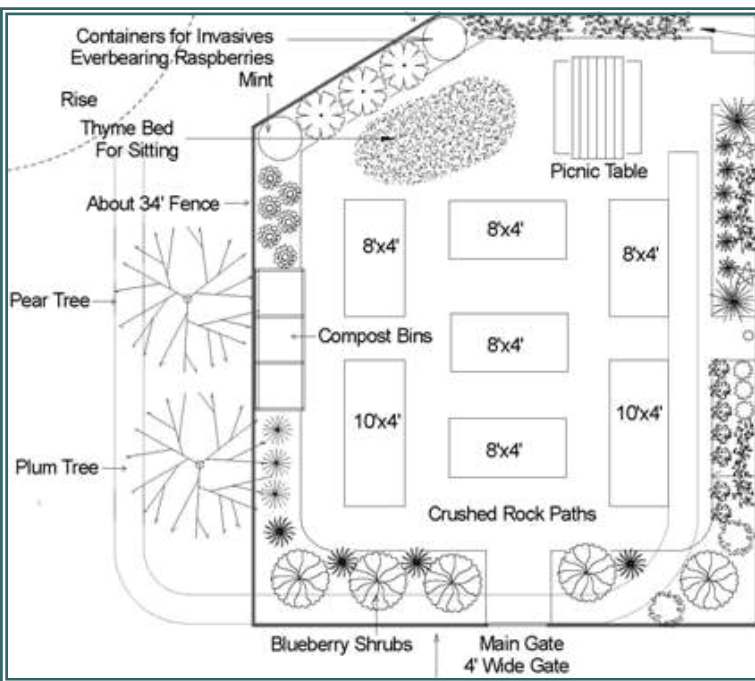
## WIC Nutrition Program Sees Increase in Caseload

KCR's WIC (Women, Infant, and Children) Nutrition program has seen a significant increase of over 300 new clients per month served who are benefiting from healthy nutrition habits, breast-feeding education, access to health services, and vouchers for foods. WIC brings over \$3.2 million into Kitsap County's grocery stores and local farmers. Close to 50% of all infants born in the county receive assistance from WIC programs.

Studies have shown that women who participate in the program during pregnancy have lower Medicaid costs for themselves and their babies. Plus, WIC participation is linked with longer gestation periods, higher birth weights, and lower infant mortality.

## Head Start Students to Benefit from Urban Garden at 1201 Park

Volunteers and KCR staff are joining together to build the Hungry Caterpillar Garden, which will allow Head Start children and families to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables. Students will also learn about the ins-and-outs of gardening, tasty recipes, and the nutritional benefits of eating fresh produce. Donations of compost, top soil, and other garden items are being accepted. Please call 360-473-2090.



## Bake Sale and Bazaar

Saturday Dec. 6  
9 am - 2 pm

First Lutheran Community Church in Port Orchard  
Sponsored by the Women of First Lutheran Community Church, part of the proceeds benefit KCR



KCR's Christmas Angel program has set up a tree at the Kitsap Mall where families can select a child or family to sponsor for Christmas gift donations.

## Your Helping Hand this Holiday Season

In this season of giving, don't forget your neighbors in need. KCR works hard to leverage every dollar we receive to maximize our efficiency while we stay focused on our mission. Our donors make the difference by allowing us to remain committed to implementing high impact strategies.

Hopefully you received a letter asking for your support. If not, you can always donate online at [www.kcr.org](http://www.kcr.org) or call 360-473-2003.

Your contributions benefit our clients - our children, youth, adults and seniors - struggling through economic and personal hardships. Thank you for your continued support.

## Web Site Redesign Launches

Visit our newly redesigned web site at [www.kcr.org](http://www.kcr.org), which features:

- Video in which program participants share their experience with KCR
- News articles that highlight the latest happenings within KCR
- Detailed program information
- About Us – detailing our history and leadership
- Community Resources