



August 2011

Newsletter

Family and Home Ownership Program

Make the decision to begin planning to own your own home! Enroll in the Family and Home Ownership Program today to start working with a staff member of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority.

Once enrolled in the Family and Home Ownership Program, participants can expect to meet with a staff member of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority who will assist them in setting realistic goals that will help prepare them to purchase a home. Examples of these goals are credit repair counseling, creating and maintaining a household budget, locating and maintaining employment, reliable transportation, and more!

To qualify for this program, you must currently be receiving Section 8 rental assistance through the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority, or currently be residing in a Public Housing unit, owned by the Housing Authority.

For more information regarding this program, please contact Carl Reimer at either (563) 556-4166 or (800) 942-4648.

Regional Transit Authority

Did you know that the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) provides rides for jobs, daycare, school, groups, and medical appointment transportation?

The RTA provides service to the cities and rural areas of Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson Counties. Many cities have daily service within their jurisdiction as well as commuting to other areas, while other communities have service several times per week. The RTA schedule can be flexible to meet a consumer's needs. All of the RTA services are based on the demand of its consumers. RTA vehicles are equipped to accommodate the general public, including children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Transportation is provided to Dubuque, Iowa City, Coralville, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, and the Quad Cities. These destinations must meet minimum ridership guidelines, so advance preparation is suggested to ensure that enough riders are available. The cost of rides vary depending on the destination.

While many riders receive assistance with their RTA fees, you do not need to qualify financially in any way to utilize the services of RTA. RTA services are available to all persons of all income levels. If you feel you need assistance with your RTA fees, contact the RTA for additional information on how to access assistance services and agencies by calling 1-800-839-5005.

if you have questions about anything contained in this newsletter, please contact:

Jenny Schrobilgen, Housing Coordinator
at 563.556.4166 or toll-free at 1.800.942.4648

Mindy Wiley, Family Support Coordinator
at 563.588.1963 or toll-free at 1.877.588.1963

Mindy Meyers, Family Support Coordinator
at 563.556.5013 or toll-free at 1.877.656.5013



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Self-Sufficiency Programs

The Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority has a Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) for persons on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, as well as for persons living in the EIRHA's Public Housing units.

On the Family Self-Sufficiency program, participants create several goals with an FSS Coordinator to help reach the goals in their lives.

Examples of these goals could include:

- Finding employment
- Obtaining a GED
- Locating daycare assistance
- Improving credit scores
- Budgeting finances
- Working toward home ownership

Not only do FSS program participants benefit from working toward the goals in their lives, there is a possible financial incentive as well.

For more information or to enroll in the FSS program please call Mindy Meyers at (563) 556-5013 or 877-656-5013 or Mindy Wiley at (563) 588-1963 or 877-588-1963 if you are on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. If you are a resident at EIRHA's Public Housing units contact Jenny Schrobilgen at (563) 556-4166 or (800) 942-4648.

Resident Advisory Board

One of the goals of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) is to have more Public Housing residents involved in the Resident Advisory Board. On this board, members are given an opportunity to voice their opinions on the types of activities EIRHA provides for tenants, and to voice any concerns related to EIRHA. For more information call Jenny Schrobilgen at (563) 556-4166 or (800) 942-4648.

Activities for the Elderly/Disabled

The Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) is currently in the planning stages for the fall potlucks for Public Housing residents who are currently residing in the elderly/disabled complexes owned by the Housing Authority. If you currently reside in a complex for the elderly and/or disabled owned by the EIRHA, watch your mail for an invitation to the next scheduled fall potluck!

Community Service

HUD PIH Notice 2003-17 requires all non-exempt adult Public Housing residents to participate in eight hours of community service and/or economic self sufficiency activities per month. Exempt residents include those over the age of 62, disabled individuals, working individuals, and those in compliance with the requirements of a state FIP (welfare) program.

Staff of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority have contacted affected households and are monitoring their activity for compliance.

Tenant Protection

Are you protected by renter's insurance? If not, EIRHA urges you to consider purchasing a policy. Renter's insurance can provide protection for your personal property along with personal liability protection. Policies can be inexpensive, especially when combined with other insurance policies, such as automobile insurance. You can obtain a variety of quotes by visiting the following website: www.answerfinancial.com. You can also check your local yellow pages for insurance agencies. By shopping around, you can find the best policy for your needs.

Public Pool Safety Tips

If you are not comfortable with any of the following conditions, talk to pool management or plan your outing for another day or location.

- Is there a lifeguard on duty? Are there enough lifeguards to observe every area of the pool?
- Do you see rescue equipment easily accessible and in good working order? A shepherd's hook and life preserver with line are required to assist in getting a distressed swimmer to the side of the pool.
- Is there a phone in clear view? It will be needed in case of emergency.
- Are water safety rules posted in a conspicuous place and are the rules enforced?
- Are there any tripping hazards in the pool area?
- Is the general cleanliness of the bathrooms and locker rooms up to your standards?
- Is the pool water clear or cloudy? Can you see the drain at the bottom of the pool? If not, it could be an indicator the water quality is questionable.

Information from: www.parenthood.com

The Residents' Corner

Heat-Related Illnesses

No matter where you live, it's important to recognize the real dangers of extreme heat and take action to offset its impact at its earliest stages.

- Severe sunburn: sunburn reduces the skin's ability to release excess heat, making the body more susceptible to heat-related illness
- Heat cramps: muscle pains and spasms caused by heavy exertion, which triggers heavy perspiration. These usually involve the muscles of the abdomen or legs
- Heat exhaustion: a mild form of shock marked by heaving sweating, weakness, cold and clammy skin, a weak pulse, fainting and vomiting. This usually occurs when people have been exercising heavily or working in a warm humid place. Blood flow to the skin increases – in an attempt to cool the body – causing blood flow to vital organs to decrease
- Heat Stroke: a truly life-threatening condition in which the body's internal thermostat has ceased to work. The ability to sweat stops, and the body's temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may occur in 10-15 minutes unless medical help is immediate.

Information from: www.weather.com and www.osha.gov

What to do if there is a Tornado

Summer is upon us and that means severe weather from time to time. Plan ahead with these tips in case a tornado watch or warning is issued for your area:

Prepare a Home Tornado Plan

- Pick a place where family members could gather if a tornado is headed your way. It could be your basement or, if there is no basement, a center hallway, bathroom, or closet on the lowest floor. Keep this place uncluttered.
- If you are in a high-rise building, you may not have enough time to go to the lowest floor. Pick a place in a hallway in the center of the building.

Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit Containing:

- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Canned food and can opener.
- At least three gallons of water per person.
- Protective clothing, bedding, or sleeping bags.
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.

Stay Tuned for Storm Warnings

- Listen to your local radio and TV stations.
- Know what a tornado WATCH and WARNING means:
- A tornado WATCH means a tornado is possible in your area. A tornado WARNING means a tornado has been sighted and may be headed for your area. Go to safety immediately.
- Tornado WATCHES and WARNINGS are issued by county or parish.

When a Tornado WATCH Is Issued...

- Listen to local radio and TV stations for updates.
- Be alert to changing weather conditions. Blowing debris or the sound of an approaching tornado may alert you. Many people say it sounds like a freight train.

When a Tornado WARNING Is Issued...

- If you are inside, go to the safe place you picked to protect yourself from glass and other flying objects. The tornado may be approaching your area.
- If you are outside, hurry to the basement of a nearby sturdy building or lie flat in a ditch or low-lying area.
- If you are in a car or mobile home, get out immediately and head for safety (as above).

After the Tornado Passes...

- Watch out for fallen power lines and stay out of the damaged area.
- Listen to the radio for information and instructions.
- Use a flashlight to inspect your home for damage.
- Do not use candles at any time.

Information from www.redcross.org

The Kid Zone

Back-to-School Checklist

FIRST STEPS

- Find out what day classes start and what time your child should arrive
- Enroll your child (if she is not already registered from the previous year)
- Fill out emergency contact sheets and any other required forms

CHECK MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Make sure your child has all required immunizations
- Schedule a physical/eye exam for your child if needed
- Notify the school about any health problems or medications

STOCK UP ON SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Check the school website or call for a list of required supplies

- Buy a backpack or bag to carry daily items
- Review the school dress code

LEARN ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Find out whether the teacher prefers to communicate by phone, e-mail, or written note
- Know what your child is expected to learn in her grade level
- Familiarize yourself with the information on the school website
- Note the phone numbers for checking school closures or reporting absences
- Find out the procedure for taking your child out of school early

- Read the school handbook and make sure your child understands the rules

PLAN TO BE INVOLVED

- Mark school events on the family calendar
- Attend the back-to-school program
- Schedule and attend parent-teacher conferences
- Meet leaders of the parent-teacher group

PLAN HEALTHY MEALS

- Have nutritious food on hand for breakfast and after-school snacks
- Find out how much school breakfasts and lunches cost
- Find out whether snacks and drinks are available at school or can be brought from home
- Ask where to obtain weekly school lunch menus
- Alert school staff if your child has a severe food allergy

ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION

- Practice getting to school with your child
- Arrange a carpool if necessary
- Compile contact information of parents who can pick up your child in an emergency

MAKE AFTER-SCHOOL PLANS

- Arrange child care or after-school activities
- Choose extracurricular activities carefully to avoid overscheduling
- Make sure your child knows where to go after school each day

HELP YOUR CHILD PREPARE FOR SCHOOL

- Discuss your child's feelings about starting school and talk over any concerns
- Talk with your child about their daily school schedule
- Talk about peer pressure with your child
- Have your child memorize your home address and home and work phone numbers
- Tour the school with your child so she can find her classrooms, the restrooms, and the cafeteria
- Arrange a time for you and your child to meet his new teachers

LAY THE GROUND RULES

- Establish a firm bedtime before school starts
- Determine where and when your child will do homework
- Figure out a plan for balancing homework and play time
- Set rules for the time spent on TV, video games, and computer use for non-school projects

Slushy Mandarin Orange Smoothie

This orange smoothie recipe combines mandarin oranges into a slushy smoothie with a lightly tangy and sweet flavor.

Ingredients:

- 3 mandarin oranges peeled and unseeded
- 1/2 cup of yogurt
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 cup of ice cubes

Directions:

Blend the mandarin oranges with the yogurt, orange juice, and ice cubes until slush mixture is formed. Serve and enjoy!

From: www.smoothie-recipe.com/

