

# Manhattan Community Services

曼哈頓社區服務

Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.  
Manhattan Community Center  
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## APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak and social distancing, CPC Manhattan Community Center is temporarily closed, but our commitment to the community members remains the same. We continue to serve and support our members through telecommunicate, video conferencing, remote training, share resources and up-to-date information, and distribution of pressing need of supplies.

### CPC is Providing Regular Updates on Chinese Radio



CPC wants to ensure our community members are getting important and up-to-date information regarding CPC programs and services during the COVID-19 health crisis. We are providing regular updates in Cantonese at 2:00 pm on AM1480, and in Mandarin at 7:00 pm on AM1380.

CPC Staff members provided updates in Cantonese on Monday at 7:00 pm on AM1480 in the past few weeks; during the broadcast the following topics were discussed:

- Despite the closure of CPC facilities, we continue to serve and support the community online and via phone, Monday through Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
- CPC Little Star Regional Education Center is serving children of the first responders and essential worker, age 2-5 and their siblings up to 11 years old, from 7:30 am – 6:00 pm.
  - The NYC Department of Education is taking online applications at [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/regional-enrichment-centers](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/regional-enrichment-centers)
  - Little Star Center is in Manhattan at 178 Broome Street, phone at 212-941-0920 ext. 165
- CPC Early Childhood Learning & Wellness Services continues to assist connecting parents with infants and toddlers with child care providers.
- CPC Multi-Social Services continues to assist with SNAP applications, housing, Census forms, immigration matters and other governmental entitlement applications. Please call CPC Multi-Social Services at 212-431-7800 for assistance.

## CPC Advocacy in Albany



On February 25, 2020, over 40 CPC staff travelled to Albany to meet with over 50 New York State legislators and staff to discuss issues that impact our programs and communities from Adult Literacy funding, SYEP, New York Health Act, to strong nonprofits, voting rights and more. After a day of fruitful discussion, CPC heard afterwards from many elected officials and allies that CPC and its staff had an impressive and powerful presence. CPC reminded our lawmakers know that we are active in fighting against proposed Medicaid cuts and for everything that our communities need and deserve. Despite this, CPC is disappointed in the FY21 New York City Executive Budget that cuts funding for essential services that would help vulnerable communities and organizations serving these communities sustain and recover from COVID-19. CPC will continue its efforts to fight for issues that support the community it serves.

## CPC Census 2020 Get Out to Count Campaign



CPC staff and volunteers helped with Census 2020 outreach by actively calling the community members to explain the importance of being counted and its impacts on the community. We informed community members to be wary of fraudulent activities masquerading under the Census banner. From March 30 through April 24, CPC Multi-Social Services team successfully reached 380 households, with over 200 completing the census and 161 pledged to complete. The Census has been extended to late October and CPC will continue its outreach efforts with a door knocking campaign in June.

## Asian Family Services



Asian Family Services (AFS) provides multiple levels of services to address Asian families and children's needs by supportive counseling, parenting skills training, and crisis intervention. AFS keep children safe and prevent their entry into foster care system.

The uncertainty of COVID-19 crisis is taking a toll on parents emotionally and physically, and for single parents, is even more overwhelming. AFS received a referral from NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) that a single mother with a young child is in desperate need of help and support. The single mother is managing on her own, unemployed, running out of food and diapers, has very limited internet access, and afraid her child would be place in foster care. She is also afraid to go out because she doesn't have face mask or any other PPE. AFS contacted food pantries and other organizations, and were able to pick up food, diapers, cleaning supplies, and delivered to her. By working together with other departments, AFS helped her to get more data usage from the carrier, applied food stamp and emergency fund. AFS will continue to follow her case and make sure she is receiving the supports that she need.

## Community Health Services



Community Health Services (CHS) offers multiple health services that educate, inspire, and empower healthy outcomes through prevention education, personal responsibility education, workshops on financial literacy, healthy relationships, and healthy life skills.

During the temporary closing of our office, our staff continues to tele-visit community members that are living with HIV/AIDS by checking in with them once week and addresses their needs.

## Remote Workshop on E-cigarette and Vaping

With vaping being the most popular form used among young people, on April 23, CHS along with Learn and Earn Program conducted a remote workshop on E-cigarettes and Nicotine. 17 young adults participated. The purpose of the workshop was to raise awareness and help the participants to make healthy decisions. The workshop focused on what are e-cigarettes, types of e-cigarettes on the market, and what is in e-cigarettes; what kind of chemicals is in e-cigarettes and how nicotine affects the development of the brain. It also talked about how manufactures are keen to attract teens and young adults by marketing vaping as cool and safe and offering a variety of flavors. The workshop generated a very constructive discussion among the participants.

## Early Childhood Learning & Wellness Services



In the midst of COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of family and group family daycare providers are impacted by the lack of attendees, insufficiency of supplies, and closure of programs that threaten them financially and

emotionally. Many providers are devastated by uncertainty of possible long-term program closure, what and when assistance will be available, how to survive and who will guide them. WE, at the Early Childhood Learning & Wellness Services (ECLW) are constantly conducting outreach to our members, to assist their needs, offer words of encouragement and provide guidance.

### Infant and Toddler Mental Health Remote Workshop



On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Amy Eng, Infant Toddler Mental Health Consultant and Program Supervisor of the Early Childhood Learning & Wellness Services, hosted a remote workshop for Grand Street Settlement.

The Infant and Toddler Mental Health Workshop was well received by over 20+ participants. The workshop focused on the mental health of infant and toddler and recognized the interconnectedness between caregiver's mental health and the children.

Amy shared information on the different types of trauma and their effects on children's behavior and highlighted similar behavioral traits that can be confused during diagnosis. She emphasized the importance of understanding children as a whole and provided strategies for staff to stay connected with students during COVID-19 crisis, as it has a direct impact on the families that they serve. She also included DOE and OCFS guidelines for staff to share with families and discussed self-care techniques for staff members to help maintain their own mental health.

Overall, the training received positive feedback. After the workshop, Amy was approached by the Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator and was asked of the possibility of providing remote assistance to their staff members and to support their virtual classrooms.

### Emergency Child Care Project for Essential Workers

#### **A Little Goes a Long Way**

On April 3, New York City mandated all child care centers and school-based programs to close, as a measure to slow the spread of COVID-19. Parents that are essential workers were left with few options to have their children cared for while they worked. Essential workers are heroes who maintain a little glimpse of order during this chaos. CPC Early Childhood Learning & Wellness Services (ECLW) is prepared and ready to offer the much-needed support in locating child care services for their children and be the backbone to the parents.

ECLW diligently assisted parents, who work in hospitals and grocery stores, in finding child care programs for nine children over the course of one week. From receiving the referral, to calling 50 child care providers, locating child care services, and conducting case management follow-ups, we've learned to work beyond the scope of our responsibilities. It may have been 50 tedious phone calls, but 50 tedious phone calls locate one child care program that can bring parents peace of mind that their children are in good hands. When their children are taken care of, then 50 people can be served, or 50 additional lives can be saved. ***A little goes a long way.***

### **Hand Sanitizer & PPE Materials from OCFS**

To support child care providers who have remained open, Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) secured and delivered a shipment of much sought after hand sanitizer and PPE to NYC childcare programs. ECLW and its Consortium partner agencies used an internal list of programs compiled from staff's calls, that reported being open and caring for children, to inform of the availability of hand sanitizer for pick up. Providers were contacted primarily by telephone to confirm their appointment time for pick up. ECLW provided the much-needed materials to child care providers and Regional Enrichment Centers that are caring for essential workers' children.

### **Department of Education-Funded Family Child Care Network Enrollment**

CPC's FCC Network will serve providers in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. Our staff informed providers the benefits of choosing CPC's FCC Network, provide support, and guide them through the enrollment process. CPC's FCC Network is a One-Stop-Shop Network and one of the few agencies that achieved the highly acclaimed Quality Assurance from Child Care Aware of America. We guide providers on opening their program, guide them through achieving, maintaining, and renewing licensing, and ensure they comply with NYC and NYS regulations. We will assist providers in attaining National CDA Credentials and we provide free technical assistance to improve and maintain provider facilities through training and assessments. Our program staff members are multi-lingual, speaking English, Chinese, Spanish and Korean. In our network, DOE's reimbursement rate is 100%.

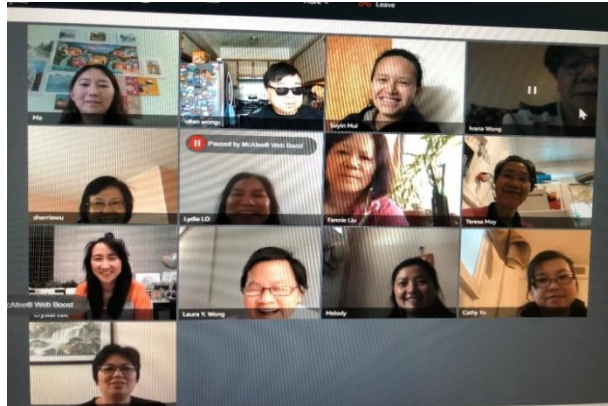
### **Completion of CPC ECLW's 2019/2020 Korean Training Program**



Since 2018, CPC ECLW has been helping the Korean community get to know more about family child care and providing them with the necessary trainings so that they can open their own home childcare business. For existing family children care providers in the Korean community, our trainings are essential requirements for license renewal. All our trainings and services are offered **free** of charge. From October 2019 until March 2020, we have successfully concluded our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Korean family childcare trainings in the CPC Queens Community Center.

There were over 25 participants who attended our SUNY Health & Safety training, American Red Cross First Aid / CPR training, and 30-hour cohort training in various childcare related topics. After the completion of all the trainings, participants were given a Certificate of Participation. Throughout all these years, participants are very grateful for CPC ECLW has done for, with many stating that this empowered them to start a new career and they hope training sessions will continue in the future.

### Multi-Social Services



Multi-Social Services (MSS) encompass assistance programs in housing, SNAP, HEAP, Medical and immigration. Our team always solves problems through collective actions, finding answers and solutions together. During this time of the Covid-19 crisis, we learn from adversity and coping effectively. Together with the community, we are becoming resilient.

### A Chance in Affordable Housing Lottery

Mr. Alan Wong, MSS Housing Counselor received a call from a community member who wanted to apply for affordable housing. She will miss the deadline if she waited for our Manhattan Community Service’s office to re-open. Alan very patiently spent two and half-hours over the phone, teaching her how to set up an account on Housing Connect and applying for the apartment. She was very happy for the housing opportunity and grateful that she can have a chance for the apartment lottery.

### If there is a Need, We Will Find a Way to Help

Ms. Lydia Lo, a CPC SNAP pre-screener, received a call from a homebound senior who was concerned about letters she received but does not know how to read English. Lydia informed her that MSS created a WeChat account so community members like her can privately send images of their letters for assistance. Since many of our Chinese community members know how to use WeChat, it was not a struggle for her. The senior was very happy to hear that, and she took 90 pictures and sent it to Lydia. One by one, Lydia patiently went over each picture with the senior. In addition to reading her letters, Lydia carefully reviewed to ensure that her Entitlement benefits are kept current. The senior was ecstatic and couldn’t believe that even with the office closed; MSS is still

able to render aid. Ms. Lydia Lo was the source of comfort to the homebound senior in this desolate and lonely time of COVID-19 crisis.

Ms. Ivana Wong, SNAP pre-screener, was checking up on a community member that she helped to recertify SNAP benefit through IVRS telephone rectification back in January 2020 and found that her client did not receive their SNAP allotment for March and April. She found that the case was flagged for a telephone interview and immediately know that there must have been an error. Her client had received a recertification confirmation in January and all telephone interviews are waived during this pandemic. Due to the pandemic, Ivana was unable to use regular channels for assistance. She contacted the Food Support Connection Manager at United Way, who in turn reached out to HRA. Within 24 hours, both March and April SNAP allotment were deposited into the client's EBT card. It is wonderful to work together as a community and help each other in need.

### Seniors at Hong Ning Housing are Adjusting to the New Environment

Social isolation is one of the challenges for the seniors at Hong Ning Housing during the COVID-19 outbreak, but with the efforts of the Ms. Priscilla Fok, Resident Wellness Coordinator and team, and volunteers from API Medical Student Association, the seniors are gradually adjusting to the present situation. To ensure the physical and mental well-being of the seniors, the team performs wellness checks through weekly calls to each resident to listen to their concerns or just to have a friendly conversation. In addition, the Resident Wellness Team created bilingual **Care Cards (Stay Home Cards)** to help motivate the residents, suggest exercises and activities they can do at home, and provide tips to stay happy and healthy.

CPC, partnering with Table to Table, delivered 80 hot meals to seniors on April 3 and April 13. Residents are also receiving meals from their senior centers, Meals on Wheels, and the Department of Aging. Staff at Resident Wellness and home care attendants helped the seniors in food shopping even though the attendants are not allowed to stay with elderly. Tai Look Merchants Association donated groceries to the seniors, and the staff continues to look for food vendors for donation, all in the effort to make sure the seniors at Hong Ning Housing are well fed and getting the supplies that they need.

#### **Bilingual Care Cards (Stay Home Cards):**



**Health promotion of social distancing at Hong Ning Housing:**

Wellness Coordinator, Ms. Priscilla Fok, designed two simple flyers that are clear and easy for seniors/visitors to understand.

**Flyer #1: Friendly reminder about Social Distancing**



**Flyer #2: 4 People per Elevator**



**About CPC**

The Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC) is the nation’s largest Asian American social services organization. Founded in 1965, CPC aims to promote the social and economic empowerment of Chinese American, immigrant, and low-income communities of New York City.

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
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For more information and updates, please visit [www.cpc-nyc.org](http://www.cpc-nyc.org)