



Family Self-Sufficiency

Program Updates for 2011

From the Desk of Doug De Soto

Happy New Year! As we begin 2011, the FSS program will be putting into place some changes that we hope will improve program operations. Starting with this issue of the FSS Newsletter, all program participants who have registered an email address with the FSS office will be receiving their quarterly and bi-monthly newsletters via email. Additionally, effective January 1, 2011, all quarterly Family Reports will be emailed in PDF format so that you can fill the form out on a computer, save, and return to

the FSS office via email rather than USPS. Another major change involves the monthly mandatory FSS Workshop. Based upon guidelines from the Department of Housing And Urban Development, we will no longer be conducting mandatory monthly workshops. However, in an effort to make the program as accessible as possible to all participants, we will be conducting after-hours meetings on a monthly basis. The purpose of the after-hours meetings will be to facilitate

those individuals whose school schedule or work schedule interferes with their ability to meet with the FSS Program Coordinator on a regular basis. Dates, times, and locations will be posted each quarter in the newsletter. The changes listed above do not change your responsibility to update the FSS office with your program progress on a monthly basis or for those of you who are not enrolled in school or not employed, to turn in your FSS Work Search Log on a monthly basis.

Fair Housing Anyone?



The Department of Housing And Urban Development has requested that all Public Housing Authorities who operate Family Self-Sufficiency Programs

ensure that each FSS participant receives training and information on rights and remedies available under the federal, state, and local fair housing and civil rights laws. Therefore, Fair Hous-

ing training workshops will be held in February and March in order to provide the required training and information to each of you. Attendance is mandatory and Certificates of
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STUDENTS

All FSS Program participants enrolled in vocational, secondary, or GED programs, please remember to turn in your class schedules for the Spring 2011 semester no later than the end of January .

Fair Housing – Continued

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Completion will be issued and kept in your FSS program file.

February Schedule

The Fair Housing training workshops have been scheduled over a two-month period. You only need to attend one of these meetings:

Wednesday, February 16 2011: St. Nicholas Church, 5872 Oliver Road, Paradise. 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 17, 2011: Greater Oroville Family Resource Center, 2185 Baldwin Avenue, Oroville. 6:00p.m.

Friday, February 18, 2011: Housing Authority Office, Chico. 10:00 a.m. or 6:00 p.m.

March Schedule

Wednesday, March 16, 2011: St. Nicholas Church, 5872 Oliver Road, Paradise. 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 17, 2011: Greater Oroville Family Resource Center, 2185 Baldwin Avenue, Oroville. 6:00p.m.

Friday, March 18, 2011: Housing Authority Office, Chico. 10:00 a.m. or 6:00 p.m.

Plan on the meeting lasting one hour. In the event that you can not attend the meetings as scheduled contact the FSS office at 895-4474, extension 231.

Fast Facts about Housing Discrimination

Housing discrimination based on your race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status, or disability is illegal by federal law.

If you have been trying to rent a home or apartment and you believe your rights have been violated, you can file a fair housing complaint.

There are several ways to file a complaint:

- You can file a complaint by using HUD's online form.
- You can call toll-free 1 (800) 669-9777.
- You can print out a form from the HUD web site, complete it, and mail it to:

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Room 5204
451 Seventh St. SW
Washington, DC 20410-2000

Job Search And Employment Tips

If you don't have a job, make finding a job, your job. Many people who are out of work wait until their unemployment insurance runs out or their savings run out, and then start looking. Finding a job takes time. Here are some tips to finding work:

1. Polish and tailor your resume. Contact the One-Stop for resume information to help make you stand out from the crowd before your employer even meets you.
2. Expand your effort. Many people

search a few hours a week for work. Once they've checked one or two leads or filed an application, they're done for the week. If you don't have a job, make finding a job, your job, full time! Run down every lead. Ask for more leads everywhere you go.

3. Expand your interview skills. Contact One-Stop for interview tips that can help you get prepared.
4. Expand your follow-up. A thank you letter is great, but what do you do afterwards? How about calling and

asking a week later how they are coming? If it's a real good opportunity, how about visiting a week after the interview?

5. Expand your marketable skills. The demands of the business world are ever more complex, yet most people expect to earn more money and benefits on the skill set they developed decades ago in high school or college. Want to earn more? Offer more! Go back to college or improve your business skills.

Careers with Great Job Prospects

For individuals entering college and trade schools in 2011, there are some fields that hold much more future promise than others. According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), there are several fields that will virtually guarantee a job for those graduating over the next few years. Three of every 10 new jobs created in the U.S. economy by 2014 will be in

healthcare services. But even in the promising healthcare field, there are a few key careers that really stand out.

1. Home Health Aide: required education includes on-the-job training by registered nurses (RNs), licensed nurse practitioners (LPNs) or experienced aides. A competency evaluation may also be required. **Pay:** Median hourly earnings of \$9.34.

2. Medical Assistance: required

education includes one year postsecondary medical assistant program through a community/junior college or a two-year associate degree. Students who have passed the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) exam through a local community college typically command the highest salaries for this position. **Pay:** Median annual salary of \$26,290.00.

The rapid growth (continued on Page 3)

Careers with Great Job Prospects—Continued

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in information technology is projected to continue unabated. The best IT employment opportunities over the next few years include:

1. Network System and Data Communications Analyst: required education includes a bachelor's degree in computer science, information science or management information systems (MIS), or an MBA with a concentration in information systems. **Pay:** Median annual salary of \$64,600.00.

2. Computer Software Engineer and Application Designer: required education includes a bachelor's degree in computer science or software engineer-

ing, or a master's degree in math or systems design. **Pay:** Median annual salary of \$79,780.00.

Other Fields

1. Environmental Science and Protection Technician: required education includes a minimum of a two-year associate's degree in applied science. **Pay:** Median hourly earnings of \$18.30.

2. Water and Liquid Waste Treatment Plant and Systems Operator: required education includes a two-year associate's degree or one-year certificate in water quality and wastewater treatment technology. **Pay:** Annual earnings of \$36,070.00.

3. Court Reporter: required education includes training through a postsecondary vocational and technical school or college. The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) has certified 70 programs nationwide. **Pay:** Median annual salary of \$45,610.00

4. Welder: required education includes postsecondary work through a community college. **Pay:** Median hourly earnings of \$14.90.

5. Veterinary Technician: required education includes a minimum of a two-year associate's degree from an accredited community college program in veterinary technology. **Pay:** Median hourly earnings of \$12.88.

EITC Alert



If you're like millions of Americans, you work hard but you don't earn a high income and want to keep more of what you earn. The Earned Income Tax Credit also called EITC or more simply EIC is a credit for people

who earn low-to-moderate incomes. EITC can reduce your taxes, and can mean a refund. In simple terms, working families and individuals keep more of what they earn.

To qualify for Earned Income Tax Credit or EITC, you must have earned income from employment, self-

employment or another source and meet certain rules. In addition, you must either meet the additional rules for Workers without a Qualifying Child or have a child that meets all the Qualifying Child Rules for you. For information on the qualifying child rule go to irs.gov/eitc.

Earned Income and adjusted gross income (AGI) must each be less than:

- \$43,352 (\$48,362 married filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children.
- \$40,363 (\$45,373 married filing jointly) with two qualifying children.
- \$35,535 (\$40,545 married filing jointly) with one qualifying child.

- \$13,460 (\$18,470 married filing jointly) with no qualifying children.

Tax Year 2010 maximum credit:

- \$5,666 with three or more qualifying children.
- \$5,036 with two qualifying children.
- \$3,050 with one qualifying child.

Mentor Program

As a reminder the FSS Program does have a Mentor Program that is affiliated with professionals in a wide variety of career fields. If interested, contact the FSS office to pick-up an application.

Tax Season Tips

Start collecting the necessary paper work now:

For complex filers, sort receipts by type and then sort each type by date.

Common documents needed include the 1098-

E Tax Reporting Information for Account (Student loans), the 1099-INT Interest Income statement (Savings accounts), Tax Return from last year (for reference) and W2's for all jobs. If



you have not received your W2 by January 31, call your company.

Save money by E-filing for free:

Visit IRS.GOV for a list of companies. Typically, you can file free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$56,000 or less and you are age 50 or younger. You must link to the company through: www.irs.gov/app/freeFile/jsp/index.jsp

Call the IRS, they can help you for free: Don't make unnecessary errors or

pay a third party for simple questions. IRS live assistance is available Monday through Friday. There is also a 24 hour recorded assistance line for your convenience. Telephone Assistance for individuals is: 1-800-829-1040.

Tuition Deduction: You may be able to deduct qualified tuition and fees up to \$4,000 that you pay for yourself, your spouse or a dependent. You do not have to itemize to take this deduction.

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE
COUNTY OF BUTTE**

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***Building Bridges to a Brighter
Future***

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www.butte-housing.com

**January
After-Hours Schedule**

Information on VITA will be provided. If you have issues specific to your file to discuss, please contact the office prior to the meeting date.

Wednesday, January 19, 2011:
St. Nicholas Church, 5872 Oliver
Road, **Paradise.**
5:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 20, 2011:
Greater Oroville Family Resource
Center, 2185 Baldwin Avenue,
Oroville.
5:30 p.m.

Friday, January 21, 2011:
Housing Authority Office, **Chico.**
5:30 p.m.

Contact Information Current?

Please verify that your correct mailing address, email address, and telephone number are current and on file with the FSS Office and Section 8 program.

Job Search Data Bank

The FSS Program maintains a data base of FSS participants seeking employment. If a job announcement matches a participant's job skills, the FSS office notifies the participant of the job announcement. To enroll in the Job Search Program contact the office at 895-4474.

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF BUTTE

Family Self-Sufficiency



fit TIPS for 2011

January fit TIP

**Good health is...
laughing out loud**

Is laughter the best medicine? And is it contagious? Maybe it's both. Recent medical research has shown that laughter can boost the immune system and reduce tension, stress, anxiety, irritation, anger, and depression. And according to studies, the brain responds to the sound of laughing and prepares face muscles to join in. So have some fun, yuk it up, and feel good. The domino effect started by a few chuckles is a healthy one.

February fit TIP

**Good health is...
everything**

Being healthy really begins with a good attitude. And the recognition that achieving good health can come from a lot of little things. Like taking a minute to breathe deeply and slow down. Taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Turning off the TV and being an active participant in your own life. Making sure you're getting enough sleep. Like indulging with moderation in just about everything except laughter!

March fit TIP

**Good health is...
spring-cleaning your mind**

More and more people are incorporating spirituality into their everyday lives as a way of finding balance. Find your spirituality within by beginning or ending your day with a five-minute meditation. It'll clear your mind and help you escape the hustle and bustle. Or try keeping a journal to record your feelings. Include one positive thing about each day.