



## Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House—A Look at Who We Are

### Family programs

From preschool to parenting classes and afterschool care, we provide a range of services to help families from all backgrounds, whether they are new to the country or just new to parenting.



### Youth programs

From skills development to peer support, youth camp to cultural buddies, we try to serve the needs of our young people in tangible ways.



### Seniors

Our vibrant and thriving seniors programs brings people together for fun, fitness, mentoring and more in innovative and supportive ways that reduce isolation and foster community.



### Community Development

The cornerstone of all our programming and reason for being is focused on enabling people to help themselves by creating and sharing resources that benefit their particular concerns—we call this capacity building and it informs everything we do at MPNH.





## A Typical Day in Our House

*On any given day, MPNH is a hive of activity ... just take a look inside!*

- In the playroom, families are making crafts and enjoying play-time with their children.
- Outside in the playground and garden, older children are tending to lavender plants to sell at an upcoming community fair.
- In an inside room, a group of seniors are playing Mah Jong together.
- In another room, a law student offers free advice to those who may not be able to afford a lawyer.
- In the lounge area, a young woman who is currently living on the streets enjoys some respite, relaxing on one of the comfortable sofas and reading a book.
- At noon, a healthy lunch is served to low-income community residents — a meal that was prepared in the Neighbourhood House kitchen by volunteers who are learning valuable skills and gaining self-confidence.
- In the youth club-house on the top floor, young people have access to a computer and a safe place to relax, socialize and exchange ideas.





## Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

*Making Neighbourhoods Better Places to Live*

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### Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

#### How a House Became a Home

*This is a place that changes lives. We are building stronger families and a stronger community by helping individuals find skills, confidence and self-respect.*

Mount Pleasant Neighborhood House is an integral part of Mount Pleasant, an economically and culturally diverse neighborhood in East Vancouver. MPNH serves as the heart of our neighbourhood. It is a place of safety and support for seniors, children, youth, families, people with disabilities, new immigrants and people who may be living in poverty. MPNH has been a cornerstone for the area for 30 years, ever since its inception as a one-room youth outreach centre operating out of a small basement office. Since that time the organization has grown and is housed in a homey wooden frame structure built in 1977 which occupies the corner of Broadway Avenue East and Prince Albert. The House was designed with all ages programming in mind. It was also designed to feel like an actual home — we have a large fireplace and lounge area, disabled washroom access and baby change stations, a dining hall, kitchenette, phone access and coffee and snacks as well as bread and other foodstuffs for people who need them — and many people do. We are the neighbourhood's living room, as it were.

Every year, Mount Pleasant Neighborhood House offers programs and services for more than 3,000 people from around Mount Pleasant. In this neighbourhood, the needs are as diverse as the people themselves. Seniors, many of whom have come here at an advanced age, need social contact as well as support with health and wellness questions. Young mothers seek advice on parenting, a safe play area for their children, an escape from isolation; teenagers want a safe space of their own, and a positive outlet for their energies; adults with disabilities look for encouragement and new strategies for finding meaningful work; parents need to find after-school care so they can work a full day; homeless or unemployed people may simply want a decent meal or a safe place to rest. Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House helps all of these people take charge of their lives step by step. For all those who seek a refuge from poverty or

unemployment, from violence on the street, from unhealthy isolation, we work to make our House a home.

We also work with community partners and with those who participate in House activities to keep our programs relevant to the needs of the groups we serve. We not only encourage input and ideas for programs and activities, we fully support the ability of community members to help themselves — that's what neighbourhood houses are all about.

### **Testimonials**

"The house means a lot to me because I always feel welcome.... I love you guys!"

— *Raven, Youth Programs participant*

"I have been coming for three and a half years. The House means a lot to me because it gives me a chance to do stuff I wouldn't normally get to do. I sometimes volunteer... participate in the teen program, and just hang out."

— *Lindsey, Youth Programs participant*

"The House had helped me, and I wanted to give something back."

— *Maggie, Senior Mentors Making Connections in Immigrant Communities volunteer*

"It's a haven for people who need to come in and get warm and to be treated as a real person."

— *Margaret, former Board member and volunteer*