

## Audience: Internal (staff, volunteers, board)

### What is a Neighbourhood House?

A neighbourhood house (NH) is a welcoming and inclusive place where everyone of any age, nationality and ability can attend, lead and learn through our programs and services. A NH connects people and invites them to be engaged in their community, building stronger neighbourhoods.

<b>Research point</b> (what are we trying to say)	<b>Key Message</b> (how we will say it – presentations to staff/volunteers, recruiting)	<b>Sub-messages &amp; Support</b> (story/research/facts to support the key messages)	<b>Calls to Action</b> (CTAs – the actions we want staff, volunteers to take)
<p>NHs facilitate collective action and advocacy to address social inequalities and exclusion</p> <p>Through community organizing and advocacy initiatives, NHs connect people to their neighbourhoods and as such, build stronger communities</p>	<p><b>Neighbourhood houses contribute directly to making communities better places to live, work and play</b>                      We build connections, collaborate with other groups, bring people together, and promote positive social change.</p> <p>Or  <b>A neighbourhood house is where neighbours connect, create and learn together.</b></p>	<p><b>Neighbourhood houses are known for contributing to positive initiatives already happening in the community.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research shows this builds connections, promotes collaboration, and helps avoid duplication and negative competition between service organizations.</li> <li>- “What the NHs have done for us is sort of allow us to network with the community, and brought us into projects that we wouldn’t necessarily have been involved in.” – a Community Partner of Kiwassa/Frog Hollow</li> </ul> <p><b>Neighbourhood houses empower people to create the change they want to see in their community.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through supportive collaboration between community members and service groups, unmet needs are met and unused assets are mobilized</li> <li>- “Neighbourhood houses allow for co-creation, so someone can walk in and say, ‘I’m really interested in starting a group about X and NH staff will work with that particular community member to see if that can be realised.” – a Community Partner of Kitsilano Neighbourhood House</li> <li>- As one member said, neighbourhood houses are catalysts for change in communities (find specific, recent examples of new programs/positive social change initiated NHs)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Welcome and invite residents to their neighbourhood house</i></p> <p><i>Help our participants understand that through their neighbourhood house, they can create the change they want to see in their community (localize)</i></p> <p><i>Show residents how their neighbourhood house can support them – and their families – not just now but throughout their life</i></p> <p><i>Let other service groups know that we want to work with them to build stronger communities</i></p>

	<p><b>Our diversity of participants is our strength</b> Neighbourhood houses enhance our ability to work together to achieve common goals</p> <p><b>Neighbourhood houses become second homes for residents, volunteers and staff</b> People come for a service or program, and develop a sense of belonging that is enduring. What does your neighbourhood house mean to you?</p>	<p><b>Our research shows that neighbourhood houses are effective in ensuring access to needed supports and creating a sense of belonging.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This helps reduce feelings of loneliness. Research shows that social isolation and exclusion from the benefits of society leads directly to more sickness and mental distress.</li> <li>- “You feel safer and then you have a support system because a lot of us don’t have families here necessarily.” – NH participant (NHs as Second Homes)</li> </ul> <p><b>Our research found that a large majority of respondents saw increases in their knowledge and skills because of their involvement in a neighbourhood house.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants work, learn and play alongside a diverse group of other service users in a variety of programs, as well as cultural and expressive activities that are organized to bridge differences</li> <li>- More than 80% saw an increase in their knowledge about neighbourhood issues. Three quarters of respondents reported an increase in their ability to work with people from different backgrounds.</li> <li>- Our staff reflect the diversity in our communities – our research found that more than 20 languages are spoken by three or more staff members throughout Metro Vancouver neighbourhood houses</li> </ul> <p><b>You are a part of something bigger than your program.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are one-stop location for many services that support the whole individual throughout their life, and impact multiple generations</li> <li>- In 2012/13, more than 200,000 people participated in almost 450 programs at 14 neighbourhood houses</li> <li>- Our research involved focus groups with 41 Community Partners – all staff from different service organizations who have collaborated with a neighbourhood house</li> <li>- People who have become involved in a neighbourhood house often share their experiences with others. 65% of respondents found out about their neighbourhood house through a family member, friend or neighbour. Almost 60% of respondents have</li> </ul>	<p><i>Ask members to share their stories with us</i></p> <p><i>Ask participants to tell their friends and neighbours about us</i></p>
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