



Homeowners and visitors
coming together for home
stays, celebration and a
good cause.

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For immediate release

News Release

New organization enables Metro Vancouverites to fight homelessness while hosting Olympic visitors

VANCOVER, BC – Home For The Games, a new non-profit organization providing a solution to the 2010 Winter Games accommodation shortage while also helping solve homelessness, officially launched today. Through homeforthegames.com, Metro Vancouverites get a chance to host Games visitors from around the world, with proceeds going to charities tackling homelessness.

“Home For The Games will help people share in the spirit of the Games by opening their homes to visitors from across the country and around the world,” said Charles Montgomery, founder of Home For The Games. “The exciting part is, every home stay will raise money to help our most vulnerable citizens.”

Home For The Games is seeking hosts willing to offer one or more rooms in their home for fair prices and donate half the fee to charity beneficiaries: the Streethome Foundation and Covenant House Vancouver.

The program both fuels and rewards generosity: Hosts can set their own rates and will receive a tax receipt for the portion of the home stay fee that goes to charity. Hosts also receive a discount on short-term rental insurance from BCAA Insurance, a sponsor of the initiative. There’s no fee to list or book a room on the Home For The Games website.

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson feels the concept will help regular people support the City of Vancouver’s efforts to eliminate homelessness.

“Home For The Games is a great example of the positive legacies we can create from the 2010 Winter Games,” said Mayor Robertson. “With the immense challenge our city faces with homelessness, I can’t think of anything better than harnessing the excitement of the Olympics to help get people off the street and into homes.”

“We want to use the energy of the Games to bring people together for a shared experience and cultural exchange, and create opportunities for friendship and generosity,” said Tracey Axelsson, acting project manager for Home For The Games. “We’re striving to provide visitors with fairly-priced accommodations while supporting efforts to reduce homelessness.”

Funds raised through home stay fees will be directed to projects by Streethome Foundation and Covenant House Vancouver aimed at fighting homelessness.

“We are pleased to see organizations such as Home For The Games creating such unique community partnerships to raise money in support of ending homelessness in Vancouver,” said Jae Kim, president of the Streethome Foundation. “It is through the hard work and support of community initiatives like this that our goal of ensuring that all Vancouver citizens have access to safe, decent and affordable housing by 2015 can be realized.”

The initiative also gained support from Vancouver City Councillor Suzanne Anton, who spoke in favour of the idea at a council meeting earlier this year.

"Metro Vancouver homeowners are generous and want to help those without homes. Home For The Games lets homeowners have the enriching experience of hosting guests for the Olympics and the great pleasure of sharing the proceeds in a positive way to help homelessness," said Anton.

The idea has snowballed with Vancouver business professionals volunteering their time and expertise to develop the initiative. Home For The Games has attracted tremendous in-kind support and donations, and early sponsors included theyee.ca, BCAA Insurance, Seven25 Design and Ryan Ilg Creative.

"Our goal is to raise \$750,000 through rental fees and donations. We've already had great response from hosts, volunteers, donors and sponsors, and welcome additional support from those who share our vision," said Montgomery.

To learn more how more about Home For The Games and how you can get involved, visit the website www.homeforthegames.com

About Home For The Games

Home For The Games is a non-profit web-based system to match 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games visitors with Metro Vancouver hosts for short-term home stays. Home For The Games is building a legacy of a different sort: creating opportunities for people to share an unforgettable Olympic experience with guests from around the world while earning modest rental income. At the same time, we ensure that half of home-stay "rent" will go directly to registered charities helping Metro Vancouver's most vulnerable citizens. For more information, visit www.homeforthegames.com

About Streethome Foundation

Streethome is a community-based foundation dedicated to reducing homelessness through housing and support services in the City of Vancouver. Streethome brings together partners across the community to pool their energy and resources to provide supportive, safe, affordable, clean housing. Through Streethome, corporate leaders, non-profits and government are working together to develop real, sustainable change. Current initiatives include funding and facilitating the creation of housing for people who are homeless, including supportive housing for homeless mothers and babies. Funds raised through Home For The Games will support an innovative project to help address homelessness among people with mental illness spearheaded by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The four-year pilot project will help them secure housing while ensuring they receive access to integrated treatment and services. For more information, please visit www.streethome.org

About Covenant House

Covenant House Vancouver exists for young people who often have no one else – people between the ages of 16 and 24 who have fled physical, emotional or sexual abuse or have been forced from their homes. Primarily privately funded, Covenant House relies on the generosity of over 50,000 individuals and organizations to provide shelter, food, clothing and counselling to over 2,000 young people each year. Funds raised through Home For The Games will directly support the shelter housing these street-engaged youth. For more information visit www.covenanthousebc.org

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