



*Port Alberni Association for Community Living*

# PAACL NEWS

## Whole Living

Whole Living meets twice a month. We celebrated a year of coming together last November 2011. The group averages about 8 regular members at each meeting. The group is open to PAACL participants and is facilitated by two staff. Services for Community Living staff Jodi Brennan and Krista Nelson have been with the group since it began in November 2010. The focus of the group is to bring information to the group about day to day living. We have had information sessions about diet, exercise and portion control. We have conversations about self esteem, personal victories, the human body and how it works. We provide information about high cholesterol, high blood pressure, self breast exams, and when you should see a doctor. We also talk about, How to be safe in your home and Emergency situations. We have "what if" questions that provide a platform for open table discussions about things which are important for each person attending the group. A favorite activity was when we stepped back in time, to when the hand written letter was a form of communication more widely used. Each person wrote a letter using pen and paper, they chose someone to write to and mailed it with the hope they would get a return letter back. Most people did. There is something exciting about getting a letter in the mail; it is a personal way of keeping in touch. We will continue to meet in 2012 and the topics for this year promise to be as interesting as last year and will include such things as Wills and Estates, Your heart, lungs and other organs , How to plant a garden to suit your personal needs and Travel tips for your travelling comfort.

### What is it about Whole Living that keeps you coming?



**Ken Rudd-** I enjoy the company. I have met people in the group that I might not have met outside of the group. I enjoy learning about new things and then seeing how it works for me. I would like to stay healthy and learn about eating the right foods to help me stay that way.



**Dolores Doughty-** I enjoy Whole Living because I have learned how my body works. I recently had surgery that made me have to change the way I live and eat. Whole Living helped me understand some of the reasons why and the group is interested so I can talk about the surgery without feeling uncomfortable.



**Charleen Weber –** I come to Whole Living to learn more about my body and how to keep it healthy. I have learned how to choose foods that are better for me. I also have met new people and made some new friends. During a medical emergency, I also had an opportunity to use some relaxation breathing skills that we had learned at a Whole Living group.



**Vicki Anderson** –It is a place to come, so I can get out of my place. I learn things by playing the Whole Living Board game. I have learned that changing simple things like the amount of salt and fat you eat can make a difference in your weight. I have lost weight since I started a year ago.



**Corrine Wells**- I have only just started the group. I think I would like to learn about my body and diabetes.



**Leah Geddes**- I like how we can get together to problem solve and support each other with our health issues and questions. I feel a lot of moral support from the other people in the group. It has helped me understand how different things like diet and stress can affect you. I have lost weight since I started because I think I make better choices about nutrition and portion control

PAACL has had a Health and Wellness Committee since September 2009. We wanted a supportive environment that brought into focus healthy choices and the importance of physical activity. Employees are provided information on various areas of health and wellness and are encouraged to stay physically active. A Body Bulletin newsletter is circulated monthly. The newsletter provides information about lifestyle, physical activity, nutritious eating, healthy recipes, stress management, safety and addictions prevention. Employees are challenged to participate in healthy initiatives that are organized by the Health and Wellness Committee.

Connection Day program  
 Services for Community Living  
 Community Employment  
 Access Leisure Program  
 Pathways Club House  
 Self Advocates  
 Residential Support Services  
 Infant Development Program  
 Supported Child Development  
 Personalized Supports Initiative