



RICHMOND CITY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
RICHMOND CITY JUSTICE CENTER
1701 FAIRFIELD WAY
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23223
C.T. WOODY, JR., SHERIFF

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Monday, December 21, 2015

Media Contact: Dr. Sarah Scarbrough
Office: (804) 646-0987, Cell: (804) 837-7779

INAUGURAL RCJC HOLIDAY TEA

What: RCJC Holiday Tea for Mothers and Children

When: Tuesday, December 22, 2015

Where: Richmond City Justice Center, 1701 Fairfield Way

RSVP: Interested media must RSVP by 8 a.m. on Tuesday, December 22

This holiday season, seven women, who are also inmates at the Richmond City Justice Center (RCJC), will have the opportunity to spend a few hours with their children and loved ones during afternoon Tea; a few of them will even get to celebrate their birthday with their moms during the tea.

These women, who are participants in the REAL Program, were selected to participated in the Tea, which is being sponsored by the Richmond Family and Fatherhood Initiative (RFFI), celebrate! RVA, and the Richmond City Sheriff's Office.

Prior to the tea, the women have been required to participate in a 28 hour comprehensive motherhood evidence based class provided by RFFI. Classes work to educate and give clarity on not only their journey on Motherhood, but their journey in life. RFFI motherhood class coordinator, Tauchanna Gregory commented, "the purpose of the class is to provide education and support to the women as they strive to be not only better mothers, but better women."

Celebrate! RVA, whose mission is to give disadvantaged children a memorable birthday celebration in a safe and fun environment, will be hosting birthday festivities for the children attending the Tea who have a birthday in the months surrounding the event.

Speaking on this event, Sheriff Woody remarked, "For many years, we have had opportunities for fathers [inmates] and their children to participate in events together. For the first time, we are able to provide this same opportunity for mothers and their children! We are excited to kick off this inaugural event, as a means to not only celebrate the holidays together, but for new relationships to be formed, which will be marked by commitments the mothers will make to their children at the event."

The Richmond City Sheriff's Office is responsible for maintaining a secure jail and a safe court system, along with seamless inmate transport and civil process to preserve public safety. We remain committed to performing these duties with unsurpassed integrity and professionalism, with progressive training that incorporates best practices and technology. While partnering with the community, we strive to lower recidivism by bridging the gap from incarceration to reentry into the community by addressing criminogenic needs and barriers most closely related to reoffending.

About the REAL Program

Recovering from Everyday Addictive Lifestyle (R.E.A.L) is the RCJC’s premiere program. R.E.A.L. has a purpose of reducing recidivism through ensuring the individual is prepared for re-entry into society. This is done by assisting residents of the RCJC to positively and comprehensively address their addictions and behaviors, while appropriately modifying their thinking.

About celebrate! RVA

celebrate! RVA is. We believe in the power of a celebration and that every child should feel loved on their special day. Through our work at Title I Elementary Schools, Safe Harbor, and the Richmond City Justice Center, we have celebrated over one thousand children in the past three years.

About RFFI and the Motherhood Curriculum

At the heart of the Motherhood Support Group sessions is the National Partnership of Community Leadership’s (NPCL) *Young Mothers and CoParenting Curriculum*. This curriculum is an experiential design model which provides “support, information, and motivation in areas of parenthood and relationships.” The curriculum is unique in that that the curriculum also addresses the *real life experiences and challenges of mothers*. In other words, the curriculum is relative despite ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. The curriculum focuses on building knowledge in five areas: personal development, life skills, parenting skills, relationships, and health and sexuality.

In addition to the motherhood curriculum, the ladies were able to experience the benefit of Richmond Family and Fatherhood’s new Program Model. This model not only entails a motherhood curriculum but brings in two other essential components, Trauma Informed Practice and a Co-Parenting curriculum. With approximately 70 percent of adults experiencing familial abuse, neglect or a type of household dysfunction within their family prior to the age of 18, it was incumbent that RFFI add this component to the Fatherhood and Motherhood Support Group program. These experiences have been studied by the CDC for over 25 years and is known as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The participants completed the ACE’s assessment and along with the training, received an understanding of the trauma they experienced and how that trauma adversely affected their lives as well as the lives of their children. Through this process, there was knowledge, a recognition and a desire not only to be a better mother and a better person. This was accompanied by tears, openness and transparent conversation.

Another vital part of RFFI’s model is the CoParenting component. The CoParenting model, emphasizes putting children first and being “child-focused” rather than “relationship-focused.” The premise of the curriculum encourages parents to put aside differences and past problems and work together for the betterment of the children. The program also helps parents see where their kids are, gives them new life skills, and helps them to modify their parenting approach. The participants began dialogue of how they were raised expressing that they wished their parents had done this for them but how they plan to utilize the skills used during the class.

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