



Holden Village is a multi-generational community. We value the presence of children and believe they enrich the community life experienced by all. Being part of the community is a very important part of your experience serving on Holden's staff, but families are encouraged to be families.

Families are solely responsible for the care of their children and are empowered to decide how they will care for one another taking into account the commitments, the environment, and rhythms of Village life. Parents are responsible for setting boundaries with their children. Holden Village understands that your children come first, and we encourage parents and families to make a plan that will work for them. This will require schedule coordination of work time and family time between parents, children, and supervisors. We understand that flexibility is required when caring for children; contributions by family members, therefore, may vary from family to family.

Holden Village is in a remote wilderness setting. The peace provided by Holden's remoteness is a great gift but also a responsibility. The setting and location create unique circumstances, which should be considered prior to applying.

The Staff Coordinators can put you in touch with a current family in the Village who can be a resource for you as you consider whether joining the Village staff is a good fit for your family.

## Thinking of Bringing Your Family to Holden Village as Volunteers?

Holden Village has long been a place where people of all ages share life together. Families and children are valued and enrich the fullness of community. Holden is located in a beautiful and unique setting that has the potential to be an amazing experience for families to grow and learn together.

The information in this packet is meant to help families consider a year of service in the Village.

It is not comprehensive, so please also read the **Volunteer Guidebook**. These two information pieces will serve to create a more complete picture of the rhythms and structures of life in the Village.

## What you need to know before you move to Holden with your family:

Making the decision to move to and live at Holden is a significant commitment on the part of families. Here are some aspects of the Village which may contribute to your decision making process:

**MEDICAL:** The Village has a trained First Aid Team, and a first aid station equipped to handle basic needs. We do not have a doctor on staff. We attempt to continually have the medic position staffed by either an EMT or a RN. Holden cannot accommodate health conditions that require ongoing care, and because of our isolated location, emergency evacuations are extremely difficult. If you have any questions about coming to Holden because of your families' health status, please contact your doctor and/or write the Village Medic at [medic@holdenvillage.org](mailto:medic@holdenvillage.org) before applying.

**VILLAGE ACTIVITY:** The Village itself can be hazardous. The terrain of the Village is hilly (some would say mountainous) and rocky, in the winter snow paths are uneven and sometimes unstable. It can make mobility difficult for small children. There is a road through the middle of the Village which trucks, buses, and heavy equipment use to move back and forth through the Village. Around the Village there is equipment that children are interested in; there are vehicles, tools, building materials, paint, and more that children may come into contact with. The Village is generally not set up with children in mind so parents need to be cognizant of where their children are playing, and are responsible for supervision and setting safe boundaries.

**WORK POSITIONS IN THE VILLAGE:** Holden recognizes that caring for children is a parent's first priority. When your family is filling out the application, please think carefully about how your family will balance family care and your work commitments to the Village. Every family has its own approach to family life, childcare, and comfort levels of independence for their children. We want to work together to find a balance of contribution to the Village with the freedom and ability to care for your family.

The Staffing Committee, when reviewing your application, appreciates knowing the positions in which parents are most interested, but may need to be a creative in finding ways to staff parents so they can also be available for the needs of the family. Staffing position assignments need to take into consideration the ages of the children.

Multiple models have been used to staff two-parent families including a combination of full-time and half-time positions, if young children are involved. Job-sharing may also be a possibility. We can accept solo parents into positions for which the schedule is mostly during school hours. At this time, we are not able to consider solo parents with children younger than school age.

**Potential Half-Time positions:** Contributions Recorder, Posti, Laundry, Librarian, Head Bus Driver, IT Support, Musician, and various Operations positions.

*If you have questions about specific full-time or half-time positions and the flexibility of work schedules please contact the staff coordinators.*

**HOUSING:** Housing is simple and often shared, and assigned upon arrival. Living spaces are furnished with basic necessities.

Be prepared that upon arrival you may be housed in transitional space (like a shared room in a lodge) until your assigned housing becomes available. We try our best to get everyone settled as soon as possible and keep them settled in one place. Sometimes it is necessary to ask families to move into different housing as needs determine.

Housing plans take into account the fact that families need housing that works for families. Most families are housed in a chalet (1930's era house) or other space to accommodate your family. Chalets have several different configurations ranging from a duplex apartment, single family dwelling, or suites including bedrooms and bathrooms. Everyone has access to a living room and kitchen, although it may be shared as common space with other staff members.

Bedroom configurations may include twin, double, queen, or bunk beds. Siblings are often asked to share bedroom space.

**BENEFITS AND EXPENSES AT HOLDEN:** Holden has long benefited from the generous contributions of people willing to come and give their time, talents, and energy to the Village. On account of valuing the unique experience families bring to the Village community, Holden offers a \$550 monthly stipend for each long-term volunteer to support their basic living expenses, as well as additional \$75 stipend for each child. A set number of boat tickets for travels out of the Village for personal days are also provided. Parking a car at Field's Point Landing free of charge is an additional benefit.

Expenses while at Holden are minimal. There is ice cream for sale in the snack bar for a dollar or two. The Holden bookstore sells gift items, card, books, CDs, Holden t-shirts, candy, as well as toiletries and other necessities.

Personal time out of the Village has been reported by previous families to be a financial challenge for transportation, food, and lodging costs. During the months of October through April Holden operates a staff house where staff can stay for \$10/night, children \$5/night. During May through September the staff house functions as a B&B open to guests and staff. Staff can reserve a room at the B&B for a reduced rate.

**LAKE CHELAN PUBLIC SCHOOL AT HOLDEN VILLAGE:** The Holden School is the only "remote but necessary public school" in the state of Washington and is operated by the Lake Chelan School District. It meets all state educational requirements and credits earned are transferable. All school-aged children must be enrolled in the public school on site. Home schooling is not an option.

The school is divided into elementary (K-6<sup>th</sup>) and secondary (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>). The teachers and teacher's aide are hired by the School District. The principal visits the Village to meet with parents and teachers a couple times a year.

School opens the first or second week of September like other public schools in the Lake Chelan School District. The school sets its own hours and schedule, including school breaks. The last day of school is generally during the first week of June.

More information on the school can be found on the district site: [www.chelanschools.org](http://www.chelanschools.org). The Holden Village School is listed as one of the district schools.

**CHILDCARE AND PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH:** There is no childcare at Holden. Parents are responsible for the welfare and care of their dependent children.

From early June to late August, Holden offers part-time programs for children and youth accompanying their families. The Narnia program provides age-appropriate activities for infants and children through those entering grade five. On weekday mornings (8:30am-12pm) volunteer staff lead games, hikes, and a host of fun and educational activities.

Also during the summer the Jr. Miners/Miners program provides activities for youth entering grade six through grade twelve, led by adult volunteers. Miners and Jr. Miners programming is less consistent than Narnia. Sometimes there are activities in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon, and sometimes in the evenings. Miner and Jr. Miner activities are dependent upon the energy, ideas, and number of participants (both guest and staff). It is important to know that as a parent you will not be able to count on a consistent schedule for your middle school and high school age children.

Programming for children is created and led by the Village residents throughout the winter season. Often holiday times have additional programmed activities for children and families.

**We are excited that your family is considering applying to serve in the Village. Blessings on your discernment and preparation!**

Please be in touch with your questions: [staffing@holdenvillage.org](mailto:staffing@holdenvillage.org)

Here is an edited excerpt from the 2014 winter edition of the Holden Village Voice:

## At the Soul of the Village: Children

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Families and youngsters are deeply embedded in the soul of our community. Holden is where families not only come for a week or two to get away, but for a few fortunate families, it is a place to live for a period of time. The Village continues to look for families to come year-round as long-term staff members.

Families who have lived and worked at Holden for a year or longer generally agree that it's a life-changing and enriching experience. They also caution that it's not an escape from life's real issues. If anything, living in a close-knit community can reveal and exacerbate fractures within a family.

"There is no perfect place to live," observes Chris Shultz, public utilities manager who with wife Cindy, daughter Kasey and son Corey has lived at Holden since 2010. "Whether you stay where you are or come to Holden, you're gaining something and you're giving up something."

"It's challenging for anyone to be here," notes Kristian Winston, staff coordinator. "For a family that would be magnified. You have to be a strong family to be here."

Nancy and Marc Rerucha-Borges have a long family history with Holden, beginning when their daughter—now attending the University of Washington—was 4. The family has lived intermittently in the Village, including four years encompassing Raina's sixth through ninth grades. Timing is everything, Marc and Nancy agree. "It's different for every family. You have to come at the right time. It has to work for everyone in the family," says Marc, currently operations manager.

Families with preschool children can have special challenges. There's the matter of constantly "parenting in public," recalls Natalie Julin-McCleary, who with husband Brian moved to Holden when their children were 2 and 4. The family lived in the Village for two years before moving to Fairberry, Neb., where Brian is a Lutheran pastor.

On the other hand, Becky Woods Sellers, mother of two preschoolers and a second grader, welcomes the closeness of community. Parenting small children in the city can be "isolating," she says. "When we came here, I had the opportunity to interact with adults regularly." Holden does not allow babysitting for pay, but people frequently volunteer their services, says Becky.

Holden's spectacular setting; a school small enough to offer individualized instruction; exposure to a continual stream of artists, scholars and creative thinkers; a daily worship experience; and a mix of generations are strong draws for families. Drawbacks might include parents' rigorous work schedules, a limited number of playmates and the fact that there's always so much going on at Holden.

"Just like anywhere, you have to make time for family," says Cindy Shultz. Each family finds its own formula, including rules about eating together as a family or working on dish team together. "There have been many times when 'work of the Village' has felt like a hardship on our home life," admits associate pastor Elizabeth Damico, whose daughter was in first grade at Holden. "However, this community again and again shows great

generosity and understanding, helping me to prioritize raising my daughter over all other responsibilities. This is sheer gift for a village parent.”

Villagers of all ages tend to get involved with the children, who relish the opportunity to ski or hike with 20-somethings or learn to weave from a grandmotherly-type in the Craft Cave. “People don’t treat you like a kid,” says Kasey Shultz, now at Boston University. Still, all agree it doesn’t “take a village” to raise children. It takes parents. From the Holden parents’ handbook:

“Families are solely responsible for the care of their children and are empowered to decide how they will care for one another taking into account the commitments, the environment, and rhythms of village life. Parents are responsible for setting boundaries with their children. Holden Village understands that your children come first, and we encourage parents and families to make a plan that will work for them.”

Leaving Holden is also a reality — sometimes a sad one — for long-term staff, just as all who come to the Village seek to “go out with good courage,” as stated in the “Holden Prayer.” “Know that you commit to a duration, need to leave, and others will care for the place just fine without you,” says Brent Diamond, former operations manager whose family returned to their home in Everett, Wash., after two years at Holden. Not everyone agrees. Adjusting to life after Holden, 5-year-old Sophie Julin-McCleary sadly told her parents: “I want to live there a million years.”

## At School You Can Be Y-O-U-R-S-E-L-F

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Kids love going to school at Holden. “Why isn’t every school like this one?” asks Espen Richardson, who attended eighth grade during his third year at Holden. “You can be yourself, which allows you to be more passionate about your learning.”

The Holden Village School is operated by the Chelan School District and funded by Washington state as a remote and necessary school. The Holden School encompasses kindergarten through 12th grade and is part of the Chelan Public School.

The student/teacher ratio in the school allows for frequent one-on-one instruction and a curriculum that, while meeting state and district requirements, can be tailored to each student’s interests and abilities.

Explains Espen: “We still have all the necessary subjects such as math and science and language arts, but you are also given a choice of independent studies, which I imagine—even though I’ve never been to college—is a bit like college.”

“Coming to Holden for her first and second grades has had an incredible effect” on daughter Michaela, says her mother, Elizabeth Damico: “like opening the cocoon for the butterfly to open up.”

There are sacrifices, like no football, band or clubs. But classes are often out-of-doors, high school seniors play dodge ball with first graders and last year's school year ended with a 17-mile hike. Students may get lessons from the village musician or sit in with professional level musicians who frequently visit. Artists and other professionals on staff volunteer to teach classes, sometimes at the students' initiative. Tenth grader Corey Shultz invited his electrical engineer dad to teach a course on electricity this year.

Holden is a public school, but it doesn't feel like one, agree brother and sister Espen and Maija Diamond, who spent two years in the Village. They expected something of a transitional shock when they returned to larger schools in Everett, Wash., but discovered the change wasn't difficult. Other families agreed that returning to a more normal educational setting has not been a problem. If anything, they say, the Holden experience broadens a student's perspective, leading to more mature attitudes.