

## News release



Everett Public Schools

**Sept. 21, 2012**

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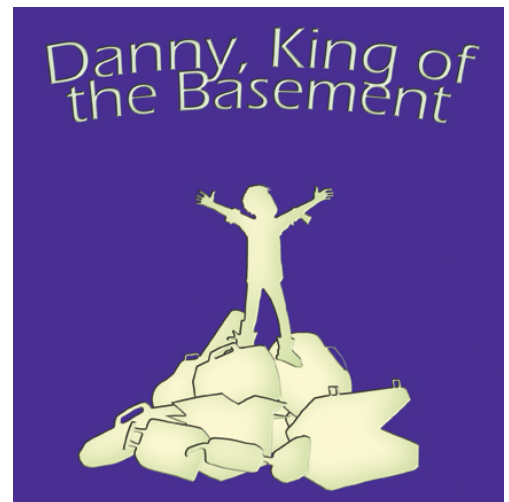
### **FREE community forum on family homelessness, Tuesday, Oct. 2**

*Learn what family homelessness looks and feels like, and discuss solutions at Evergreen Middle School event*

How does family homelessness look and feel? How can we create empathy and awareness? How can we help? These are some of the thought-provoking conversations that will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 2 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at [Evergreen Middle School](#) (7621 Beverly Lane in Everett).

#### **Attendance at Evergreen event is FREE.**

The first 50 families to arrive at the Evergreen event will receive one free child's ticket to any public performance of [Danny, King of the Basement](#).



The play, about a homeless child's imaginary "secret agent self," chronicles his efforts to overcome the cold realities of a life with plenty of uncertainties, hunger and lack of things most children take for granted. After being humiliated at school Danny takes off, looking for his father, who has long been absent. During his quest, Danny learns that "home" is more than a location – that home also incorporates friendships and truth.

On Oct. 2, you will see some of the scenes from [Danny, King of the Basement](#) and hear firsthand from those whose work entails meeting the needs of homeless families in Snohomish County.

County Executive Aaron Reardon and school board Vice President Ed Petersen (also executive director of [Housing Hope](#)) will be joined by Mary Ellen Hardy who coordinates community resources for homeless students in Everett Public Schools and Mary Jane Brell Vujovic of the Workforce Development Council. They and other community members will share what they have seen about our community family needs and be involved in the discussions of how to make a difference.

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Seattle Children's Theatre Artistic Director Linda Hartzell is a former Evergreen *Junior High* student. She is particularly excited about bringing this production and conversation to her old school as she remembers those years that are now called "middle school" as bringing new challenges. As Hartzell explains, the play, "... explores what is often in our region – the effect of homelessness on children. Danny is an inspirational character who shares his emotional story in an uplifting and humorous way."

Hartzell and Seattle Children's Theatre Education Director Karen Sharp will also be part of the interaction during the forum – leading discussion groups and coalescing the information and ideas gleaned from the evening.

The program, co-sponsored by Everett Public Schools, is possible through Seattle Children's Theatre and [Seattle University's](#) Project on Family Homelessness with funding from a grant by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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