

## QUESTIONS MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT THE DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS CENTER

1. *"Aren't there plenty of services already available? Isn't it just a matter of making these more accessible?"*

Helping displaced homemakers utilize existing services is essential, but only part of the problem. When a woman returns to the job market in her late 40's or 50's, she has fewer options. She is likely to have had less education, often feels "over the hill" and worthless. Because of the combined impact of age and sex discrimination, she is less acceptable to employers. Older women have accepted the dependency role for so many years that they have a more difficult time shifting to self-sufficiency. By helping each other, displaced homemakers can gain self-confidence at the same time that they are developing new skills.

2. *"Won't this center be primarily for middle class women?"*

No, it will be for all classes of displaced homemakers. Some will come from the middle class and will be newcomers to a lifestyle of poverty. Others will come from low-income families. The common experience of being "displaced" in middle life brings women from different backgrounds together in their common struggle to be self-supporting.

3. *"Is it practical to spend money training older women when funding is so short?"*

Since life expectancy for women is 74 years, and one third of women 55 to 64 are on their own, it is imperative to assist these older women in their efforts to be self-supporting so that they are not a financial burden on their children or their community, as well as for their own well-being.

4. *"Will the Center be open to men?"*

Yes, if they meet all of the qualifications of a "displaced homemaker."

5. *"With so many people out of work, will there be jobs for these displaced homemakers after they are trained?"*

Rather than train displaced homemakers to compete for the existing advertised job openings, the Center will show them how to create jobs for themselves by analyzing the needs of the community and offering skills which will solve existing problems. New jobs can be created if employers are convinced that an added service will make their organizations more effective, or if they can be shown that the addition of a new job will ultimately save them money. In addition, the Center will demonstrate ways whereby displaced homemakers can become self-employed or can establish a business which will pool similar skills to provide needed services in the community.

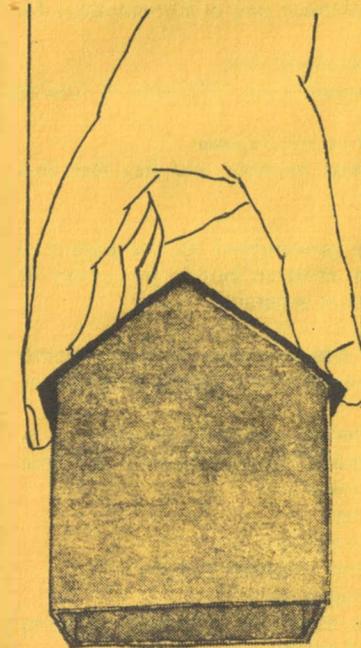
6. *"What is meant by job creation? How can new jobs be created if the present economy is forcing employers to reduce -- rather than expand -- their staff?"*

Richard Nelson Bolles, employment consultant and author of "What Color is Your Parachute?", says, "Creation of new positions is the key...the vacancies, or potential new positions, are there no matter how bad the economy is." Some specific kinds of newly created jobs for displaced homemakers include the newly emerging field of paralegal and paramedical services for the aging as well as the more traditional bookkeeping services that might be offered, as an independent business, for many new community projects unable to hire their own full-time accountants. The list of jobs is endless.



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## FOR HOMEMAKERS WHO LOSE THEIR JOBS . . .



## THE DISPLACED HOMEMAKER CENTER



A pilot project to assist those in their middle years who must change their role from homemaker to wage earner.

## WHAT IS A DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS CENTER?

- It is a *multi-purpose service program* for those in their middle years who need jobs and whose most recent work experience is that of homemaking. The program, a "first" in the nation, was made possible by the passage of the California Displaced Homemakers Act (SB 825). Hopefully, the Center will be a model for communities all around the State as well as other parts of the nation.

- It is *designed for the person who:*

- is over 35
- has worked without pay as a homemaker for one's family.
- is not gainfully employed.
- has had, or would have, difficulty in finding employment.
- has depended on the income:
  - (a) of a family member and has lost that income.

OR

- (b) from the government as the parent of dependent children but is no longer eligible for that assistance.

- It is a *training site* for those displaced homemakers who are willing to create jobs for themselves.

- It is a *place where a variety of services* will be offered to many displaced homemakers in the area. Some, but not all, of these are:

- peer counseling
- assertiveness training
- information and counseling about:
  - money management
  - health care, especially problems of menopause and aging
  - marital dissolution and problems of widowhood.
  - social security, health insurance and income maintenance programs.

- It is a *self-help program* for displaced homemakers who will work together to promote non-traditional types of employment by:

- developing new examples of jobs in community service and self-employment.
- persuading private employers and government agencies to open up new jobs within their organizations for older persons.
- encouraging employers to consider shared and split jobs.

- It is *located on the campus of Mills College* and is open Monday through Friday from 10 to 4.

## JOB CREATION TRAINING PROGRAM

The Displaced Homemakers Center will work with a small number of displaced homemakers to help them to create jobs for themselves. The length of the training period will be no more than six months and during this time monthly stipends will be available to those who qualify for financial assistance. All applicants must be willing to make a fulltime commitment to develop their own job skills, to help other displaced homemakers who come to the Center and be ready to create new types of permanent jobs, either full or part time, at the end of six months.

Those enrolled at the Center's job-creation training program will participate in:

- individual and group assessments of strengths and marketable job skills.
- workshops and discussion groups which include such topics as:
  - Ways to create a new job for ourselves
  - Making the system work for us
  - The hidden job market
  - Making lemonade out of lemons
- assertiveness training

Those participating in this training program will function as auxiliary staff, providing services to many other displaced homemakers in the community. As part of their job training, they will be expected to:

- help develop projects to provide unmet community services
- provide leadership in workshops and peer support groups
- train their replacements at the end of their training period
- become an example to other displaced homemakers

Unlike other job training programs, the Center will stress the search for, and the creation of, new jobs which will match the needs of the community with a reservoir of untapped talent. The overall thrust of this experimental program will be to open new ways to fit jobs TO people instead of following the traditional path of training people for existing job openings.

## LOCATION OF CENTER

