



# Circle of Care

**grief and illness services for children and families**

**A program of East Bay Agency for Children**



Fall 2005

## Invitation to a Support Group

*Imagine you are 8 years old. Three months ago your father died suddenly. You and your younger brother and mom are attending your first night in a support group at Circle of Care.*

*You are pretty scared to attend this support group, but you have worked out a deal with your mom that you will at least give it a couple of tries. At school, no one really wants to hear about your dad. You don't want to talk about him much either. You feel pretty alone these days.*

*As you enter the building your family is greeted by Cleavon, a support group facilitator who shows you around. You see that your mom will be downstairs with other parents, and that your brother will be with other*

*toddlers. As Cleavon brings you up the stairs you are introduced to more friendly facilitators. Anne shows you what is planned for the evening. In one corner you could make a mask, in another a big stack of board games awaits, and on the center table there will be memory-candle making.*

*You notice that many other kids your age are gathering in a circle on the floor and you are invited to come and join them.*

*You find a comfy pillow and plop down. The facilitator welcomes everyone and asks that each person says their name and the name of their person who has died. As each person introduces themselves you begin to realize that everyone here has had a mom or dad die. You start to feel like you fit in. You think about trying to make a candle...*



At Circle of Care, our support groups bring together parents, children, teens and toddlers who have lost a family member or are living with someone who is seriously ill. By coming together we create a community of peer support. This safe place breaks the isolation many of our families experience in the midst of grief. It is a relief not to feel so alone. Our groups are safe spaces for each family member to experience their grief.

Each group is unique and each person who comes has something to give and to receive. Our structure is open and flexible to meet many different peoples' needs. The kids who have been in groups for awhile reach out to new members, remembering their first time in

### Welcome

In this issue we highlight our Support Groups

Summer Fun Day Highlights Pg 2

Summer Fun Day Pictures pg 3 & 4

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group. Parents share strategies and go away feeling better able to cope.

Crystal, age 10, said it best; "I wish I could come here every night. It makes my heart feel better."

If you know someone who could benefit from our support groups, please tell them to contact us at 510-531-7551.

## Summer Fun Day was a BLAST!

Our 4th annual Summer Fun Day was a big success this year! On July 9th, over 20 families gathered at Circle of Care to participate in this year's activities, which included an Astro-jumper, clown, face painting, water balloon toss, art projects, and drum circle. We'd like to extend a very warm THANK YOU to all of our volunteers who helped to make this possible: Amy Boxer and her sister, Martha Chase and her daughter, Cleavon Smith, Anne Bodel, Melissa Cheung, Amanda Field, Joanna Vaughn, Kaili Moyer, our photographer Ron Chen and Clown Debbie Brown. Check out the cool pictures on the following pages.....

### Little's Workshop Fun

Time was also spent with the youngest children that attend our support groups in our Little's Workshop. This workshop makes a special time for the toddlers to tell us about their feelings and families. This year our volunteer Donna Carvahlo brought her puppet "Matilda the Gorilla" to facilitate play with our youngest group members. Many thanks go out to Cleavon Smith, Ana Cruz and Donna for volunteering their time to make this workshop so special.

## Remembering Robert & Conner Van Tassel

In the summer issue of our Circle of Care newsletter we honored the lives of the Families that founded our program over 25 years ago. Due to some formatting issues the very end of the article was cut short leaving out the website address created by Peter Van Tassel, Bob's son. We apologize for this omission For more information and to check out the works and life of Robert Van Tassel take a look at [www.bobvantassel.net](http://www.bobvantassel.net)



### Our Wish List:

- ♥ Halogen Floor Lamps
- ♥ Polaroid film
- ♥ Used ink cartridges
- ♥ Band-aids - in all shapes, sizes and colors!
- ♥ Safeway and Albertsons gift cards
- ♥ Large Jug of Bubbles
- ♥ Art supplies for children
- ♥ Large floor pillows
- ♥ Gift certificates to bookstores



## Construction At Charleston Street

Support groups have been on break over the summer, but Circle of Care's building has been bustling with all kinds of exciting upgrades. In July, after Summer Fun Day, demolition of the old withering retaining wall began in the back yard, and will soon be replaced with a stronger more aesthetically pleasing concrete retaining wall and stairs. Tons of rock, dirt, and debris has been excavated from the back yard making the play area a lot larger, and safer for everyone who uses it. Inside the building, the walls experienced a facelift with a much needed fresh coat of paint.

Staff are now having fun reorganizing the offices and the multi-purpose group room upstairs getting ready for support groups to start up again in September. A big thanks to all the people who worked on these projects here at our offices, and especially to Debbie Tavella, Operations Manager at EBAC for making it all happen.



# Summer Fun Day Memories!

Photographs by  
Ron Chen



# More Summer Fun.....



# Fall 2005 Calendar

## September 2005

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Loss Group	15 Loss Group	16	17
18	19	20	21 Living w/Illness	22 Extended Fam. Loss	23	24
25	26 Volunteer-Open House	27	28 Loss Group	29 Loss Group		

## October 2005

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5 Living w/Illness	6 Extended Fam. Loss	7	8
9	10	11	12 Loss Group	13 Loss Group	14	15
16	17	18	19 Living w/Illness	20 Extended Fam. Loss	21	22 Vol Training
23/30	24/31	25 Vol Training	26 Loss Group	27 Loss Group	28	29

## November 2005

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Living w/Illness	3 Extended Fam. Loss	4	5
6	7	8	9 Loss Group	10 Loss Group	11	12
13	14	15	16 Living w/Illness	17 Extended Fam. Loss	18	19
20	21	22	23 No Groups	24 No Groups	25	26
27	28	29	30 Loss Group			

### Support Group Schedule

All groups meet from 6:30 to 8:00pm. Families need to be pre-registered to attend a support group.  
 Questions?  
 Call 531-7551

- ♥ **Wednesday Living with Illness:**  
 Sept. 21, Oct. 5th & 19th,  
 Nov. 2nd, 16th & 30th
- ♥ **Wednesday Living with Loss:**  
 Sept. 14th & 28th,  
 Oct. 12th & 26th, Nov. 9th
- ♥ **Thursday Living with Loss:**  
 Sept. 15th & 29th,  
 Oct. 13th & 27th, Nov. 10th
- ♥ **Thursday Extended Family Loss:**  
 Sept. 22nd, Oct. 6th &  
 20th, Nov. 3rd & 17th

**Teen Support at WCRC:** This group meets the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.

### Up-Coming Events

#### Fall Volunteer Training!

Our next training for new volunteers will be held:

October 22nd & 25th

Come join us at our next informational meeting on:

**September 26th**

For more information about the Info meeting or how to apply, contact Alinya Charron at 531-7551 x109 or email [alinya@ebac.org](mailto:alinya@ebac.org)

### Calendar Notes

Shaded Boxes indicate our offices are closed. Please note that we will not be having groups the week of November 21st-25th. The every other week schedule for Wednesday Living with Illness & the Wednesday Loss Group is slightly changed so that each group can have an opportunity to meet twice in November. Please call us if you have any questions about the schedule.

## Circle of Care

2540 Charleston Street  
Oakland, CA 94602

voice: 510-531-7551 fax: 510-531-3657

Circle of Care, formerly PediatriCare, assists children and families coping with grief and illness through support groups, counseling and school-based programs. We collaborate with Children's Hospital Oakland, Women's Cancer Resource Center and Alta Bates Comprehensive Cancer Center. We are one of the very few programs in the county devoted exclusively to the needs of children and their families who are dealing with grief in their lives. We are supported entirely by donations from the community, foundations and the families we serve.

### Requesting Services:

If you or someone you know could benefit from individual counseling or group services, please call 510-531-7551. We have a short telephone interview to get you started in our program.

### Our Staff:

Sara Marsh, Program Director, ext. 130

Elisabeth Hopkins, Program Assistant & HIV Coordinator, ext. 165

Alinya Charron, Volunteer Coordinator, ext. 109

Nancy Landau, Clinical Program Coordinator, ext. 107

Maria Hetenyi, Support Group Coordinator, ext. 195

Jacqueline Bruhn, Outreach Coordinator, ext. 173

**Newsletter Editor:** Alinya Charron, [alinya@ebac.org](mailto:alinya@ebac.org)



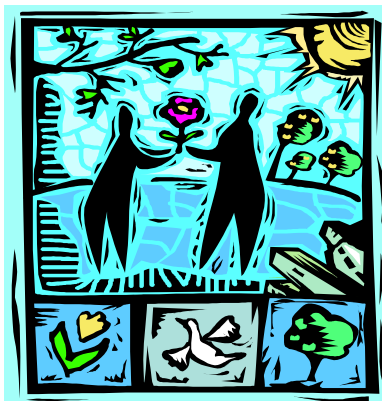
Circle of Care is proud to be a program of **East Bay Agency for Children (EBAC)**. EBAC improves health, offers hope, and provides opportunities to children and families. Our programs, located throughout Alameda County, prepare children to succeed in school; assist families through times of crisis; and provide therapeutic support to children who have suffered from abuse and/or neglect. Founded in 1952 by local parents, we have grown from a small program serving 18 children into a comprehensive regional agency making a lasting impact on more than 15,000 children and families every year.

## Sara Says...

As summer days shorten and the cool weather reminds us that autumn is just around the corner it is easy to want to resist the change of the seasons. This is especially true for those of us who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Change is always taxing, and when we are coping with multiple losses, even the change of the season can seem like too much to ask. At Circle of Care we wish all of you time and energy for your transitions and tasks this fall.

In June we ended our academic year by saying good-bye to our Clinical Coordinator, Gayle Pelton. Gayle worked with us for several years, and we wish her well as she

enters into a well-deserved retirement. She leaves a wonderful legacy of warmth and compassion. Nancy Landau will be our new Clinical Coordinator. Nancy has worked for the past year as a part-time supervisor for Circle of Care clinicians. She brings many years of experience work-



ing with children and families and a special interest in the healing role of the expressive arts. We are excited to have her on our team. Please join me in welcoming Nancy to our Circle of Care family as she transitions to the full-time clinical coordinator role.

September usually brings a few more summer days of warmth and lighter evenings. I hope you all can take the time for some dinners outside, or trips to nature, or sunset watching before the fall settles in. And we all look forward to seeing new and old friends in the support groups again this fall. Until then, wishing you peace and time!