

# Family FOCUS

FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY OF SAN MATEO COUNTY



## TEEN PREGNANCY BY THE NUMBERS

### DID YOU KNOW THAT IN 2005

- THE CHILDREN OF TEENAGE MOTHERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO PERFORM POORLY IN SCHOOL, WITH ONLY ONE IN THREE RECEIVING A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
- THE CHILDREN OF TEENAGE MOTHERS ARE AT GREATER RISK OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT
- THE DAUGHTERS OF TEENAGE MOTHERS ARE 22 PERCENT MORE LIKELY TO BECOME TEEN MOTHERS THEMSELVES

### HOPE YOU ENJOY THE NEW LOOK OF OUR FAMILY FOCUS NEWSLETTER.

WHEN YOU GET A CHANCE, GO ONLINE AND VISIT OUR NEWLY REVAMPED WEBSITE AS WELL:

[www.familyserviceagency.org](http://www.familyserviceagency.org).



**FamilyService**  
AGENCY OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

[WWW.FAMILYSERVICEAGENCY.ORG](http://WWW.FAMILYSERVICEAGENCY.ORG)

## FAMILY SERVICE CHANGES YOUNG LIVES FOR THE BETTER

It can make all the difference in the world for a young child to be raised by a mother with a high school education and strong parenting skills. Studies show that it can take years for a teen mom to catch up with her peers in terms of income and education, and their children can take the full brunt of the side-effects. They are far more likely than other youths to show cognitive and behavioral difficulties, which can persist into their teens and even adulthood.

With that in mind, Family Service has taken over operations of the Child Development Center at Redwood High School in Redwood City, part of the Sequoia High School District. Our presence there allows young mothers to be active participants in the care of children while continuing their high school educations.

The center operates from 7:30 AM-4:30 PM Monday through Friday, and will be licensed for 30 infants and toddlers. Teen moms are spending quality time with their children both in the morning before classes and when they feed them lunch. As part of the curriculum offered by Family Service Early Learning Division, the young mothers will be taught crucial aspects of parenting, such as proper nutritional care, financial management, and other life skills to help

build positive and productive lives for themselves and for their children.



Renowned Infant-Toddler Environment Designer Louis Torrelli helped design the center's environment and Family Service will look to him for help in designing their downtown San Mateo childcare center, which will open its doors in early 2005.

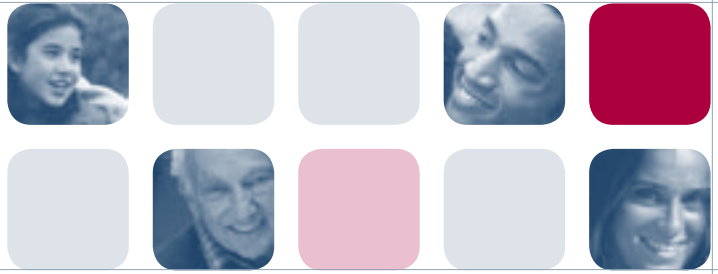
A festive open house is slated for October

21. Please join us from 4-7 pm at 1968 Old County Road (between Whipple and Brittan) in Redwood City.

To find out how you can help Family Service and the Redwood Child Development Center change the lives of infants and toddlers for the better, or to RSVP for the Open House, please call 650-403-4300, extension 4907.



**MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**



*“Current research in brain development clearly indicates that the emotional, physical and intellectual environment that a child is exposed to in the early years of life has a profound impact on how the brain is organized.”*

– The California Children & Families Commission

At Family Service Agency of San Mateo County we’ve always believed that a young child’s development into healthy adulthood is much like the building of a sturdy house – without a strong foundation a child is at a disadvantage from day one.

With this in mind, over the years we’ve built programs that have helped parents become more caring, a visitation center that lets children of broken homes stay safely in touch with both parents, and child care centers with an emphasis on early learning.

Now, with great pride we’ve taken the reins of the Redwood High School Child Development Center (please see front page for full story). Our high staff-to-child ratios ensure extensive individual attention to each child’s needs to develop physically, intellectually and emotionally during the most crucial stages of their lives. Teen moms are learning

proper care for their infants and toddlers and the realities of parenting while finishing high school. Our partnership with the Sequoia Union High School District and our presence at Redwood High School is building a strong and positive future for both the young mothers and their infants.

If you would like to make a difference in the lives of these young people by volunteering or making a contribution, please contact Shirley Moore at 650-403-4300 extension 4412. To attend the Open House on October 21, please call 650-403-4300 ext. 4907.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions.

**WHEN AND WHERE TO SHOW YOU CARE**

The coming months boast a number of events, both locally and nationally, where you can make a difference...here are some of our favorites.

**HOLIDAYS ON A HIGH NOTE:** Presented by the Foothill Auxiliary, this annual sell-out event is scheduled for Monday, October 18, from 10am-2pm. It will be held at the Menlo Circus Club and will feature stunning Holiday table settings, a sumptuous lunch, a display of fun and festive floral arrangements and an encore presentation by Doug Robbins. For reservations and more information contact Diane Crittenden at 650-325-8328.

**OPEN HOUSE, FAMILY SERVICE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT REDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL:** Thursday, October 21 from 4-7pm at 1968 Old County Road, Redwood City. Celebrate one of our newest efforts in changing young children’s lives for the better. Call 650-403-4300 ext. 4907 to RSVP.

**HOLIDAY TOY STORE:** December 10, 11, 12. Family Service volunteers from the Foothill Auxiliary invite you to hold a toy drive at your school or company to stock our “Holiday Store”, which is available for parents (clients of the Family Service) to “shop” for gifts for their children at the holidays.

We encourage the parents to be the gift givers, strengthening their position in their families. This is an ideal opportunity for school-age children to receive community service hours and for companies to celebrate the holiday season by reaching out to those in need. For toy donations, contact Carol Mince at 650-324-0234; for volunteer opportunities, contact Diane Crittenden, at 650-325-8328

**OFF TO THE RACES!** Fancy a trip to jolly old England? Kerns Fine Jewelry has generously donated to the Hillsborough Auxiliary a trip for two from San Francisco to London, England, including round-trip airfare and a stay at the fabulous 11 Cadogan Gardens Hotel. Hobnob with royalty and steep yourself in pageantry at the Royal Ascot horse races! For a chance to win this once-in-a-lifetime adventure call Judy O’Neal at 650-344-3133.

**NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK:** November 21-27. This special week – sponsored by the Alliance for Children and Families -- is a catalyst for family-strengthening advocacy, through programs, policies, and actions. To find out how you can organize a celebration of family in your neighborhood or home, call 800-221-2681 or visit [www.nationalfamilyweek.org](http://www.nationalfamilyweek.org).



## DIFFERENCE-MAKERS: CHARLES N. HUGGINS, PRESIDENT OF SEE'S CANDIES

Few people epitomize Family Service's mission of 'Making a Difference' as fully as Charles N. Huggins, President & CEO of See's Candies of South San Francisco. Huggins' ongoing efforts for Family Service include past duty served on the agency's Board of Directors and extremely generous donations, including several company cars from See's fleet. And not just any company cars – these were filled to the brim with delicious confections from See's Candies to 'sweeten' the kind donation even more!



PHOTO: SCOTT BUSCHMAN

In tribute to Huggins' extraordinary efforts, Family Service's Board of Directors recently named him as an honorary lifetime member at a festive annual meeting that included a personalized tribute song for the jazz aficionado sung by his fellow board members. Huggins' wife Donna, who also volunteers for Family Service as outgoing president of its Valley Auxiliary, was by his side as he accepted his honor.

"We are not only appreciative of Mr. Huggins' past efforts on behalf of the agency, but are also thrilled to have him signed up as a lifetime advocate of our ongoing causes," remarked Family Service President Laurie Wishard. Mr. Huggins characteristically gave much of the credit for his charitable nature to Donna, who brings a spark of creativity and energy to the Valley Auxiliary.

Huggins has been with See's Candies since 1951, and his experience as a community philanthropist is equally impressive. He has assisted more than 150 organizations and donated \$1.5 million towards helping Peninsula citizens. Along with his tenure at Family Service, he has also served on the San Mateo County Council and the Boy Scouts of America's Board of Directors, as well as serving on the Filoli Board for twenty years. Among his many other contributions to the success of Family Service, Mr. Huggins was personally responsible for making possible the construction of a new playground at the Family Service Leo J. Ryan Child Development Center in South San Francisco.

On behalf of the many families throughout San Mateo County whose lives have been positively impacted by his generosity, Family Service extends its warmest gratitude to Charles Huggins.

For more information on See's Candies, please call (800) 347-7337 or visit [www.sees.com](http://www.sees.com). If you'd like to make a positive difference for Family Service like Mr. Huggins and See's Candies has done, please call 650-403-4300 extension 4412, or visit [www.familyserviceagency.org](http://www.familyserviceagency.org).

## HIRING OLDER WORKERS IS A WIN-WIN SITUATION

Diana Hervey was at the end of her proverbial rope when she came to Family Service Agency of San Mateo County last year for information about returning to the job market. At 61, and out of the job hunt for a few years, she wasn't sure if she was ready for a full-time position, or even how to get started.

An interview revealed that Hervey was qualified for the federally funded Senior Employment Services Program, uniquely designed for low-income people over the age of 55. She then worked 20 hours a week at minimum wage at a neighborhood Regional Occupational Program, studying computers, and also worked at a variety of jobs at Family Service.



When a regular position opened up several months later at Family Service, with higher wages and full benefits, it was a like a dream come true for Hervey. She has impressed co-workers and supervisors alike as Family Service's receptionist. Her recently polished computer skills have helped her immeasurably on the job, and she's happy as can be in her new career and life.

"I've wanted so much to work here," she says today, "It's a wonderful place."

To mark the recent National Employ Older Workers Week (Sept. 19-25) this is an ideal time for companies in our region to inquire with Family Service Agency of San Mateo County about hiring an older worker. We placed over 200 seniors in permanent positions last year, matching these sage, seasoned and well-trained workers with companies that appreciate hard-working and loyal employees. We invite anyone age 55 or older who is interested in re-joining the job market to call and make an appointment with one of our employment specialists.

Family Service can provide them with training and job placement opportunities in a number of fields, from accounting to retail to nursing.

For more information on Family Service's senior employment services please call 650-403-4300, extension 4369.

## SENIOR-SAVVY SUSAN

Senior Division Director Susan Houston has been making a difference through her work at Family Service in this community for two decades. Since joining Family Service in 1984, Susan has been doing stellar work, moving into her current position fifteen years ago. Overseeing the employment services (see article above) occupies much of Susan's time and talent, while one day a week is dedicated to the people and activities of the Family Service Intergenerational Center at Fair Oaks. In all she does, Susan keeps the focus on "building up services to seniors and securing solid funding to support those services."

Some of these services, designed to keep seniors who attend the Intergenerational Center healthy in mind and body, include Spanish-speaking support groups, computer classes, garden club, exercise, sewing and much more. Perhaps the most critical program offered at the Center is the daily meal. Anyone aged 55 or older can stop by any weekday for a hot, nutritious meal. A typical day would find over 60 meals being served to older folks from all walks of life. For many, this is the only nutritious meal of the day and the only social contact, both vital to healthy living.

One common vein to all of the programs, says Susan, is the need for additional funding. Government funds earmarked for senior programs help, but leave a significant shortfall each year. The funding for the meal program requires matching funds and other programs depend on special grants, as many of the people who attend the center cannot afford to pay for classes.

While this funding can be a struggle, Susan did want to acknowledge those who have made a difference at the center.

This includes an "absolutely wonderful" Senior Advisory Committee, made up of Board Members and community leaders. Last spring, with help from Wells Fargo and Kaiser Permanente, this committee and the Valley Auxiliary to Family Service hosted a festive garden luncheon for the seniors – an experience of a lifetime for many. This year, they will be studying ways to provide programs in a more efficient and cost-effective manner to maintain stability even in tough economic times.

The most satisfying part of her work, says Susan, is helping seniors feel they are "truly involved in and contributing to society. For some, our services are the reason they even get dressed in the morning."

*To offer your help, please contact Shirley Moore at (650) 403-4300, x4412. Why not sponsor a day of lunches in the name of a loved one or close friend? Send your donation of \$100 in the enclosed Focus envelope and warm the heart of someone close to you by easing the hunger of an older person in need.*

We are grateful for the following  
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## **MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH A GIFT THAT GIVES**

When Family Service Agency Board Member Jean Leonard attended her birthday party this past summer, the gifts that she was most excited about weren't even for her. They were checks made out to Family Service Agency of San Mateo County in Jean's name, with the idea thought up by an old friend familiar with her penchant for helping those in need – and Jean's 12-plus years serving the agency.



The result? Nearly \$900 in funds to help families and children in need. And a feeling of satisfaction that is priceless.

"I've always believed in the concept of helping those who need help," Leonard told Focus, adding that the Child Development Division of Family Service is particularly close to her heart. She also appreciates the fact that the low administrative overhead at Family Service Agency means most of what people give goes directly to helping families in need.

There's no secret to getting friends and loved ones to donate to a great cause in celebration of a special occasion, says the long-time supporter of Family Service...

"Just let them know you'd prefer that instead of gifts!"

Jean is a perfect example of someone who puts others' needs before her own. The result is that her actions make a difference in the lives of many who need help to lead positive and productive lives. All of us salute Jean and others like her who have made Family Service Agency a priority in their lives.

To learn more about the difference your gifts to Family Service Agency make, please call Shirley Moore at 650-403-4300, extension 4412.