

# HOMEtown News

The Official Newsletter of the House of Mercy and Encouragement

Summer 2018



## From the Director

We live in very challenging times. Political turmoil, senseless wars, refugees seeking shelter, volcanic eruptions, unpredictable weather, school shootings and a myriad of other problems. How is this effecting our mental health? How is it effecting our children? I remember counseling a young child in 2001 whose favorite Uncle was a steward on the second plane that went into the Twin Towers in New York. He made two tall structures out of large cardboard blocks and then took a toy airplane off the shelf and rammed it into blocks, crumbling the structure he had carefully made. He didn't say a word but began to pace back and forth in the room- back and forth, back and forth. His breathing became shallow and it was hard for him to catch his breath. Then he threw up. He was having a full-blown panic attack! This is what trauma can do to a child. I began to read everything I could get my hands on regarding children and trauma. I remember reading an interesting article about children and PTSD. They don't have to have experienced the trauma themselves. In other words, they don't have to have first-hand experience of the trauma. Many children who were not part of or even knew anyone in the Oklahoma City bombing were experiencing post-traumatic stress- nightmares, clingy behavior, easily irritated or angry, play re-enactment, somatic complaints. The article went on to explain the children with PTSD had only seen the events on TV or heard others speaking about it.



My husband and I recently went on a date to the movies. I can't even remember the last time we had attended a movie, but I will say I was impressed with the automatic seats! We saw "Pope Francis, A Man of His Word." Catholic or not, church goer or not, believer or not, I would highly recommend this movie. It is like a breath of fresh air, in a world so wrought with violence, abuse, consumerism, and narcissism. He addresses mental health. He states, "We live with the accelerator down from morning to night. This ruins mental health, spiritual health, and physical health. More so: it affects and destroys the family and society." His anecdote is to rest, worship God and "to spend time with the family, to play..." We need to play. We need to laugh. We need to have fun and we need to spend precious time with our loved ones. Turn off the TV, shut down the computer and video games. Turn off the cell phones and make eye contact with your children, husband, wife, mother, father, and grandparents. We need to work harder than ever to strive for a sense of peace – peace within our hearts, peace within our families and peace within the community. We need to do it now!

In His Peace,  
Dolores

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2030 Main St.  
Dunedin, FL 34698



# More Than Words Can Express!

I am so humbled by the gracious out pouring of donations to the House Of Mercy and Encouragement these past few months!!! We are looking forward to serving more families and children through your generosity, implementing an educational series on various mental health topics through our HOME auxiliary, building a solid infrastructure and initiating a mentoring program. There are so many needs to fulfill to help our community raise awareness of mental health issues, support those who have no insurance or means to get help and assist children with learning challenges who cannot afford the extra help. Every donation is used to meet these challenges to assure that we live in a safe and caring community.

- ❖ Richard Dennison and Elizabeth Bosco in memory of their son, Rich. Peace be with you.
- ❖ Special longtime friends and supporters of HOME
- ❖ Newcomers Club of Dunedin: \$1,000
- ❖ Walmart: \$1,000
- ❖ Kiwanis Club of Dunedin: \$1,300
- ❖ Knights of Columbus, John F. Kennedy Council No. 5635: \$20,000

## Comments From Some of Our Wonderful Families We Serve:

"Some great news! I had my NACC certification interview in Texas on Pentecost Sunday and was accepted! This means I am now a Board Certified Chaplain-I just couldn't have done this without your loving support!"

"My 6-year-old daughter **asked** to come see Ms. Dolores again after a successful series of sessions last year. She had a very positive experience at H.O.M.E."

"We are extremely grateful for the ability to join group sessions under a scholarship offered by HOME as my child recently lost his insurance coverage, but needs the services provided by Dolores and the others at HOME. Thank you for your generous offers."

"Love it here! Great experience!"

**"Let us more and more insist on raising funds of love, of kindness, of understanding, of peace. Money will come if we seek first the Kingdom of God - the rest will be given." — Mother Teresa**

## Welcome to HOME, Stacy!

We are pleased to have Stacy Dennison as our new Community Outreach Coordinator. Stacy will be busy with our upcoming fundraising efforts and letting others know about the quality mental health services we provide for children and families. Below is a little bit about her.



Stacy is the Community Outreach Coordinator of HOME. Stacy's main responsibilities include creating a public awareness of HOME and its mission, building relationships with the local community, and planning special events with the HOME auxiliary, including the annual fundraiser.

Stacy moved to Florida in 2007 after receiving a Bachelor's degree from American University in Washington, DC. Stacy brings experience with her from working at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office as a Community Programs Specialist for ten years. Stacy enjoys working with family (Dolores is her aunt and Lindsay is her cousin) and for an organization whose mission she believes in.



## BAY NEWS 9: EVERYDAY HEROES

Not long ago, Bill Murphy called Dolores to tell her that she was nominated to be an “Everyday Hero.” Bill profiles one local person each Monday on Bay News 9 who is making a difference in the community. Unknown to Dolores, a mother, Melissa Valentine, nominated her and the call from Mr. Murphy was totally unexpected. **My deepest gratitude is extended to Melissa.** Below is the email she sent: (used with permission)

“I’d like to nominate Dolores Mortimer as an everyday hero. Dolores has founded and operates House of Mercy and Encouragement (HOME) in Dunedin which provides individual and group counseling, tutoring, and behavioral interventions for children and families for the last 10yrs. Dolores still provides therapy and works with my son in counseling and is fantastic. She founded HOME after her son and nephew were killed in a tragic car accident. Her commitment to helping kids with mental health needs over the last 30 years and her ability to turn a tragedy into a desire to help others makes her an everyday hero. Below is a link to the website for HOME.

Thanks,

Melissa Valentine”

You can view the story by going to:

<http://www.baynews9.com/fl/tampa/news/2018/05/28/everyday-hero-dunedin-house-mercy-encouragement>



To check out our **upcoming events** including groups, educational support meetings hosted by our HOME Auxiliary, art classes, socials and fundraisers, check us out on the **House Of Mercy and Encouragement Facebook page**. Keep an eye out for our next fundraiser in November! Details are upcoming. ([facebook.com/houseofmercyfl/events](https://facebook.com/houseofmercyfl/events))

### HOME Auxiliary

The purpose of the HOME Auxiliary is to offer volunteer support and assistance to the mission of the House Of Mercy and Encouragement. HOME faithfully provides quality mental, emotional and behavioral health services to children and families. This vital work needs your help! The auxiliary meets every second Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm. If you are interested in learning more, email our Community Outreach Coordinator Stacy @ [Stacy.dennison@houseofmercy-fl.org](mailto:Stacy.dennison@houseofmercy-fl.org) or our Volunteer Coordinator Sharyn @ [stjildea@knology.net](mailto:stjildea@knology.net)



### Coffee with the Counselor

An important goal for the House Of Mercy and Encouragement is to provide educational opportunities for the community regarding mental, emotional and behavioral health issues. The HOME Auxiliary is helping to provide vital information by hosting a speakers’ series called **Coffee with the Counselor**. The first two presentations are scheduled for Tuesday July 10<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday September 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm – 8:00pm at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church. The following is an overview of the topics to be presented:

**Spirituality and Psychology:** Strong emotions such as anger, depression and anxiety can affect our spiritual life and our faith. What can we do besides pray when we are feeling overwhelmed? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in healing our wounded emotions and communicating with others? A practical approach that you can apply right away will be discussed so that healing may begin. Come and find out how to help yourself or those you love. Presented by Dolores Mortimer, LMHC #5480, NCC, RPT/S

**Spirituality of the 12 Steps and Mental Health:** This presentation will take a fresh look at the 12 step program which is used in many recovery programs such as AA, NA, and OA. Using the guidelines of the 12 Step Program and the Serenity Prayer can help all of us in our daily life overcome many stressful challenges we face. Come and learn about the relationship between stress, addiction, mental health and the 12 Steps.

Presented by Sr. Cathy Cahill, OSF. Sister Cathy is a Franciscan Sister of Allegany, trained as an alcoholism counselor at Lutheran General Hospital in Chicago. This eventually led to a retreat ministry. She has had over 30 years experience facilitating retreats and days of reflection. Marcia Albanese, MA, RN, has had over 35 years experience working in the field of nursing and is well versed in AA programs and mental health. We are blessed to have both experts present this very important topic.

Call HOME for more information or to register for either of the presentations. 727 786-7951

If you don't see your insurance please contact us. We also offer a sliding fee scale and scholarships. Please call for more details.

BayCare • Cigna • Humana (Lifesynch)  
MHnet Behavioral Health • New Directions  
Tricare • ValueOptions • Vocational Rehab

Currently a Provider for:

## Need Help??

Our vision is to compassionately serve as a resource for those children and families who are affected by mental health, learning, emotional, or behavioral issues. We are a faith-based provider who believes in the God given dignity of every child and family. All families are treated with respect and kindness.

HOME is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping children and families.

Website:  
www.houseofmercy-fl.org  
Email address:  
info@houseofmercy-fl.org

Phone: 727-786-7951  
Fax: 727-786-7951

2030 Main Street  
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*play therapy, counseling, tutoring  
help for children and families*

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