

HOMEtown News

The Official Newsletter of the House of Mercy and Encouragement

Fall 2019



From the Director

I am having an internal struggle with my conscience. Should I continue to watch the evening news or not? The unprecedented number of floods, tornados, uncontrollable wildfires, missing children, missing mothers, racism, hatred, violence and so many other issues. We are a people on edge. My struggle is this. Do I continue to watch the news to be informed or do I keep the TV off at night? I fear if I don't watch the news, then I will be uninformed and become complacent. But if I continue to watch the news, am I subjecting myself to angst? How much can I take?



One of HOME's therapists came to me the other day to ask if I had heard the news just reported. I had not. She said that a motorcycle backfired in Times Square and hundreds of people panicked and ran scrambling for cover thinking it was an active shooter. Some people got hurt in the chaos, thankfully no one was killed. Are we living in a world gone mad? The therapist said, "Everyone is suffering from PTSD!"

I have a plaque hanging in one of the rooms at HOME. I read it often and sometimes point to it as I am counseling others. It says, "God does not give us what we can handle. God helps us handle what we are given." It reminds me of all the good there is in the world. Where "sin is increased, grace overflows all the more." I think of first responders, doctors, nurses, technicians, everyday people who attend to the wounded until help arrives, the multitude of people of every color, race, and faith who pray and turn their hearts to God for so many in need. God helps us handle what we are given through the goodness and grace of others. Yes, through prayer and action, whatever it may be, wherever you are.

So, I have decided to continue to watch the news. I don't want to forget all the people who need my prayers. I want to continue to promote peace through a listening ear, words of encouragement and perhaps offering a box of tissues when the stream of tears seem endless.

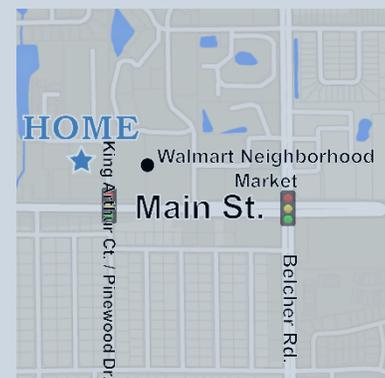
God bless all of you who come to HOME seeking peace. God bless all of you who pray for us at HOME and especially for those who financially support us to help keep our doors open. Without you, we wouldn't exist. We wouldn't be able to extend our gift of peace to so many children and families in our community. Thank you and know that we are deeply grateful.

In His Peace,
Dolores

In this Issue:

- **My Story**
- **We Are Pleased to Announce**
- **Coffee With the Counselor**
- **Lots of FUN and LOTS of OPPORTUNITIES for Kids!**
- **HOME 2019 Fundraiser**

2030 Main St.
Dunedin, FL 34698



My Story

"My Story" is a true story written by a parent, guardian, client or therapist who found help or inspiration through HOME. Our deepest gratitude to the author, Ana Gutierrez!

Starting a journey can sometimes feel scary. When I was looking for sites to complete my practicum and internship experience, I felt anxious and overwhelmed by the process. I came upon a sign that read HOME: House of Mercy and Encouragement and the words "play therapy" caught my eye. I was in a play therapy program at my university and wanted to work with children and adolescents. I felt the anxiety leaving me and being replaced by excitement. After looking HOME up on their website, the excitement grew. Not only did they work mainly with children and families, but I would be able to learn under a Registered Play Therapy Supervisor if Dolores decided to take me on. This seemed like the perfect place for me. I stopped looking for any other site and held out hope that Dolores would agree to supervise me. When I first met Dolores, I realized I was meeting a kind, energetic, knowledgeable, and spiritual woman. After meeting with her a couple more times, Dolores decided to take me on as a student intern.

In August 2018, I started my journey at HOME, and I've never looked back. I had theoretical knowledge and some experience from my play therapy class, but had not truly been able to apply what I've learned. As I met with more clients and co-facilitated more groups, my confidence in counseling grew. I have done over 200 play therapy sessions with children and families, co-facilitated over 40 group sessions with children and teens, and conducted over 40 individual or family counseling sessions during my time at HOME. Dolores grew into more than a supervisor to me. She became a mentor and guided me through the counseling process and the best ways to help my clients. Each of the people I have met through HOME has left an impact on me. I learned new techniques and new ways to consult with parents and teachers that I could not have learned otherwise. I developed close therapeutic relationships with my clients that have helped them to grow in their own journey. My heart has grown as a person and as a counselor.

It has now been a year, and I've graduated from Stetson University. That part of my journey has ended. I am beyond thrilled that my journey with HOME has not. It has truly become a home for me, and I will never be the same.



Good works are links that form a chain of love.
- Mother Theresa

We Are Pleased to Announce...

Since our last newsletter, the following groups have granted us funds:

- Dunedin Newcomers Club \$1,000
- Pinellas County Sheriff's Advisory Board \$1,000
- Walmart Supercenter – #2796 – Oldsmar \$250
- Walmart Supercenter – #1712 – Largo \$250

We are deeply grateful for the funds to be used for scholarships, nutritious snacks, and to help support our social skills groups.

Thank you for understanding how vital your support is in helping our children and families. We are all working together to keep our community healthy and safe!

Thank you to Lizzy and James Keene, owners of Pisces Sushi and Global Bistro of Dunedin for sponsoring a delicious fundraising event at their restaurant in Dunedin. We raised close to \$1,000!



Pisces Owner Lizzy Keene, Dunedin Chamber of Commerce Director of Operations Matt Mennenga with his daughter Madison



We had tremendous feedback from those who participated by attending last year's Coffee With the Counselor sessions. We asked what you would like to have presented this year and an overwhelming response suggested more topics with spirituality incorporated into the discussions. We are listening and responding! We are very excited about our next presentation.

October 29, 2019 Spiritual Living in a Secular World

Panel Discussion: Fr. Gary Dowsey, Fr. Victor Amorose, and others will facilitate this inspirational, much requested topic. What is spirituality? What does it have to do with everyday life? How do I foster my own spirituality in times of trouble, despair or suffering? How can I encourage others when I feel so discouraged? Come be renewed mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Enjoy coffee, refreshments and uplifting conversations.

RSVP by calling Lindsay at H.O.M.E. 727-786-7951 or email Stacy the following: stacy.dennison@houseofmercy-fl.org The location is at Our Lady of Lourdes Conmy Center 750 San Salvador Drive. **All** are invited to attend.

*You're
Invited*

12TH ANNUAL H.O.M.E. FUNDRAISER

Sunday, September 15th, 4-6PM

Featuring
music by:
**Gloria West
and
The Gents**

**Countryside Country Club
3001 Countryside Blvd. Clearwater**

**Tickets:
\$50 Per Person**

**LIMITED SEATING:
R.S.V.P. by September 1, 2019
727-786-7951**

Hors d'oeuvres

Silent Auction

Cash Bar

Live Jazz

**Proceeds will be used to help H.O.M.E. provide counseling and
tutoring services to children and families in need.**

**H.O.M.E. is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization
dedicated to serving the needs of children and families.**





LOTS of FUN and LOTS of OPPORTUNITIES FOR KIDS!

We are offering the following the following classes for kids of all ages this fall.

Social Skills Classes/Friendship Groups: for children Pre-k through 1st grade!

Little ones learn the basics of making and being a friend. Through art, stories and play children learn how to share, trade and take turns. They will engage in games and cooperative play while learning boundaries, and appropriate ways to communicate while solving problems.

Creative Arts Expression Classes: for children 2nd through 5th grade

There are many ways to express yourself than just through words. Creative expression includes art, drama, building, music and movement, writing poetry or stories, using puppets and much, much more! This class is meant to appeal to your child's senses and imagination in order to **build self-esteem, emotional regulation, communication skills, boundaries and character development.**

Legos Imagination: Middle School and up

A meeting of great minds! If you are a LEGO® fan, if you love being creative and enjoy problem solving, teamwork then this is the class for you! Students will be challenged to design and build their own LEGO® models. From spaceships to buildings- the sky is the limit! The only thing holding you back is your own imagination.

Open Art Studio for Teens

A special invitation is extended to Middle and High School students who enjoy art! Students are free to use clay, paints, pencils, pens to design their own masterpiece. Materials provided. Pizza for lunch and snacks included.



SEPTEMBER CLASSES STARTING SOON. YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER CALL LINDSAY@727-786-7951 FOR DATES, TIMES, and FEES

**HURRY!
HURRY!
HURRY!**

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

- Aetna • American Behavioral • BayCare
- Cigna • Corporate Care Works • Humana
- New Directions EAP • Psych Care (Av Med)
- Sunshine Health • Tricare
- Vocational Rehab • Wellcare

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

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*play therapy, counseling, tutoring
help for children and families*

