

# HOMEtown News

The Official Newsletter of the House of Mercy and  
Encouragement

Spring 2022



## From the Director

Lately my husband and I have been watching a lot of documentaries on the Beatles. I have been thoroughly entertained. It makes me laugh to see how the girls screamed and even fainted at the sight of the "Fab Four." Yes, I even remember when I was in elementary school watching them on television with my family when they appeared for the first time on the Ed Sullivan show. All my father could talk about was their long hair and all I could think about was "Which one is the cutest?" For me, watching the Beatles documentaries is a trip down memory lane. I am sure I learned about love through my family and experiences but I also learned about love through songs such as "All You Need Is Love," "All My Loving," "She Loves You," "Can't Buy Me Love," and so many more! Then I think about other songs that the hippies and other musical performers of the time advocated for love, peace, and wearing flowers in our hair.



In the many years between then and now, I have learned much about love. A great deal has been through my faith and reading. Much of it has been through watching family and friends. A considerable amount of learning has been through listening. Everyone has a story. Some of my greatest lessons on love have been through stories of grief, broken relationships, sorrow, and triumph over despair.

Many years ago, I remember watching a video called "Life After Life." It was a documentary on near death experiences. I really enjoyed the production because it was not proselytizing any religion or particular set of beliefs. Psychiatrist Raymond Moody was interviewing individually many different people from various religions or no religion at all on the question, "What happened when you died?". Men, women, all different ages, from all different walks of life who died for varying lengths of time from a variety of causes were questioned. All came back from the experience saying the most incredible part of dying was experiencing the presence of unconditional love which was indescribable. They all came back to life not fearing death anymore. Each person realized it wasn't great achievements, awards, money, power, or fame. The question each person was asked by this presence of love was "How have you loved?"

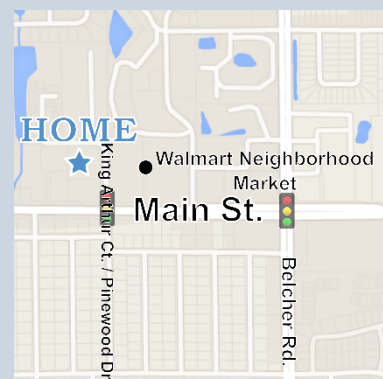
It is written in Scripture that "God is love." (1 John 4:16) I consider that to be the most important 3 words in the Bible. It is telling us that if we are made in the image and likeness of God, then we are made to love. Mother Teresa said, "At the end of life, we are going to be judged on the basis of our love for one another." So, the question for each one of us is "How have I shown my love today?"

In His Peace,  
Dolores

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2030 Main St.  
Dunedin, FL 34698



# My Story

I'd like to start by saying how grateful my Family and I are for the care and compassion shown to us by everyone at House of Mercy and Encouragement.

In 2007, school became a source of extreme anxiety for our 7-year-old. Things were getting worse rather than better and it was heartbreaking for all of us. This was when we realized that we needed some help.

The first therapy office we visited had a tiny room with no window and the therapist treated our kid as though he was misbehaving. This caused him to shut down further.

Luckily, his teacher recommended H.O.M.E and that's where our positive journey begins.

As soon as we walked through the door, we felt comfortable and welcome. That has continued every visit since. Even things like making appointments are super easy as Lindsay will remember things I mention and schedule appointments that suit our family.

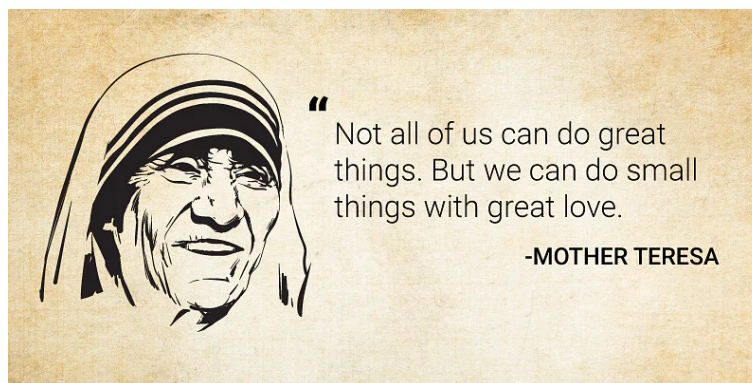
Ms. Dolores is wonderful, the therapy is always tailored to what is relevant in the kid's life, you can tell that she takes the time to think about that. Our son thinks the world of her and looks forward to going to the sessions, he often says that he feels much better when I come and pick him up. I can also tell that he has many coping strategies now for stressful situations. She really ensures people feel at home and I think that's what makes her so special.

The Art Therapy run by M'rissa is so fun and a great group activity. Expressing himself through art and working in a group was therapeutic and helped build his self-confidence.

We now have a happy and well-adjusted kid and we are very proud of him. He is doing well, even with the transition from elementary to middle school.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts, Ms. Dolores and team, you have been and continue to be an integral part of our Son's journey. You helped us get our boy back and we will be forever grateful.

*My Story is written by a parent who found help through the House Of Mercy and Encouragement. We are deeply grateful to the mother who has written about her experiences.*



## Did you know?

### MAY IS NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

**46% of Americans** will face the criteria for a diagnosable mental health condition sometime during their life. (Mental Health America)

**1 in 6 children aged 2-8 years old** has a mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder.

In June 2020 the CDC surveyed individuals across America and out of 5,470 respondents found the following:

- **31%** of respondents reported symptoms of anxiety or depression
- **13%** reported having started or increased substance use,
- **26%** reported stress-related symptoms
- **11%** reported having serious thoughts of suicide in the past 30 days.
- **These numbers are nearly double the rates we would have expected before the pandemic.**
- **74.9%** respondents aged 18 – 24 years reported at least on adverse mental or behavioral symptoms



If you know someone who needs help, please call our office **727-786-7951**. Also, the number **211** can help with financial and housing assistance. The national suicide prevention lifeline will be changing its 10-digit telephone number to **988** after July 16, 2022.

# SAVE THE DATE!

## COMING SEPTEMBER 17, 2022

### **"Help, Hope, and Healing: Mental Health Awareness Conference 2022"**

**Our Lady of Lourdes Church 750 San Salvador Dr, Dunedin FL 34698**

Open to everyone in the community. Lots of speakers and topics of interest for everyone of all ages. Good mental health begins with you! Mark your calendar for **Saturday September 17, 2022**. See what our community has to offer for help for you, your family, friends, and neighbors. Professional speakers include physicians, nurses, therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, and more. A special track for teenagers to attend will also be offered. Just a few of the topics of interest are:

- Boosting Brain Power: The Aging Brain
- Clinical Aspects of Depression and Anxiety
- Medications for ADHD, Depression and Anxiety
- Surviving Grief
- Parenting Challenging Children
- Raising Resilient Teenagers
- Autism Awareness
- Suicide Prevention
- Physiology of Addiction and Codependency
- Spirituality of the 12 Steps
- Diverse Learners: Giving Students What They Need
- Student Engagement, Motivation, and Organization: Practical Help

**Special Track for Teens: Vaping and Drug Education; Stress, Depression and Anxiety; Teen Talk and Creative Expression**

**Thank you, Fr. Gary, for opening your doors at Our Lady of Lourdes and welcoming so many people to attend this very important event!**

Our sponsors for the day are:



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

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



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 • BayCare • Cigna • Humana  
Sunshine Health • Tricare • Wellcare (CMS and  
Staywell)

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.

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