



CALICO Center

Child Abuse, Listening, Interviewing and Coordination Center

Spring 2007 / Volume 10

Celebrating **10 YEARS** *of Service*

2007 marks CALICO's tenth year of aiding abused children in Alameda County. Since 1997, over 5,000 young victims have been welcomed into a comfortable, child-friendly space where trained, compassionate staff sat down with each child to hear what happened. Dozens of agency partners now work together to make informed decisions about how best to keep these children safe and help them heal. Through CALICO's leadership, and the dedication of our many partners and supporters, the needs of young victims are now front and center of our county's response to child abuse. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of abused children!

Blanket Project Warms Hearts of Children

On February 24th, eighteen members of the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay, Inc. (JLOEB) and Jo Molz of Blankets for Kids gathered at CALICO to make fleece blankets for our children. Another 30 members assembled blankets at home and donated them to the project. In total, the JLOEB brightened CALICO's office by creating and donating over 350 blankets. The blankets are essential in creating a comfortable space to put children at ease during a difficult time. The assortment of patterns and colors add warmth to the office and the children light up when they are given a blanket to take home with them. Thanks to JLOEB members for their ongoing dedication and support!



New Services Launched

In April 2006, CALICO hired our first Family Resource Specialist, Allison "Ruby" Reid-Cunningham. As FRS, Ruby spent the last year developing and launching new services to support the families of children who come to CALICO. Ruby works one-on-one with each caregiver to:

- Answer questions, address concerns and provide a supportive attentive ear throughout a difficult and confusing process;
- Provide information about programs and services, particularly counseling, that their child and family may need to move forward and heal from the abuse; and
- Connect their family to the county's Victim-Witness Assistance program, which provides financial resources for counseling and an advocate who offers vital support throughout the legal process.

Our family support services are based on the premise that one of the best ways to support abused children is to support their caregivers. Sadly, Ruby will be leaving CALICO in May to conduct dissertation research in Croatia. We thank Ruby for the compassion and energy she brought to her work and for creating a new initiative that will serve families for years to come.

*"...you have no idea how comforting it was,
finding ourselves in CALICO's capable hands."
-Parent of CALICO client*

CALICO & Partners Recommit to Aid Abused Children

CALICO hosted our 10th Anniversary Leadership Breakfast on February 1st at the Alameda County Family Justice Center (the site of CALICO's Oakland satellite office). The event was an opportunity to celebrate the significant changes made in child abuse investigations over the past ten years. The leaders of over a dozen agencies – including District Attorney Tom Orloff, Social Services Director Chet Hewitt, Sheriff Greg Ahern, Police Chiefs Walter Tibbet (Alameda), Michael McQuiston (Albany), Douglas Hambleton (Berkeley), Janeith Glenn-Davis (Cal State-East Bay), Gary Thuman (Dublin), Ray Samuels (Newark), Wayne Tucker (Oakland), Michael Fraser (Pleasanton), and Greg Stewart (Union City), Dr. James Crawford of Children's Hospital and Research Center of Oakland, and Fred Gill of Community Care Licensing – publicly reaffirmed their commitment to CALICO's multi-disciplinary model to aid abused children in Alameda County. Dozens of donors and special guests attended the ceremony which was a powerful testimony to the value of CALICO services and the strength of the partnerships that have grown on behalf of abused children in Alameda County.



Save the Date!

Our 2007 annual collaborative training will be held Thursday, September 20th at the Marina Community Center, San Leandro. Join over one-hundred colleagues, including police officers, social workers, medical staff, lawyers, mental health professionals and others, to learn about best practices in child abuse response. E-mail calicomain@yahoo.com to be added to the mailing list.

"CALICO was there for our family during the hardest days of our lives. We will always remember how much you cared, and how much you helped us."

-Parent of CALICO client

Board Transitions

In 2006 we said goodbye to two Board Members, Margaret Walker, retired Pediatrician from Kaiser, and Vic Morris, Executive Director of First Tee of Contra Costa County. We thank them for their years of valuable service to CALICO!

Welcome to our three newest board members:

Amy Boxer

Amy owns Welcome Home Furniture Rental and Staging, providing staging services for home sellers and realtors. Amy has considerable expertise planning events and contributed her skills to our successful 2006 fundraiser. For the last three years Amy has been a volunteer at Circle of Care, a support center for families facing trauma and loss and for kids who have lost one or both parents.

Tara Desautels

Tara is an attorney with Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP in San Francisco. An expert in the field of child sexual abuse investigations, Tara previously served close to eight years as an Alameda County Deputy District Attorney and for the last two and a half years as a member of the child sexual assault vertical prosecution team. Starting in June, Tara will begin her first term as President of the CALICO Board.

Todd Ruggiero

Todd is a real estate entrepreneur and former Special Counsel for Sprint/Nextel where he negotiated the company's sports and entertainment deals. Todd is putting his marketing and entertainment background to use at CALICO by increasing community awareness of our services. He recently returned from a sabbatical in southern Africa, India and the Middle East.

Sharing Pieces of Gold

On November 16th, CALICO hosted our 9th annual collaborative training, "Pieces of Gold," at the Marina Community Center in San Leandro. Attendance was at record levels – 140 professionals, representing a range of disciplines including law enforcement, child welfare, mental health, medical/public health, and legal services. John E.B. Myers, law professor at University of the Pacific, gave the keynote address, which surveyed the latest research on child abuse investigations. As always, the event served as an opportunity for county leaders and experts to share "nuggets" of information. This year, the speakers highlighted three partnerships that have emerged to serve the growing number of children in Alameda County whose abuse has not historically been recognized or addressed, including:

Sexually Exploited Minors

Det. Jim Salida and Nola Brantley shared the challenges and successes investigating cases of human trafficking and sexual exploitation and providing services that can help young women onto a new path. (see Nola's related article, "Sexually Exploited Minors in Alameda County")

Drug-Endangered Children

As Capt. Eskridge of the Sheriff's Office explained, the health of children living in homes where drugs are used, manufactured and sold is significantly at risk. These so-called drug-endangered children (DECs) can inadvertently ingest airborne substances that settle on home surfaces, and many test positive for drugs. Because these children are at higher risk of sexual or physical abuse or neglect, CALICO is one of a dozen agencies that are working together to intervene on their behalf.

Children Witnessing Domestic Violence

Did you know that a child is 15 times more likely to be abused if s/he's living in a home where there's domestic violence? Or that just witnessing domestic violence can put a toddler at risk for psychological harm lasting for decades? Assistant District Attorney Karen Meredith highlighted new efforts in Alameda County to intervene when children are living in homes in which domestic violence occurs. A new county protocol is in the works, which we hope to see adopted county-wide in 2007.

The training was also an opportunity to present Sheriff Charlie Plummer, who retired in January, with a teddy bear and award thanking him "for his generosity, his steadfast support of CALICO, and his tireless commitment to keeping children safe." Thank you Sheriff Plummer for a decade of partnership with CALICO!

Thanks for a Fantastic Fall Fundraiser!

On October 23rd, CALICO hosted its 3rd Annual One Child at a Time Fundraiser at the Rotunda Building in downtown Oakland. Approximately 135 people shared an evening in support of CALICO – they enjoyed wine and hors d'oeuvres, folded an origami crane as part of our "LISTEN" community art project, heard from children's book author Elisa Kleven who read and displayed artwork from one of her books, and learned about CALICO services from county leaders and a young woman who benefited from them when she was sixteen. Thanks to our many sponsors and donors who made the evening a success – together we raised over \$15,000 through ticket sales, donations and a raffle to support vital services for abused children in Alameda County.



Fall Fundraiser Donors!

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Sexually Exploited Minors in Alameda County

By Nola Brantley, Scotlan Center and M.I.S.S.S.E.Y.

The issue of the sexual exploitation of minors, which is commonly (and improperly) referred to as teen or child prostitution, has reached epidemic proportions in Northern California. Over the last two years, the number of sexually exploited minors (SEMs) has increased, while the age of youth targeted for victimization continues to decrease. Several factors have contributed to this growing problem, including response systems that are uncoordinated, increasing violence towards sexually exploited minors, gaps in SEM-specific services, and relaxed enforcement or absence of adequate laws to protect children who are victims. In addition, in Northern California, SEMs are most often dependents of the state Child Welfare System and have run away from a court-appointed foster care or group home placement. Inappropriate placements, where SEMs do not receive the specialized care and attention they need, can contribute to the problem.

In response to the growing epidemic of SEMs in Alameda County, SEM-specific services have been developed and funded.

There are many laws in place to protect SEMs. Most of these laws fall under child abuse or other victim laws. Unfortunately, due to the absence of a law that would permit law enforcement to detain a SEM as a victim for more than 48 hours, most SEMs are arrested on criminal charges in order to get them off the street. Consequently, they are often not offered the services available to them as victims of child abuse. Currently there is great need for legislation that will protect this very vulnerable population of children.

In response to the growing epidemic of SEMs in Alameda County, SEM-specific services have been developed and funded. Three community-based organizations are providing SEM-specific advocacy/case management through the Sexually and Commercially Exploited Youth/Safe Place Alternative (SACEY/SPA) program funded, in part, by the City of Oakland Measure Y voter initiative. Additionally a healing, transition and recovery drop-in center for SEMs opened in April 2007 at the Alameda County Family Justice Center, and several community-based organizations that were previously doing general street outreach are now focusing street outreach specifically on SEMs. Finally, many of the major public systems within the county are beginning to work with the SACEY/SPA program around developing SEM-specific protocol within their systems.



As further response to the growing epidemic of sexually exploited children and the lack of appropriate services, placement options and laws pertaining to SEMs, four young women (including the author) have established MISSEY, Inc. to work exclusively on this issue and provide direct services to SEMs throughout Northern California. MISSEY, Inc. plans to open its doors July 1, 2007. You can learn more about MISSEY and the work being done around sexually exploited youth, especially in the form of child/teen prostitution, by visiting www.misseey.org. MISSEY, Inc. is very excited to announce a SEM crisis hotline, which will be up and running April 2007, 1-888-4MISSEY.

"The information learned during interviews often provides vital leads for the Detectives assigned to the Juvenile Division. Our Department views the assistance of CALICO as an essential part of the investigation of child abuse cases."
-Chief Joseph W. Kitchen
San Leandro Police Department
(Retired)

Many Thanks to our Generous 2006 Supporters!

The following donated to CALICO between January 1 and December 31, 2006

Community Organizations:

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Albany Peace Officers Association
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Mark Your Calendars: CALICO Turns Ten

CALICO will host a birthday party on July 21st, 6:00-9:00 p.m. to celebrate our 10 years of service. Come enjoy chocolate, wine, hors d'oeuvres and a raffle and hear from special guest, Senator Barbara Boxer.

Looking Ahead

As we enter our next decade of service, CALICO will have a new look in more ways than one. We are delighted to announce that CALICO received a \$28,200 Every Child Counts Capital Improvement Grant. With these funds, we are making much-needed improvements to our San Leandro facility. New paint, carpeting and furniture will brighten the office and make CALICO a more comfortable space for children and their families. Also in 2007, CALICO will have a virtual facelift – an enhanced website (www.calicocenter.org) is coming soon, featuring our new logo, more information about our services and child abuse, and ways to support the work we do.