



### CALICO Celebrates Our Friends in the Community

Each year, CALICO benefits from the generous hands-on support of dozens of volunteers. In 2008, friends of CALICO spent hours with hammer, nails, scissors, fleece, glass, clay and more to brighten the lives of the children we serve and the professionals that serve them. Thank you!



Eagle Scout Isaac Wolf designed and constructed an inviting outdoor breakroom for CALICO staff, complete with gorgeous hand-crafted redwood benches and planters. You did it Isaac!

The Junior League of Oakland East Bay hosted their second blanket-making Saturday at CALICO, crafting hundreds of soft fleece blankets to comfort CALICO children.



Karen Kadaja, founder and organizer of the annual One Bear Project, hosted this year's "teddy bear donation event" with entertainment, dancing, a BBQ and children's activities at Faultline Harley-Davidson/Buell in Fremont. Thanks to Karen's tireless efforts, 1,500 stuffed toys were donated to CALICO.

CALICO was selected as the charitable beneficiary of the 6th Annual Zocalo Holiday Art Benefit. Thanks to artists Marjorie Albright, Trish Culbert, Sadie Cuming, Susie Howell, Christopher Roscoe, Fleurette Sevin and Carole Westlund for contributing artwork for the raffle and 10% of your sales to CALICO.



### CALICO's Board of Directors Expands

CALICO is delighted to introduce a team of exceptional new members to the Board of Directors:

**Amy E. Blanchard.** As Program Manager at Cisco Systems, Amy's business acumen will foster new corporate relationships for CALICO.

**Brian L. Colbert.** A multi-talented entrepreneur and consultant, Brian has introduced CALICO to on-line social networking.

**Mark Goyne.** As Vice President at Wells Fargo Bank, Mark adds depth and expertise to CALICO's financial team.

**Patricia S. Itamoto.** An attorney and legal volunteer, Patricia brings a keen legal eye coupled with a facility for engaging new constituents.

**Holly Metz, Psy.D.** As a trauma therapist, Holly's expertise will advance CALICO services and partnerships in prevention, treatment and education.

**Gloria Taylor.** Gloria brings a rich history of volunteer and not-for-profit leadership plus deep ties within Alameda County.

The Board of Directors is a dedicated team who invests their time, talents and resources to advance CALICO's mission.

*If you want to share your talents in fundraising, marketing and/or event planning, please contact CALICO about joining a board committee.*

CALICO is always looking for new friends in the community. If you want to get involved, have ideas for ways you can help CALICO, or would like CALICO to come speak to your group or business, please contact us at (510) 895-0702 or info@calicocenter.org.

# An Interview with Family Resource Specialist Belinda Uriarte-Roehl

In August 2008, CALICO hired its first full-time Family Resource Specialist, Belinda Uriarte-Roehl. Belinda joined CALICO after years of helping children and families as a court liaison for SafeStart at the Unified Family Court of San Francisco, an early mental health specialist for the Link to Children in Oakland, and a victims of crime advocate for the San Francisco District Attorney's Office.

*What is it like to be a Family Resource Specialist at CALICO?*

It's very challenging work and, at the same time, humbling and rewarding. I feel humbled by all the people I meet who come here with pain and hurt and yet have the strength to go on. I feel honored that they share their stories with me. It feels rewarding to know I am part of a team of professionals who are dedicated to ending child abuse and what I do matters.

As a Family Resource Specialist, I have to keep an open mind and not pass judgment. Parents or caregivers can be sad, angry and scared when they get here, and it is my job to make sure they receive emotional support during a very difficult time. Many times just sitting with them to hear them out is enough. Many need follow up support to access community resources - especially counseling - so that they can heal and move on.

*What has surprised you most about working for CALICO?*

The professionals in this field are amazing! From law enforcement to the DA, the interviewers, the social workers, the therapists, and our passionate executive director. It's tough work, yet they do it with dedication and commitment, and still keep a sense of humor. That's inspiring!

The children are incredible too. I can't believe how strong and resilient they are in times of crisis and trauma.

*What do you find most challenging about working at CALICO?*

I think it's the feeling of helplessness, that I can't do anything about what happened to a child. When they ask, "Why my child? Why me?," I have no answers.

Also, this work can affect you. I have to keep my emotions in check so that I don't get affected by the traumatic stories I hear. I have to keep healthy boundaries between work and my personal life especially because I have young children. I have to make a conscious effort to take care of myself.

*What do you wish other people knew about working with this population?*

I wish people knew how difficult it is to be a caregiver, especially in times of crisis. I wish people knew how many loving, hardworking and caring parents, caregivers, and guardians there are, who truly want the best for their children.

*Tell me about some of the people you've met while working with CALICO?*

I've met some of the most admirable people in the field of child abuse including forensic interviewers who hear many sad stories and yet choose to continue doing this work, prosecutors working tirelessly for justice, and inspectors, social workers, therapists and advocates who have a passion for helping children. This work requires a lot of heart.

*What might someone be surprised to know about you?*

In addition to English, I speak Tagalog, a little bit of Ilongo which is a dialect from the Philippine Island, and Spanish.

*What do you do when you aren't working at CALICO?*

Have fun with the family, go to the movies, go out to dinner and travel. I also do a lot of PTA work at my children's school.



Belinda Uriarte-Roehl (left) with Kristy Brodeur Dermody at CALICO's Collaborative Training.  
Photo by Richard Langs.

# 5th Annual One Child at a Time Benefit

Thank you to our guests, volunteers, donors and sponsors for making the 5th Annual One Child at a Time Benefit the most successful yet. The festive evening at Periscope Cellars featured a wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres, a spirited raffle and silent auction, contemporary artwork by Maya Kabat, Elliot Anderson and Erik Niemann, and live jazz music by Rick Baskin and friends. Over \$45,000 was raised, and all proceeds support CALICO's forensic interviewing and family support services.

The event was made possible due to the generous support of many friends of CALICO:

**PRESENTING SPONSOR (\$10,000):** Tiger Trading Corp. Int.

**BEST FRIEND SPONSOR (\$5,000):** Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP

**ROLE MODEL SPONSOR (\$2,500):** Continental Mills

**CAREGIVER SPONSORS (\$1,000):** Jill and Stephen Chambers, Karen Meredith and Mike Wanless, Earl and Rosalinda Rupp

**EVENT HOST:** Periscope Cellars

Catering by Namie's Kitchen  
Cupcakes donated by Teacakes Bakeshop

White wine donated by Diageo Chateau & Estates Wine  
Beer donated by Eric Masamori

Invitations printed by @ Printing

Photos by Marcus Hanschen



## RAFFLE & AUCTION DONORS:

Acacia - Matthew Glynn  
American Swim Academy  
Bangkok Bay  
The Bar Method  
Bark Busters Home Dog Training  
Beaulieu Vineyard - Joel Aiken  
Best Buy  
Bette's Oceanview Diner  
Bud Field Aviation  
Campo di Bocce  
Renee Carolla  
Brian Colbert  
Constellation - Alan Atkinson  
Keren Deberg  
Deli Nini's

Anne Diem  
Grounds  
Hennessey House  
Karen Kaja  
Lake Chabot Golf Course  
Lalime's  
Eric Masamori  
McGreil Vineyards - Jim & Ginger McGreil  
John Menke  
Karen Meredith and Mike Wanless  
Miner/Oracle - Gary Brookman  
Nth Degree - Karl Wente  
Oakland Police Department  
Nagiba and Paul Peng  
Platypus Tour Coach

Provenance/Hewitt - Tom Rinaldi  
Saddle Creek Golf Course  
See's Candies  
Sorpresa Vineyard  
Sports Basement  
Sterling - Julie Schreiber, Mike Westrick  
STRIP.  
Tatedog - Claude Bobba  
Tilden Park Golf Course  
Twinkle Designs  
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer  
Walsh Vineyard Mgt - Brian Shepard  
Welcome Home Furniture Rental & Staging  
Whitehall Lane Winery - Dean Sylvester



## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR EVENT VOLUNTEERS:

Martin Berger, Kelly Cook, Marley Degner,  
Hannah Dermody, Sean Dermody,  
Melissa Graycar, Eleanore Hopper,  
Andrea Kaja, Lindsay Lutz, Stephanie Lynch,  
Jennifer Mello, Julie Moorad, Annie Wanless



# A Child Tells

by Melissa G.

The morning of May 4, 2008 is a day my family and I will never forget. That was the morning we celebrated my husband's birthday and the day my 4-year-old daughter told me about a bad dream she was having about daycare. My first reaction to my daughter's dream was denial; I didn't want to believe what I was hearing. The more I listened to her the more I realized what she was explaining and describing was information a 4-year-old should never know. Just then I knew this wasn't just a bad dream, this was reality.

I felt my heart break into a million pieces, and the only thing I could do was hold my daughter and thank her for telling me about her bad dream. As soon as my daughter was situated playing with her little brother, I went to the garage and cried until I had no more tears to cry. Within a very short period of calling our local police department, an officer was at our house. I will never forget what he said to us when he walked into our house, "Happy Faces". At that time I didn't understand why he was telling us to smile and have "Happy Faces". He asked us questions about what happened, and he didn't speak to my daughter. He told us we would have an appointment at CALICO very soon. Before that day I had no idea what CALICO was.



The very next morning we got a call from our detective stating we had an appointment in San Leandro at 10am. Not knowing of CALICO or what to expect, I told my daughter she was going to a special school and a very special teacher was going to talk to her. My daughter couldn't have been more thrilled. Once we arrived at CALICO, I was surprised that every person spoke to us normally, not like we were parents of an abused child. They took us back to the play waiting area where both my kids felt instantly at home. Our interviewer came and introduced herself to us and asked my daughter if she was ready to come back to talk with her. My daughter is a shy, hesitant child but she jumped up towards the interviewer, grabbed her hand and headed to the interview room chitchatting the whole way. It felt like forever, but an hour or so later the detectives called me into the interview room because my daughter wasn't talking. They wanted permission to continue interviewing, and of course, I said yes. More time went by before my baby reappeared smiling and ready to play. I kept asking how things went but they didn't say anything. I was annoyed until the interviewer gently touched me on the shoulder and said everything will be ok.

That day, my daughter's abuser was taken into custody. After the amazing work of the detectives, he was arrested on eighteen felony counts of sexual abuse. Three months later he got the maximum sentence available.

I sit back today and now understand why the first officer came into our house saying "Happy Faces". No matter how terrible things got, how upset I was or the feeling of just screaming from the top of my lungs with sadness or frustration, I always had to keep a "Happy Face". Not for me but for my daughter. We never let my daughter know that anything was wrong. We lived everyday life just as before. The only difference is mommy now stays at home, and we don't go to daycare anymore. My daughter today is a beautiful 5-year-old kindergartener who is no different than any other child. For that I thank that officer for his first words to me. Still to this day my daughter will talk about the special school and teacher she went to see that day and the present she got to choose after being interviewed.

As parents, we never think the worst can happen to our children. We strive to protect, love, nurture and educate them to the best of our abilities. Before this event I was a naive parent. I never thought of child abuse, I especially didn't think this would happen to my child, and I had never heard of CALICO. It did happen, and I'm so overly grateful for CALICO and what they do everyday. We didn't know, at the time of my daughter's interview, that she didn't tell her story as she did to me the day before. If it wasn't for CALICO and the interviewer's drive to take that extra time to talk to my daughter, she wouldn't have provided a crucial piece of information which led the detectives to make the arrest. If it wasn't for the dedication, skill and passion of the detectives, my daughter's abuser wouldn't have admitted to his crimes. If it wasn't for the persistence and effort of our District Attorney, the abuser wouldn't be incarcerated. Mostly, if it wasn't for my 4-year-old daughter's bravery and the courage it took for her to come to me about these horrible events she endured for longer than I can imagine, who knows where or if she would still be with us today.

# Many Thanks to Our Generous 2008 Supporters!

The following Donated to CALICO between January 1 - December 31, 2008

## **Businesses and Organizations:**

Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs' Association  
Alameda Police Officer's Association  
Albertson's  
Albany Peace Officers Association  
Continental Mills  
Fremont Police Association  
Inner Wheel Club of San Leandro  
Livermore Police Officer's Association  
Newark Police Association  
Pacific Legacy, Inc - Central Coast & Business Division  
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP  
San Leandro Garden Club  
San Leandro Police Officers' Association  
Tiger Trading Corp. Int.  
Tilden Park Golf Course Ambassadors

## **Foundations/Grants:**

Children's Support League of the East Bay  
Eden Township Healthcare District  
Hedge Funds Care  
In-N-Out Burger Foundation  
Kaiser Permanente  
Links for Life Foundation  
National Children's Alliance  
Spight Family Foundation  
The Thomas J. Long Foundation  
van Löben Sels/RembeRock Foundation  
Western Regional Child Advocacy Center  
Bernard E. and Alba Witkin Charitable Trust

## **Government:**

Alameda County District Attorney's Office  
Alameda County Sheriff's Office  
Alameda County Social Services Agency  
Alameda Police Department  
Albany Police Department  
BART Police Department  
Berkeley Police Department  
City of San Leandro, Department of Human Services  
Dublin Police Services  
East Bay Regional Parks District Police Department  
Emeryville Police Department  
Every Child Counts/First 5 of Alameda County  
Fremont Police Department  
Livermore Police Department  
Newark Police Department  
Piedmont Police Department  
Pleasanton Police Department  
San Leandro Police Department  
Union City Police Department  
University of California Berkeley Campus Police

## **In-Kind Donors:**

Alameda County Probation Department  
Alameda Police Department  
Rosa Anderson  
At Printing  
Jean Atkins  
Shirley Davini  
Marianne Dilworth  
Susan Gonzales  
Andrew and Melissa Graycar  
Ginjer Hart  
Ben Hopkins  
Jr. League of Oakland East Bay  
Karen Kadaja, One Bear Project  
Stephanie Lynch  
Marina Community Center  
Melissa McDonald  
Michelle McMillen  
Miraglia Catering and Event Planning  
Jo Molz, Blankets for Kids  
Jean Noll  
Judy Pena  
San Leandro Kiwanis Club  
Andrew and Hannah Stark  
StarOTech, Joyce Starosciak  
U.P.E.C. Supreme Council No. 1  
Mira Villasenor  
Bonita Vinson  
Eagle Scout Isaac Wolf  
Lana Yee

## **Individuals:**

Anonymous  
Anonymous in honor of Margo Anderson  
Joanna Adler and Simon Waddington in honor of Chris Iverarity  
Patricia A. Aguilera  
Dena M. and Alan Aindow  
Nancy and William Alberti  
Marjorie Albright, Studio Phoenix  
Sharon and Frank Almeida  
Robert Alton  
Dale and Carol Amaral

Mike and Diane Ambrose  
William B. Andrade  
Douglas and Catherine Arnstein  
Michaele Arreola  
Jean Atkins  
Aida Ayala  
Vic Bacigalupi  
Sharla M. and Charles Badger  
Alan Baker  
Lt. Pete Ballew  
Micheal Balster  
Thomas and Cynthia G. Barni in honor of Karen Meredith  
Richard J. Baskin in memory of Mildred Weichman  
Anissa Basoco-Villarreal  
Casey and Samantha Bates  
Gary Baysmore  
Paul and Lynne Berlin  
Celesta and Raoul Birnbaum  
Bill Bonano  
Susan and Steven Boranian  
Victoria and Charles Borzileri  
Linda Bowen and Dennis Keefe in honor of Victoria Gwasda  
Amy and Doug Boxer  
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer  
Kevin Boynton  
Marlis Branaka  
Cheryl and Roy Brasil  
Kristy Brodeur Dermody  
John and Kristina Brouhard  
Patricia Ann Brouillette  
Beth Bruzzone  
Richard Burge  
Dan Burke  
Patricia Burke  
Tom Burke  
Ronnie Caplane  
Denise Caramagno  
Melinda Lee Cardwell  
Jill and Stephen Chambers  
Glenn Chapman  
Nhi Chau  
Robert Chenault  
Gay Clair Cobb  
Gerald Cockrill  
Brian L. Colbert  
Mary Jo Cook  
Shawwna and Ron Costanzo  
Georgia Couch  
John Cox in honor of Charles and Gwen Cox  
Lorrinda Croll  
Christian Cubanske  
Trish Culbert, Lizard Works Glass  
Anne Culver  
Sadie Cuming, Sadies Jewels  
Erik Cummins  
Brian Czechowski  
Ana Damonte  
Theresa and Jack Dane  
Allison Danzig  
Ilana Debare in honor of Karen Meredith  
Angela Deforest  
Marc and Susan Desautels  
Tara Desautels  
Sgt. Dave Dickson  
Sande Dickson and Andrew Lane  
Ann Diem and Roger Patton  
Michelle Dominic  
Sgt. Dan Donovan  
Steve and Lara Dutto  
Christina Ehrlich  
Bridget Enos-Conner  
Vic and Linda Entrikin  
Jason Erlich  
Kristin and Logan Escue  
Diana Estrin  
Sarah Fairchild  
Capt. Benson and Mary Fairrow  
Lisa Faria  
Stephanie Fay  
John Fields  
Rocio Fierro  
Sarah Flanagan  
Lisa Foster  
James Fousekis  
Mary Frederick  
Jennifer and Abe Friedman  
Josh Fryday  
Whitney Gabriel  
Michelle Galloway  
Steven H. Gee  
Susan and Dennis Gildea  
Aedelfa Gill  
Debra and Wesley Gologorsky  
Joy Kathleen Gonzales  
Hon. Larry and Patricia Goodman  
Shelley Gordon

Melanie Gould  
Patricia Gray  
Melissa and Andrew Graycar  
Pete A. Graycar  
Sara Green  
Sylvia Gutterriez in honor of Stephanie Lynch  
Barbara and Karl Gwasda  
Greg and Sara Gwasda  
Susan Gwasda and Don Wolter  
Victoria Gwasda and Martin Berger  
Heather GyterVanWiserkirke  
Kristen Halbrook  
Cindy Hall  
Margaret and Jonathan Hamilton  
Shelley Hamilton  
Jim Hampton  
Wesley Hansen  
Erin Harper  
Vickie Hart  
Rita Hayes  
Cathy J. and Kenneth Herring  
Greg and Vee Hoff  
Susan Howell, Garden Faces  
Christopher Huntley  
Michele Iacobucci  
Deputy Chief Jeff and Susan Israel  
Autrey and Mari James  
Calvin James  
Robert James  
Donna Jean and Gent M. Jay  
John and Linda Jermanis  
Marina Jimenez  
Susan Jones  
Karen Kaja  
Bradley D. Kearns  
Charlene Keilough  
Clint Keller  
Colin Kemp  
Robert and Carolyn Knapp  
Rick Knowles  
James Knudsen  
Edward and Karen Kojane  
S. Krassensky  
Jason Krinsky  
Cathy and David Krinsky  
Lyn Krinsky in honor of Karen Meredith  
Courtney Lange  
Richard and Cece Langs  
Kay Lantow  
Lloyd Lavagetto  
James M Lee  
Rino and Susan Lee  
Towanda Lee  
Christopher Lehman and Lisa Allyson Greenberg  
David Lewis and Joyce Meyer  
Julie and Ronald Liesch  
David Lim  
Joel Linderroth  
Noli Lockhart  
Peggy Lodes  
Trina Lopez  
Thomas Loran and Francine Radford  
Maria C. Lukan  
Lindsay Lutz  
Jeff and Donna Lynch in honor of Reta Lynch  
John J. and Dorothy D. Lynch  
Kathleen MacIntyre  
Pam Mack  
Maureen Macmanus-Desautels  
Lesli MacNeil in honor of the Steering Committee of the Alameda County Department of Child Support Services  
Liliana Fuentes Maddock  
Bonnie and Herbert Mager, Jr.  
John Maley  
Steven Manning  
Sheila Mariani Milroy  
Carol and Keith T. Marlin in memory of Dylan James  
Amy Marsh  
Amy Martens  
Eric Masamori  
Joanne and Nelson Mathews  
Sandra Mathews  
Eileen T. McAndrew and Peter S. Myers  
Danielle McArthur and Michael C. Murray  
John W. McComas  
Nancy McCormick  
Donna McIntosh  
Kathy McKaskey  
Chief Michael McQuiston  
Karen and Chris Mead  
Jenifer and Shane Mello  
Karen Meredith and Mike Wantless  
Peter and Jean N. Meredith  
Michele Miller  
Janet Molitor  
Ralph Moritz  
Julie Moskowitz

Joan Mullen in memory of John & Susanne Mullen  
Susan Muranishi  
Nancy Myles  
Elizabeth Nelson  
Jill Nerone  
Bill Niven  
Hon. Yolanda Northridge  
Michael O'Connor  
Frank Offen  
Joann Oliver  
Kristiana Olson  
Lt. Christine Orrey  
Teresa and David Ortega  
Erin Osanna  
Kathleen Pacheco  
Armando Pastran  
Janet Patrick  
Todd Paulsen  
Stephanie and Lino Persi  
Donna Peterson, Tim Quirk and Abby Quirk  
Jon Pettigrew  
Anna Phung  
Paul Pinney  
Robert Plummer  
Pamela Laurich and Paul Polione  
Jackie Ponce  
Cheryl Poncini  
John Poppas  
Carol Puskar  
Catharine J. Ralph  
Nancy Ramos  
Heather and William Raney  
Susan H. Reisz in memory of Bob Reisz  
Evelyn Rice  
Rob Rich  
Ginni Ring  
Bernadette Riordan  
Michael Rolph  
Christopher Roscoe, Roscoe Art Glass  
Jeffrey Ross and Jan Platt  
Susan Ruggiero  
Todd Ruggiero  
Diane Ruiz  
Cristina Ruotolo and Chris Sterba  
Earl and Rosalinda Rupp  
James P. Russo, DDS  
Muriel Sampson  
Linda and David Sanderson  
Mayor Tony Santos, City of San Leandro  
Natasha Sarkisian  
Carol Schilling  
Melissa Schoen and Andy Huntington  
Shirley Scoggins  
Fleurette Sevin, Flower 7 Artglass  
Barbara Shaw and Michael Koetting  
Wendy Shipnuck and Benjamin Ferris  
Suzanne and Philip Simpkins  
Angela Smith  
Laura Smith and Brandon Borrman  
Shelah Snowden-McLeod  
Alanya Snyder and Michael Jones  
Anthony R. Souza, Jr.  
Hon. Julia Spain  
David Spitzler  
Wes Spowhn  
Darryl and Karen Stallworth  
Linda Stiles  
Stephanie Stoltenberg  
Tom and Kathleen Stout  
Jennifer Stuart  
Ryan Takemoto  
Mark Takeshi Morodomi  
Victor Tanverakul  
Blodwen Tarter and Alan May  
Gloria Taylor  
Kim and Adan Tejada  
John Tobin  
Susan Torrence and Rex Hesner  
Jenny Trang  
Lisa Tuck  
Wayne and Jacqueline Tucker  
Ivone Uriarte  
Belinda Uriarte-Roehl  
Maria Villarvel  
Hollie Voelker  
Paul Wallace  
Meta Marie Watson in memory of Dr. Jean Wright  
Ruth Wenckus  
Carole Westlund  
Sherry Wildoner  
David Wolfe in honor of Mary Jo Cook  
Ana Wong  
George Wood  
Sara Wood-Kraft  
Molly Woodward and James Wilson  
Valerie Worden  
Jeff Wright  
Margaret T. Wrightson and David D. Bellis  
Shelia Young

# Dealing with Abuse Recantation

Would you recant sexual abuse if, after you told someone, your whole world came crashing down? Your father goes to jail, your mother doesn't believe you, and there is no money for food? Would you recant then? What if you are moved from your family's house to a stranger's? Would you regret talking, and try to take back what you said?

Recantation was the subject of CALICO's Annual Collaborative Training, November 6, 2008 at the Marina Community Center in San Leandro. Keynote speaker Dr. Thomas Lyon, Professor of Law and Psychology at the University of Southern California, described his latest research on why children recant abuse and what professionals can do to reduce the likelihood of recantation. The event drew a record crowd - 230 attendees, including law enforcement officers, child welfare workers, attorneys, therapists, and other professionals involved in investigating and treating child abuse.

When a child reveals information about abuse, particularly abuse by a family member or respected adult, his/her disclosure triggers a series of events that disrupts the familiar pattern of many lives. For some, these changes are too difficult to navigate, and blame falls to the child. Children can feel immense pressure, both overt and subtle, to take back what s/he said. They see their family members hurting and feel responsible. They may have ambivalent feelings toward the person who abused them and feel protective. They are fearful of having to face their abuser in court or anxious about being taken away from their family and just want it all to go away. In some cases they are told directly they are to blame.

When a child recants, too often professionals and family members alike, discount the original disclosure. Sexual abuse is emotional and complicated, and it can be easier to hear that it didn't really happen than to believe that it did. In the face of huge caseloads and recanting victims, a professional responding to abuse may be relieved to dismiss the allegation. But dismissals should only occur after the initial disclosure is thoroughly reviewed and the likely reasons for recantation and pressures on the child are explored.

When a child recants, it does not mean the abuse did not happen. Recantation is a normal, if not expected, part of a process of disclosure. When children are supported by adults from the moment they first begin to disclose, it helps alleviate the pressures they feel that might later lead to recantation. A recognized model of support includes the following:

*Believe the Child* - Sexual abuse is often embarrassing and hard to talk about. A child is unlikely to make false allegations of sexual abuse. Let the child know you believe him or her.

*Affirm the Disclosure* - Acknowledge the importance of talking about the abuse and getting help. Let the child know you are glad they told you about the abuse.

*Support the Child* - Reinforce to the child that the abuse is not their fault, and that they are not to blame, regardless of the circumstances.

*Empower the Child* - Educate a child about available resources so that s/he gains control over his/her life. Be sure the child knows, "There are things we can do so that you will feel better again."

Dr. Lyon noted that the best defense against recantation is "an early narrative interview conducted in a forensically sound manner." In other words, the type of interview conducted at CALICO. This narrative interview should occur as close to the initial disclosure as possible - well before the child experiences regret or pressure to change his/her story - and include open-ended questions with video documentation. If a child recants later, a subsequent interview can document the recantation and should explore parental pressure, the child's feelings regarding the investigation, and any other factor that may have contributed to a recantation.

It is no surprise that sexual abuse is traumatic to a child. What may be surprising is that when abuse is revealed, emotional trauma to the child doesn't always stop. As Dr. Lyon makes clear, children who disclose abuse are too often under extraordinary pressure to hold themselves and their families together. The burden is immense. Thanks to Dr. Lyon's cutting-edge research, we as parents and professionals better understand the complex and conflicting emotions and behavior of young victims. We know now that recantation is not closure but an invitation to delve deeper into what the child needs to stay safe.





CALICO has built a unique collaborative partnership among twenty-seven agencies in the county who all share responsibility for responding to young victims of violence. The Sexual Assault Unit of the District Attorney's Office is one of our key partners.

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

by Susan Torrence, Assistant District Attorney

Since the mid-1980s, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office has had a unit specifically dedicated to the prosecution of sexual assaults, including sexual assault of children. This unit includes specially trained prosecutors deeply concerned with the prosecution of such cases and the welfare of the victims. Currently, the unit has four trial attorneys and one attorney who is a half-time trial attorney and half-time supervisor. All of the unit's prosecutors are what are called Vertical Prosecutors; this means that the victims in these cases have the same attorney for their entire case, from their first appearance to their last.



The caseload of the attorneys in the Sexual Assault Unit is slightly less than normal due to the nature of these cases; there is a very strong commitment to take whatever time is needed to get victim witnesses ready for court proceedings. We have decided that cases involving child victims come first; the unit is carrying 100% child victim cases at this time.

We have gone miniature golfing with child victims, met in coffee shops and played video games with them in their home. Once a Deputy District Attorney was seen rollerblading in the halls of the Hayward District Attorney's Office with a 12-year-old boy who had to testify. A special relationship is gained so that court appearances and testimony become an empowering experience for the child victim. Our first goal is for the child to walk out of the courtroom saying: "That wasn't that bad."

Our other goals are for the child to unburden themselves of the secret of the abuse and to be believed by the court and ultimately, the jury. This gives the child a satisfying sense of validation that they were ok all along—the offender was the one who was wrong.

## CALICO Executive Director Graduates From LeaderSpring Fellowship

CALICO Executive Director Vicky Gwiasda joined fourteen inspirational East Bay leaders on October 7, 2008 for their graduation from LeaderSpring, a two-year on-the-job leadership training program for selected East Bay executives. The two-year program comprised once-a-month leader clinics to develop management and leadership skills, overnight retreats, and peer coaching. In addition, LeaderSpring sponsored Vicky on a one-week "study trip" to a mentor organization. Vicky chose the Houston Children's Assessment Center led by visionary Executive Director Elaine Stolte. The Houston Center serves 5,000 children annually and includes on-site counseling, a medical clinic, and, to facilitate inter-agency communication, staggered offices of detectives and child welfare workers. After a week immersed in the center's operations, Vicky noted that, "Had I left after one day, I would have left with great ideas, but having a full week to develop relationships made me feel like one of the staff and gave me an even richer experience." Vicky continues to meet regularly with her LeaderSpring colleagues and often relies on the lessons from LeaderSpring and Houston as she works to strengthen and expand CALICO services and operations.



CALICO Executive Director Vicky Gwiasda (left) presenting a mentor appreciation award to Houston CAC Executive Director Elaine Stolte.

## Did You Know...

- CALICO aided more children in 2008 than any year prior (a 27% increase from 2007).
- Each member of our dedicated team of skilled child interview specialists has interviewed over 1,000 children on average.
- Forty percent of the children CALICO serves are 2-6 years of age, and 40% are ages 7-12.
- CALICO staff serve on state and national boards, including the California Network of Child Advocacy Centers, the State Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault Victim Services, and Stop It Now!
- CALICO is part of a network of over 60 child advocacy centers in the state and 600 in the country who have fundamentally changed the way our communities respond to child abuse.



# CALICO

Child Abuse Listening, Interviewing and Coordination Center

524 Estudillo Avenue  
San Leandro, CA 94577  
Phone (510) 895-0702  
Fax (510) 895-0706  
calicocenter@yahoo.com  
www.calicocenter.org

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
San Leandro, CA  
Permit No. 43



CALICO's mission is to provide a supportive environment to interview children and facilitate a collaborative response to child abuse in which the needs of children take precedence.

## CALICO Board of Directors

Amy E. Blanchard, Member  
Amy Boxer, Member  
Tara M. Desautels, President  
Brian L. Colbert, Member  
Mark Goyne, Member  
Patricia S. Itamoto, Member  
Richard Langs, Associate Member  
David H. Lewis, Treasurer  
Eric G. Masamori, Member  
Holly Metz, Member  
Paul Peng, Associate Member  
Todd Ruggiero, Member  
Earl W. Rupp, Vice President  
Gloria Taylor, Member



## CALICO Staff

Cory Blasi, Office Manager  
Juliana Cottrell, Child Interview Specialist  
Kristy Brodeur Dermody, Training Coordinator  
/Child Interview Specialist  
Victoria Gwiasda, Executive Director  
Catherine Jamison, Child Interview Specialist  
Marcia Kerwit, Office Manager  
Merrie Truong-Lowe, Intern  
Valerie Mayweather, Bookkeeper  
Karen Meredith, Assistant District Attorney  
Bertha Nevarez, Program Coordinator  
/Child Interview Specialist  
Amparo Ozuna, Child Interview Specialist  
Belinda Uriarte-Roehl, Family Resource  
Specialist