Dear Friends of the Family Center:

More than 10 years ago, founder Diane Strickler had a great thought: Why not create an organization that would help parents parent? Sounds simple enough, but through a decade of hard work, strong community support and countless volunteer hours, The Family Center of Grosse Pointe & Harper Woods not only survived, it took root.

Parenting doesn’t come with a manual, the saying goes, but The Family Center has worked to counter that. If a blueprint for parenting doesn’t come with a child’s birth certificate, the least we could do, as a community, would be to provide parents the tools and resources they need to be successful.

Our mission is to promote a deeper understanding of the role of parents and others in supporting our youth to become competent, caring, responsible, productive, resilient members of our community. Raising children has never been easy and, it seems, the world-changing technology-unfolding with increased frequency—tunes hurts as much as it helps.

Where does a parent turn for help? Our goal is that The Family Center is the source at the top of the list for parents, caregivers and health and education professionals. Indeed, our Association of Professionals, available at familycenterweb.org, is one way anonymously—parents can find help 24/7. The Family Center also offers more than a dozen programs a year dealing with parenting issues ranging from bedwetting to at-risk behavior, from getting ready for kindergarten to transitioning to college, from autism to teen depression, from depression to cyber bullying and much more.

The Family Center is able to provide all these programs and resources through the generous contributions of hundreds of local individual and institutional donors and volunteers. Other than a few county and state pass-through grants, The Family Center is not taxpayer supported.

Despite uncertain funding, The Family Center has managed to survive and grow—program-wise—for a decade. Building on its successful past, The Family Center seeks to build for its second decade by continuing to provide cutting-edge programming—as well as the tried-and-true—in order to help parents meet the challenges of a fluid society and raise healthy, resilient, productive children.

To do this, we have set in place a great financial team to make sure every precious dollar is put toward providing the best programming by the best local professionals. But even more spectacular is our volunteer Programming Committee, stacked with top educators and health professionals, which continues to provide an outstanding offering of helpful programs for parents, caregivers and professionals.

Leading off the fall itinerary is The Race to Nowhere, the acclaimed documentary on the “dark side of America’s achievement culture,” followed by a Q & A session fielded by local professionals.

On its heels will be a four-part Suicide Prevention and Depression Awareness Series in partnership with the Beaumont, Grosse Pointe Health Coalition. Add to that, programs on college admissions and transitions, getting ready for kindergarten, healthy anger management, parenting middle-schoolers, recognizing at-risk behavior and, last but not least, taking care of yourself as a woman. One gets an idea of the breadth and depth of The Family Center programming scheduled for our 11th year, 2011-12.

We encourage parents, caregivers and professionals to become familiar with The Family Center and attend our programs. If you like what you see, and we are sure you will, you may want to consider volunteering your time, expertise or financial support.

I look forward to meeting all of you throughout the school year as we help you to raise the best kids and build for the future!

Yours truly,

John Minnis
Board President
FAMILY CENTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS
2011 – 2012

September 27, 2011
RACE to NOWHERE
Grosse Pointe South
High School Auditorium
6:30 p.m. Free tickets online
Q&A discussion following

September-October, 2011
4-Part SUICIDE PREVENTION
and DEPRESSION AWARENESS SERIES
Presented by The Family Center
in Partnership with members of the Beaumont, Grosse Pointe
Health Coalition
Sept. 28, Oct. 5, Oct. 12, Oct. 19

October 14, 2011
CELEBRATE 11!! HAYRIDE
Tompkins Center
7-11 p.m.
Tickets $25 at door, $20 in-advance

November – April
PLAY CENTRAL
Barnes Early Childhood Center
Drop-in socialization and gym
sessions for children and
parents/caregivers
Morning and afternoon sessions
$3 per family visit

November 3, 2011
COLLEGE TRANSITIONS:
The College Admissions
Process for Students with
a Disability
6:30 p.m.

November 17, 2011
KINDERGARTEN: GET READY!!
Barnes Early Childhood Center
6:30 p.m. $5 per person

November 17, 2011
THE CULTURE OF
ACCOUNTABILITY:
The accountability equation
and the one-minute behavior
change plan
Barnes Early Childhood Center
7 p.m.

December 1, 2011
MEET & GREET
School, Mental Health & Health
Professionals
Grosse Pointe Congregational
Church
9-11 a.m. No fee

December 8, 2011
9TH ANNUAL HOLLY FEST
The Grosse Pointe Club
6 p.m. Cocktails & Hors d’oeuvres
7 p.m. Dinner
6-8 p.m. Silent Auction
8:30-9:30 p.m. Live Auction
Tickets: $85 per person
$180 per Friend of HOLLY FEST
$500 HOLLY FEST Sponsor

February 1, 2012
KINDERGARTEN: MAKING
A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
Barnes Early Childhood Center
6:30 p.m. $5 per person

February 1, 2012
GOOD & ANGRY:
A Positive Way for Busy
Parents to Express Anger/
Frustration Toward Their
Children – Reduce or
Eliminate Meltdowns &
Explosions
Barnes Early Childhood Center
7 p.m. No fee

February 9, 2012
PRACTICING SELF CARE:
Tools to Enrich the Busy Lives
of Women at Home and Work
Grosse Pointe War Memorial
7 p.m. No fee

March 2012
DINING FOR DOLLARS
Participating restaurants to be
announced in Winter/Spring
newsletter

March 11, 2012
COOKIE Bakers CHALLENGE
Grosse Pointe Hunt Club
1:30-3:30 p.m.

March 7, 14, 21, 28, 2012
ASK THE EXPERTS SERIES
with Beaumont Professionals
6:30-8:30 p.m. No fee

• March 7
SLEEP STRUGGLES with
Infants and Toddlers
Barnes Early Childhood Center

• March 14
HEALTHY LUNCHES,
‘Eat This, Not That’
Beaumont Hospital GP, Connelly

All programs are free, unless noted.
For further details and online registration, visit: familycenterweb.org

• March 21
BLUER THAN BLUE –
Is it the Baby Blues or
Something More?
Barnes Early Childhood Center

• March 28
COUPLE’S QUEST for
COMMUNICATION SUCCESS
Barnes Early Childhood Center

April 28, 2012
LEGO Artists CHALLENGE
Barnes Early Childhood Center
10:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

May 2012
PARENTING THE
MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS
Grosse Pointe Academy
7 p.m. No fee

May 2012
CHARITEA BEAR’S TEA PARTY
2-4 p.m.

May 2012
ARE YOUR KIDS AT RISK?
7 p.m. No fee

May 24, 2012
MEET & GREET
School, Mental Health & Health
Professionals
Grosse Pointe Academy
9-11 a.m. No Fee
Looking Back, Moving Forward

Thanks to your many gifts, The Family Center has celebrated its first successful decade. Last year at this time, I shared with you my top ten memories of that era. They were all related to our accomplishments in our early years of laying a foundation upon which to build a strong organization.

As our second decade unfolds, we are able to focus ever more keenly on our mission because we have everything in place for continued success: a governance structure that works well, financial checks and balances, a strategic plan, and programs that serve the needs of our community. As we drive our mission forward, each year continues to bring expanded programming along with a growing audience, and we are proud to share with you some of our accomplishments of this past year:

• More than 4,000 individuals participated in our programs
• 869 family visits to Play Central last winter
• 52 Weekly Ask the Experts columns in the Grosse Pointe News
• 15,212 visitors to familycenterweb.org
• Over 100 volunteers lend their time, expertise and support

With the continued support of your philanthropic gifts, The Family Center will be able to provide even more resources and programs to our community that will promote a deeper understanding of our role as parents and professionals in the challenging task of raising competent, caring, and responsible young people.

Together we will strengthen our community as we build healthy, resilient and successful children and families.

Yours truly,

Diane Strickler
Founder

P.S. Your tax deductible gift can be mailed in the enclosed envelope or made on our website, familycenterweb.org. Thank you!
Awareness of Depression in Adolescents

**Ask The Expert: David M. Benson, MSW, LMSW, ACSW**

Q. My son has always been outgoing and social. Recently, he appears to be really depressed. Can teenagers get “real” depression? If so, what are the warning signs of suicide?

A. Depression is real and affects children, adolescents and adults. Depression can happen to anyone at anytime. In order to answer your questions, I will first address the teenage depression, and then will examine the link between depression and suicide, as well as alarming trends and statistics of teenage suicide.

As parents, we believe that we know our teenagers well and would certainly notice if they are not acting the same as they usually do. Adolescents will often keep feelings to themselves as some venture out in isolation from their parents. No matter how we as parents attempt to engage, communicate and involve ourselves in the teenager’s life, it is impossible to identify everything that a teenager is feeling. Some parents may overlook some of the most common developmental stages in teenagers and dismiss the issue(s) to puberty, social appropriateness and “he/she is just at that age.”

Today, teenagers face a lot of pressure, not only at school and at home, but also while finding their identity, along with personal and family relationships. Teenagers also experience many other social pressures that did not exist when we parents grew up.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers between 15 and 24 years of age, with accidents (mainly automobile) being first and homicide being second. And even younger children are affected as suicide is the fourth leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 10 and 14 (National Institute of Mental Health).

Suicide has always been a “taboo” subject that most parents choose to ignore. I have heard so many times in private practice that “my boy/girl would never even think of committing suicide.” Teen suicide is a very real problem, causing the deaths of thousands of teenagers across the country each year.

David M. Benson, MSW, LMSW, ACSW is a licensed clinical therapist with over 15 years of experience and has been in private practice for 7 years in Grosse Pointe Farms. Contact him at EastShore Counseling Services 313.447.5779, email Info@DavidBensonTherapy.com or visit DavidBensonTherapy.com for more details.

David Benson is a member of The Family Center’s Association of Professionals. His “Ask the Expert” columns may be found at familycenterweb.org.

Benson will be one of the panelists at the upcoming presentation offered by The Family Center in partnership with members of the Beaumont, Grosse Pointe Health Coalition.

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**You’ll be interested to know…….**

**Americans are a generous bunch:**
Estimates show individual donations were up 2.7 percent in 2010. (According to USA Weekend – July 22-24, 2011)

**Snapshot on Giving & Volunteering in Michigan 2010** (Information provided by Michigan Nonprofit Alliance):

- 83.5% of Michigan residents made a contribution to a charity.
- 65.9% of residents volunteered.
- 92% of residents said the need for charities is greater today than in the past.
- 85% of residents believe that charities should retain their tax exempt status.
- 91% of residents feel charities help contribute to making stronger, better communities.

In a study published in the March 2008 issue of *Science*, researchers at Harvard found that as little as $5 spent on another person can raise your sense of well-being.
CELEBRATE 11!! Anniversary Hayride

Friday, October 14, 7-11 p.m.

Come celebrate our 11th anniversary with friends!

Hosted by: The Family Center CIRCLE of FRIENDS
Sponsored by: Wilson & Cain, PA and Grosse Pointe Magazine
Location: Tompkins Center, Windmill Pointe Park
Tickets: $25 per person (adults 21 and over) includes hayride, food, refreshments and entertainment

Purchase tickets online: familycenterweb.org or by phone, 313.432.3832

HOLLY FEST 2011
Thursday, Dec. 8

The Grosse Pointe Club
(6 Berkshire Place, Grosse Pointe Farms)

Program:
• 6 p.m., Cocktails & Hors d’oeuvres
• 7 p.m., Dinner
• 6-8 p.m., Silent Auction
• 8:30-9:30 p.m. Live Auction

Tickets:
• $85 per person
• $180 per Friend of HOLLY FEST (includes prominent listing in program)
• $500 Holly Fest Sponsor (includes 2 tickets & prominent listing in program)

“We are so excited to be celebrating our ninth year of HOLLY FEST and the 11th anniversary of The Family Center. We are pleased to have Rick and Cat Ruffner as our Honorary Chairpersons. They are very dedicated to the mission of The Family Center, and we appreciate their support. Please join us for a wonderful evening of camaraderie, food and drink and, of course, bidding on the festive items donated by our schools and community.”

Beth Moran & Lois Warden, HOLLY FEST benefit co-chairs

‘The little BIG Discount Card’

Save money, help The Family Center and CARE

A $10 investment can not only save you many times that in area goods and services, it can also directly benefit The Family Center of Grosse Pointe & Harper Woods and CARE of Southeastern Michigan.


All proceeds will be used to support The Family Center and CARE programs in Harper Woods and Grosse Pointe.

The new card is the same size as a credit card, so it is easy to carry around in your purse or wallet. To purchase a card or for more information, visit The Family Center's website at familycenterweb.org or call 313.432.3832.

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The Grosse Pointe Club
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Beth Moran & Lois Warden, HOLLY FEST benefit co-chairs

Holiday Ornament
Artists Challenge
Sunday, November 13, 2-4 p.m.
Grosse Pointe Art Center

The Family Center CIRCLE of FRIENDS in partnership with the Grosse Pointe Artists Association, Grosse Pointe News and Village Toy Company

2011 Registration form may be found at familycenterweb.org.

For more information, contact:
The Family Center at 313.432.3832 or info@familycenterweb.org
Is Your Child Ready for the Rigors of Kindergarten?
ASK THE EXPERTS: Dorothy Heitjan, Kristen DeVooght, and Deb Kraft

It is vital in the preschool years to provide your child with the experiences that will build the foundation for later success in school. Kindergarten bridges preschool to elementary school and provides hands-on experiences to enable your child to connect what they already know to their new learning.

Expectations for kindergarten students have changed drastically in the last ten years. First-grade skills are now the standard for kindergarten. Former kindergarten skills are the standard for preschool. The new national Common Core State Standards include reading and writing, sight word knowledge as well as emergent spelling skills. Knowing what a word and even what a sentence looks like in a story as well as reading and writing their own words and thoughts are expectations. There are also new Common Core State Standards for math and others in the works for social studies and science. Our students will recognize characteristics and patterns, know numerals to 100, count by twos and fives to 30, understand tens and ones, and express story equations with drawings and numbers. They must be able to use mathematical data, understand its use in everyday life, and express the data in mathematical form.

All these expectations require your child to be ready to learn in a school environment. Their ability to listen to explanations and then use the information is vital for success.

These abilities are directly related to their developmental readiness and maturity. Most states adopting this core curriculum have changed their school start age to 5 or 5 ½ years of age in September. School funding for Michigan schools has declined and student-teacher ratios have increased. Our start age remains at 4 ½ years of age, but the expectations for developmental maturity for these standards is 5 to 6 years of age. Grosse Pointe Public and Harper Woods Public Schools now provide full-day kindergarten programs to meet many of these needs.

An excellent read for parents is Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell. While researching those who attain phenomenal success, Gladwell has determined factors that help all of us reach our potential. Many of these factors were effective for the very young. Others are common sense: The more you do something the better you get. The 10,000-hour rule makes the difference between good and impresario! The world has become very competitive and the activities you provide for your child now will affect your child’s future.

Enroll your child at your school district’s administrative offices. You will need to provide a birth certificate, immunization records and physical examination forms (in September), and proof of residency. You should enroll your child as early as possible. By enrolling your child, you are placed on the public school mailing list and will receive important information by mail. When enrolling your child, you may have to choose between programs. Current Kindergarten programs include the traditional half-day program as well as all-day programs (ADK) or extended day programs (EDK).

Until then, enjoy talking, playing, riding, cooking, building, and exploring with your child every day!

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Save the Date

‘KINDERGARTEN: GET READY!’

Thursday, November 17
6:30-9 p.m.
Barnes Early Childhood Center, 20090 Morningside Dr., Grosse Pointe Woods.

Grosse Pointe Public School System presenters:
Deb Kraft, Kindergarten Teacher,
Kristen DeVooght, Speech-Language Pathologist, and Dorothy Heitjan,
Early Childhood Program Teacher and Speech-Language Pathologist

Fee $5 per family
Register Early online at familycenterweb.org!

Save the Date . . . The RACE to NOWHERE

Documentary Film Presentation and Panel Discussion
September 27, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Grosse Pointe South High School,
Grosse Pointe Farms
RSVP at familycenterweb.org for FREE TICKETS, click on Race to Nowhere link.
Seating limited to 420

Please note that due to the sensitive nature of this documentary, this presentation is designed for adults and open to high school students accompanied by their parent.

This presentation has been approved by the Grosse Pointe Public School System and the Harper Woods School District for staff development hours.
From the Director

Two questions that I am frequently asked are “How can I learn more?” and “How can I become involved, offer my services?” The Family Center reaches out to the community in so many ways that it is easy to find a way to learn more or to serve that suits you best.

Learn more about The Family Center by attending our presentations on a variety of topics from birth through college facilitated by local experts, reading our weekly Ask the Experts columns in the Grosse Pointe News, visiting our always-updated website with access to programs offered by The Family Center and others, connecting with members of our Association of Professionals or asking to be placed on our newsletter mailing list.

Those interested in helping or being involved with The Family Center can serve on one of our committees, join our CIRCLE of FRIENDS event committee, donate in-kind services or goods, contribute financially or be a sponsor for an event or program, advertise in our newsletter, become a member of our Association of Professionals, lend your expertise as a professional for a presentation, host a third-party fundraiser to benefit The Family Center or leave a legacy gift to benefit the organization.

As this October marks The Family Center’s 11th Anniversary, remember that The Family Center relies solely on the generous support of its community supporters and the efforts of more than 100 volunteers.

The Family Center remains a viable, respected community resource due to the generous support it receives and the actively engaged, hands-on work of our Board of Directors. We are a creative organization and can find the right spot for you!!

Deborah A. Liedel
Debbie.Liedel@familycenterweb.org
313.432.3832

Programs & Resources

PLAY CENTRAL – PLUS

Play Central is a place for parents, grandparents and all caregivers to play with their children while socializing with other families in an open play setting. Play Central Plus, offered at Barnes Early Childhood Center, features an opportunity for children and their parents to spend time in a pre-school classroom.

Fee is $3 a session per family. Runs Nov.–Apr.
Barnes Early Childhood Center gym
20090 Morningside Dr., Grosse Pointe Woods
MORNINGS: Wednesdays & Thursdays: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
AFTERNOONS: Wednesdays & Thursdays: 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

RACE TO NOWHERE: The Dark Side of America’s Achievement Culture

A nationwide documentary release focused on the pressures our schoolchildren and their teachers face as they define and manage middle school, high school and college expectations – followed by an open Q & A Panel Discussion.

Tuesday, September 27, 6:30 p.m.
Grosse Pointe South High School Auditorium (11 Grosse Pointe Blvd., GPF)
RSVP at familycenterweb.org for FREE TICKETS, click on Race to Nowhere link.

4-Part SUICIDE PREVENTION and DEPRESSION AWARENESS SERIES

Presented by The Family Center in partnership with members of the Beaumont, Grosse Pointe Health Coalition.

- Wed. Sept. 28: In the Voice of Our Teens: A Dialogue Supporting Resiliency (Part I)
- Wed. Oct 5: Are Your Teens at Risk? Responding to Youth and Parents (Part II)

No fee. Attend one or all sessions.
Visit familycenterweb.org for details and to register online for one or all presentations.

THE CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY: The accountability equation and the one-minute behavior change plan

Thursday, November 17, 7 p.m.
Barnes Early Childhood Center, 20090 Morningside Dr., GPW
Workshop limited to 30 attendees, pre-registration required.
No Fee. Register early!
RSVP by November 10.

MEET & GREET FOR PROFESSIONALS

All school, community mental health and health professionals are invited to attend this gathering and are encouraged to exchange business cards and brochures.

Wednesday, December 1, 9-11 a.m.
Grosse Pointe Congregational Church, 240 Chalfonte, GPF
No Fee. RSVP by November 24.

KINDERGARTEN: Get Ready!!

An annual presentation by professionals on preparing young children for kindergarten.

Thursday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.
Barnes Early Childhood Center, 20090 Morningside Dr., GPW
Fee $5 per person. Register early!
RSVP by November 10.

RSVP for all programs by registering online, familycenterweb.org
More info call 313.432.3832.
Kroger Community Rewards Annual Renewal

Kroger’s Community Rewards Program makes fundraising for The Family Center automatic every time you use your Kroger Plus Card.

Annual Renewal: Everyone who uses their Kroger Card to donate to The Family Center must go online each year on May 1 or after to re-assign The Family Center (#83811) as their preferred charity. This can only be done through the Kroger Community Rewards website, krogercommunityrewards.com. You will need to enroll online to continue contributions to The Family Center, so we encourage all our members to do so as soon as possible each May.

A link to Kroger Community Rewards and more information may be found on The Family Center’s website, familycenterweb.org.

KROGER SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our Kroger Community Rewards Program participants listed below for 8.1.10 - 4.30.11 (Names provided by Kroger Community Reward Program as of 5.26.11).

Katherine Adams
Teri Bannon
John Brewer
Diane Cusmano
Lisa Domas
Margaret Feringa
Lisa Khoury
Christine La Bash
Catherine Leverenz
Deborah Liedel
Louis Liedel
Sergio Mazza
Terry Minnis
Joseph Moran
Carolyn Nantrop
Ruby Prisco
RJ
Suzette Ripepe
Eileen Ross
Anna Russo
Carl Schulte
Virginia Slongo
Diane Strickler
Andrew Torosian
Gail Varga
James Whitman
Carolyn Wujek

Note: Three additional participants were listed by numbers with no names specified on their Kroger Plus Card.