



Donna M. Cahill, Executive Director

The corner of 16th and Dolores Street changes noticeably every few days as progress continues on our new 'Home.' I urge you to read page 7 for an update on our capital campaign and construction progress—we need your help! Having a front row seat to the ongoing construction is truly an honor and a privilege as it ensures that the amazing legacy created by the Sisters of the Holy Family continues for children and families for another century.

Yet, the amazing progress that occurs daily in our classrooms is where our future truly lies and not necessarily in a building. In the midst of all the excitement over a new facility, our commitment to providing **high quality early childhood education is unwavering.** In fact, I want to take this opportunity

to share with you about how the future is being molded for the youngest.

**Our Day Home for 21 infants and toddlers** is located in the SOMA neighborhood on Minna Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets. It is located at Episcopal Community Service's (ECS) Canon Barcus Community House, a low-income housing project for formerly homeless families.

Five years ago, when ECS approached us to partner with them in opening an infant and toddler center, we jumped at the opportunity to extend our philosophy of providing a stable and nurturing environment to serve the youngest at their most developmentally critical age. While the Day Home ardently advocates that a high quality preschool experience is essential for all children, we also know what research says about the first three years of life—they are developmentally the most crucial and determine which trajectory a child's life takes. Delays or disabilities that emerge later can often be traced to deficiencies experienced in these first few years of life. In a time where daycare is still thought of as "babysitting," we challenge the status quo by caring for our children where every component is developmentally or educationally based—even in our infant rooms.

Surprisingly, even though there is a tremendous demand for high quality infant/toddler care there are only a handful of these centers in San Francisco. Because **the Day Home** is one of those centers, we are seen both as **a resource and training ground for infant care** by local government and private institutions that have an interest in early childhood education. This continues the Sisters of the Holy Family's long legacy of being pioneers in developing the field of early childhood education and cements a trajectory of success for children entrusted to our care.

Thanks to both of our Day Homes, we are pleased to be able to partner with and befriend parents and guardians to provide the best consistent care for their children during these first critical 6 years of their lives. **I invite you to read on to learn more about Minna St. Day Home.** For now I take this opportunity to thank our warm, loving and dedicated infant and toddler staff for their professional and loving work with our children. It is in their capable hands that our future lies.

Donna M. Cahill  
Executive Director



## A Big Welcome to Our New Staff and Teachers



**CHARITY ANCHETA**  
Sunflowers Teacher

Although Charity grew up in San Francisco, she spent two years in Seattle as an Americorp intern. While in Seattle she worked both as a health worker helping children get free health care and as an environmental advocate. She can now be found in the Sunflowers classroom. She currently has her A.A. in child development and is pursuing her B.A. with hopes of eventually getting her teaching credential. Charity also enjoys reading, watching movies, spending time with her family, going to the beach and star gazing.



**EVELYN BANDELARIA**  
Spaghetios Teacher

Since Evelyn grew up in the Philippines, she is fluent in Tagalog. She is currently a teacher in our Spaghetios classroom. She says that “the best aspect of working at the Day Home is working with such culturally diverse children.” Evelyn has her graduate degree in Psychology and wants to continue enriching her education. Her favorite pastime is cooking, especially experimenting with new recipes.



**VICTORIA DOROSHENKO**  
Senior Accountant

Victoria grew up in Odessa in present-day Ukraine, although she lived in Odessa when it was still part of the Soviet Union. She has her M.S. in Mechanical Engineering although for the Day Home she is our Senior Accountant. When she arrived in San Francisco, she immediately

enrolled in business and accounting classes. Victoria says that the best part of working at the Day Home is that she enjoys her co-workers. When she is not at the Day Home, Victoria can be found either hanging out with her two young (and adorable) boys, her friends or reading.



**YAFAH FRANCO**  
Community Health Advocate

Not only is Yafah a native San Franciscan, but she actually grew up in the Mission District.

Her family has owned businesses in the Mission District since they came from South America in 1964. Although Yafah got her B.A. in history from UCLA, she is now returning to school to get her Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy. Her desire is to be able to use her language skills and support the growing immigrant community. Already she is putting her language skills to good use as our new Community Health Advocate. When she isn’t working with our families, Yafah loves to collect textiles from all over the world; her largest collection is vintage Japanese silk kimonos.



**ALISON LIMOGES**  
Special Projects Coordinator

Alison grew up in Delmar, New York but she has really lived all over the country. Since she comes to the Day Home with a Masters in Elementary and Early Childhood Education, she understands our mission. In fact she says, “I’m very pleased and proud to be working with such a diverse and caring staff who give generously of their time, expertise and compassion to help and teach some of the neediest families in the city.” Alison is in charge of making the organization’s transition into the new

building as smooth as possible. Outside of the Day Home, she enjoys walking, rollerblading, throwing clay, gardening and volunteering.



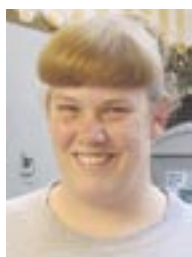
**SONIA MENJIVAR**  
Dolores Site Receptionist

Sonia grew up in sunny Miami, Florida before she moved to San Francisco. She has attended both vocational school and City College. Many of our families will get to see Sonia’s beautiful smile every day because she is our new afternoon receptionist at the Dolores site. She is so excited to get to work with a community that she identifies so strongly with. She also loves working with children and assisting parents. As a parent herself, she can often be found playing sports with her kids. When she isn’t doing that, Sonia can be found riding her motorcycle or participating in Danza, a spiritual dance.



**ANDREA ROBB**  
Dolores Site Supervisor

A native of San Luis Obispo, or SLO, Andrea received her bachelor’s in Recreation Administration with a focus on Program Management from Cal Poly. Her career focus has always been the non-profit sector and before she came to the Day Home, she was at Palo Alto Community Child Care. Now Andrea is our Site Supervisor at the Dolores Site. Apparently when Andrea isn’t at the Day Home, she can be found partaking in life-threatening “hobbies.” Those include: jumping out of planes, swimming with questionable underwater sea-life, climbing frozen waterfalls with an ice pick and eating pizza (she gets hungry while doing all the other stuff.)



**CARRIE STOUT**  
Penguins Teacher

Carrie grew up in Columbus, OH and moved to San Francisco in 1998. Carrie joined the Penguins classroom

staff just recently, although she has worked at the Day Home before as a substitute. She, like many of our staff, finds it enriching to work somewhere that serves such a diverse population. She also says that it is, "refreshing to work with a group of people who take pride in their work and honestly enjoy what they are doing." When not at the Day Home, Carrie enjoys spending time with her family, traveling and scrapbooking.



**LAURA TOPOIAN**  
Administration Director

Although Laura was born in San Francisco, she actually grew up on the peninsula.

She is our Administration Director and has her B.A. in business administration with a concentration in accounting. She loves working at the Day Home because of the personal satisfaction she gets from knowing she is helping the more vulnerable children and families in San Francisco. Laura is also our resident Martha Stewart. She bakes, plays the piano, sews, creates stained glass and crochets. Most recently, Laura can be found spending lots of time with her first beautiful granddaughter.



**VICKY ZHEN**  
Penguins Teacher

Vicky, who moved to San Francisco from southern China three years ago, is one of our new teachers in the Penguins

classroom. She is currently working on her A.A. at City College. Vicky is fluent in both Cantonese and Mandarin and loves swimming, making crafts, drawing and traveling. She loves working at the Day Home because she feels like she is part of a big family and has the opportunity to use her knowledge and skills when working with the Penguins. Before joining our big family, Vicky worked at Grace Infant and Toddler Care Center for a year.

# Thank you to all the Members of our Board of Directors

We couldn't operate Holy Family Day Home so successfully without your leadership, time, expertise and passion for the children and their families!



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# Busy toddlers and wiggly infants bring joy and

By 8 am our infant and toddler site is already abuzz with the early morning business of eight toddlers and six infants going about their day. The eight toddlers are in our Penguins classroom while the infants are Butterflies. Minna site, as we call our Infant and Toddler center, serves twenty-one children ages 3 months to three years.

The Penguins begin their day by choosing an area in the classroom to explore. Though the classroom seems small that, of course, is by design as our toddlers feel safest when their environment is manageable for their size. In fact, the Penguins classroom looks a lot like our classrooms at Dolores except in miniature. There is

a reading area, a blocks and grouping area, a dramatic play area, a sensory area and an art area. Spending time in the Penguins classroom prepares all our toddlers for the very similar classrooms they'll encounter in their future. This morning, each area is busy with toddlers deciding whether they want to play in the "kitchen" or play with the school bus tug toys or read a story.

Since routine is paramount to an optimal learning environment, at exactly nine thirty, the entire classroom heads outdoors. There is much to accomplish on this sunny day. The tricycles must be ridden, there are many sand "cakes" to make, the slide needs attention and the child-size "house" must be cleaned. This morning the teachers have set up an area where children can paint on the paint wall. Admittedly, in the name of self-discovery, more paints gets on

faces, limbs and clothes then on the paint wall. But that is a small price to pay for the learning that occurs with every new experience at this age.

One remarkable thing about toddlers is the energy present at all times. There is constant movement, constant interactions, constant emotions, and constant learning that is occurring. For an adult without experience with toddlers, this level of energy might be overwhelming. But our seasoned teachers know how to channel that energy and movement into learning experiences.

This morning many activities will help channel that energy. The Penguins will have the opportunity to create chalk drawings, sing and dance to music, and play with ribbon sticks. It's a full morning by any standard and lunch, followed by naptime, is a well needed break.

In the infant side of the world, the Butterflies classroom, some infants are napping, some are crawling while others peacefully lie and wiggle their legs and arms. Each infant is placed in a "pod," consisting of a primary caregiver and two other infants. Pods then are



# laughter to our Minna Street site

free to establish a schedule based on the individual needs of each infant, rather than an entire classroom full of infants. In addition, pods become like families; the infants learn to interact with one another and trust the primary caregiver to provide what they need.

Because pods create a schedule based on the individual infants, the Butterflies classroom is also full of energy and constant movement. Some infants need morning naps, while others need a mid-morning snack, while still others need to crawl around every square inch of the classroom. Their classroom is even smaller than the Penguin classroom and is best described as being soft and plush. The floor is soft, there are lots of pillows and all the toys feel like soft blankets.

For the infants, what fosters their healthy development is loving and stable care. Though new experiences are important, what prepares them best

is having a caregiver that is nurturing and responsive. The teachers in the Butterflies classroom are just that—responsive, nurturing and loving, some with many years of experience working at Minna.

Every day our Minna teachers dedicate their energy, passion, and time to creating a “home away from home” for the youngest at the Day Home. Judging by the amount of smiles, shouts of joy and laughter that can be heard throughout the day at Minna, the infants and toddlers certainly do feel at home.





# Denim & Diamonds

Denim & Diamonds, our second gala event (remember Spring Safari?) proved to be an enchanted evening in May full of dining, dancing, live music, mechanical bull rides and our second "diamond" drawing all enjoyed in the dramatic backdrop of the glass atrium at Levi Strauss & CO. on Battery Street in San Francisco.

More than 250 old and new friends of the Day Home vied for the more than 100 silent and live auction packages. The night was a resounding success, earning more than \$115,000 for the deserving children and families of the Day Home.

We are grateful to the many local businesses who provided support and to our corporate sponsors who contributed directly to the success of our event: Levi Strauss & CO.; Sisters of the Holy Family; ADP; Citigroup; Frank Portman Company; Mercer Human Resource Consulting; and Zachary Confections, Inc.



1: Proud winners of the first live auction item, Patrick and Mary Hayes 2: Mother and daughter team, Darby Furth Bonomi and Donna Wickham Furth show off their "jewels" 3: Ettore Leale and Denim & Diamonds committee member Juliette Hayes 4: Frank and Helen DeMarco 5: Donna Cahill, Executive Director of the Day Home with Jed York of the SF 49ers and HFDH Board Member Lisa Lau Aquino 6: HFDH Board Member Marie Hurabiell ready to show the bull who is boss 7: Co-chairs of Denim & Diamonds Bobby and Lisa Niers 8: Michael Keenan and Phyllis Chu.

Photos by Alison Limoges.



## Heave Ho — Let's Go!

What a difference a year makes! Last October, we barely had our foundation, conduit and rebar in the ground; this year, our lovely building is about to be revealed to the whole world (or at least the portion of the world that passes by the corner of 16th and Dolores). The scaffolding and unsightly black protective covering should be coming down soon, maybe even by the time you receive this Newsletter.

What will be revealed is a beautiful three-story stucco building. The yellow-gold color, slate-grey roof and copper trim will stand out proudly, even across the street from the historic Mission Dolores. A dramatic, arched entryway at 299 Dolores Street leads into an even more impressive interior, filled with light and space and state-of-the-art classrooms and family support facilities. We're building one of the most beautiful early learning centers in the Bay Area, thanks to the hard work of the Frank Portman Company, our General Contractor and, hopefully all of you!



As part of an on-going, supportive partnership with the City and County of San Francisco, Michele Rutherford (left) and Mardi Lucich (right) joined Executive Director Donna Cahill (not pictured) for a "hard-hat" tour of the new building. Mardi is the Childcare Coordinator for the Department of Children, Youth and Families and Michele serves in the same capacity for the Department of Human Services.

Our \$7.1 million Capital Campaign continues. Eleven foundations, 19 corporations and more than 165 individual donors have given a total of more than \$2.85 million dollars as of the end of September, 2006. In addition, we have low interest loans of \$1.5 million from Catholic Healthcare West and \$1.0 million from the Low Income Investment Fund to help with construction costs. Nevertheless, we still have a lot of money to raise.

**Now** is the time to step forward. Currently, our Capital Campaign is seeking larger, or lead, donors. We have significant naming opportunities — the building, classrooms, a play porch, offices, and much more — still available. Contact me **today** if you can help or if you know a person or an organization that you believe would want to hear the Day Home story and visit our wonderful new building.

Of course, we will also be contacting all of our donors and friends in the next few months for smaller, but equally important, contributions. There is still plenty of room for your name on the beautiful Donor Wall that will grace the lobby in the new building!

Ron Limoges, Development Director  
(415) 565.0504, x206 rlimoges@holymfamilydayhome.org

## Family Literacy Nights

The excitement of a new school year is upon us and that marks the re-start of Family Literacy Nights. Family Literacy Nights occur once a month during the school year and are only one component of our rigorous focus on literacy in all our classrooms.

In its fourth year, our literacy program's aim is to strengthen the literacy skills of all our children and make literacy an integral part of family time. Each day we work on building and refining literacy and pre-literacy skills in addition to participating school-wide in the Raising-A-Reader program, a lending book bag program that encourages families to read together at home.

Family Literacy Nights are a unique way that we involve our parents and siblings in the learning that takes place during the day. The program usually begins in the late afternoon, making it easy for parents to pick up other siblings before heading to the Day Home. The fun starts with circle time—a chance for the teachers to read the book aloud first so that parents get familiar with the book. In the days prior, teachers introduce the book, characters, story themes and important concepts during their regular literacy curriculum with the students.

After the book is read, songs and games are played, and "stations" are opened. Families scatter to one of three stations depending on their interest. The stations are different every month but they all require teamwork, creativity and relate to the book in some way. One station might be an art project to re-create a pivotal scene in the book. In another station, parents might use puppets to re-read the book to their children.

The end of the literacy night is spent cleaning up the classroom together and sharing healthy snacks. Children usually take several projects home with them—projects that were created by the entire family. They also keep their brand new copy of the book to add to their home library.

Our literacy program not only prepares our children for primary school but it also makes literacy fun and that, in turn, engenders a love of reading. Literacy nights are also an opportunity for community building as families interact with one another. Parents have a chance to spend considerable time in the classroom experiencing the environment that their children are learning in daily.

As with all our programs, the Day Home would not be able to provide such essential programming if it were not for the generous support of our donors. Thank you to those who support us year after year. The Family Literacy Program in particular has also been the proud recipient of a grant from the Giants Community Fund.





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### Do you remember your home away from home?



Holy Family Day Home at 16th and Dolores Streets has been a "home away from home" for more than 14,000 remarkable children. If you, or someone you know, is among this special group of alumni, we would like to hear from you to keep in touch and to share exciting changes at the Day Home. Go to [www.holyfamilydayhome.org](http://www.holyfamilydayhome.org) and click on *Alumni*; call us at 415.565.0504, x206; or, just clip and mail the form below.



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San Francisco, CA 94103

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\_\_\_\_\_

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