

Building Bright Tomorrows... Today



**OLD MILL
CENTER**
For Children and Families
4515 SW Country Club Drive
Corvallis, OR 97333
(541) 757-8068
(541) 758-1030 fax
www.oldmillcenter.org

Our Mission

Old Mill Center for Children and Families is a community-based, family-oriented center helping children of diverse backgrounds maximize their potential through specially designed education and therapy programs.

Fireside Recitals

January 31st and May 9th

Old Mill Center for Children and Families and the OSU Piano Program once again invites you to become a part of one of the most celebrated concert series in Corvallis sponsored by Barnhisel, Willis, Barlow & Stephens P.C., Attorneys at Law as well as sponsor, Enoteca Wine Bar. For over 20 years, the Fireside Recital Series has provided an intimate showcase for the musical genius of both locally acclaimed and internationally celebrated artists. This season is no exception! Please join us on January 31st and May 9th. Remaining subscriptions are \$100 per person - call Old Mill to sign up!

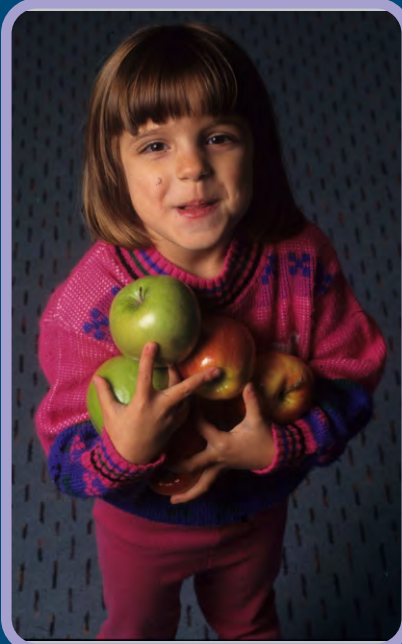


A Message From the Director

...Bev Larson, PhD

As I gaze out my office window toward Starker Arts Park, I see the brilliant red, orange and gold leaves of Fall grace the skyline. I am reminded by these colors that we are in the midst of seasonal change and soon the days will grow shorter and darker. I am glad that soon there will be holiday colors and lights to diffuse the darkness of our winter months.

I am also glad to see, as I gaze out my office window, the families who enter the welcoming doorway of OMC each day. These are families that represent all of us; families of all sizes, configurations, colors and ethnicities. These families come to OMC seeking help for the changing times in their lives: a family who seeks answers to concerns about their four-year-old's depression, a family who seeks to understand their 13 year old son's rebellion, a family distraught over their daughter's threatened suicide and a family seeking help for their seven year old boy's anger and aggression following divorce. Our hope at OMC is for lightness to enter these family's lives, as they seek and receive the services we offer.



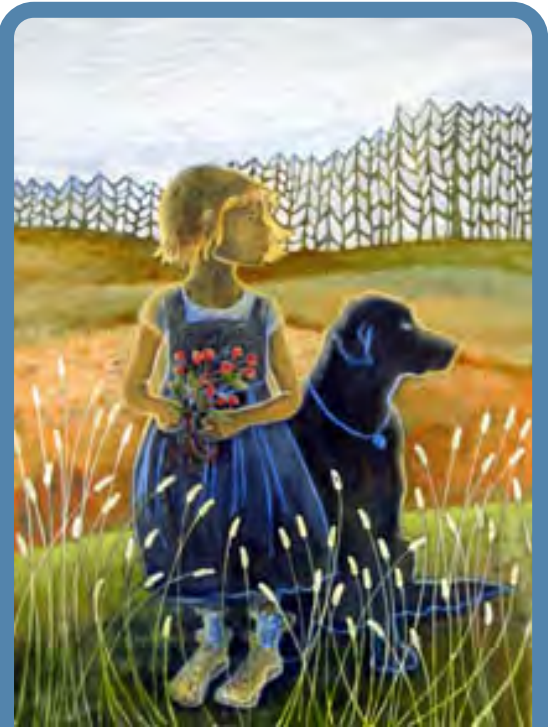
Indeed, most families come to Old Mill seeking help and change. As one single mother told me, "I feel like I'm in a black hole and don't know how to get out." Many children, youth and parents refer to "darkness" as they describe the depression, abuse, domestic violence, drug and alcohol issues, anxiety, behavior problems, and/or aggression that bring them to Old Mill Center for help. These challenges all take families to the "dark side" of life...a lonely, despairing, and frightening place.

Just this morning, a young mom with a 2½ year old son and a four week old daughter said to me as she left the Rally Around Families Together (RAFT) class for infants/wobblers, "I don't think I would have survived this morning if I hadn't been able to come to this class". The reality of her little boy grabbing his poopy diaper and smearing it on the couch while she was trying to feed her new baby was just too much! OMC supported this mom through her anger, frustration, weariness and guilt. She received

new ideas and skills to address these and other challenges tonight or tomorrow, or in the future. She left OMC with hope. There was new light.

Old Mill Child and Family Therapists often use art to reach out to children and teens. It is clear when the darkness begins to turn to light. The dark figures, dark clouds, weapons, and blood slowly turn to rainbows, houses with flowers and mountains with trees and lakes. This dispelling of the anger, fear - the darkness - is often seen. Such as the teenager who originally came to OMC depressed, with his head down, hair hanging in his eyes, making no eye contact with therapist or parents, begins to come in smiling, joking, anxious to tell his therapist about his week. Or the teen from Summer Day Camp who transformed

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Art by Barbara Levine

Old Mill is privileged to display beautiful artwork by local artist, Barbara Levine. For many years, Barbara has focused her artwork on expressing the human spirit by painting intimate scenes of everyday life. Today she explores the outdoors surrounding her home here in Corvallis and then makes rich, playful paintings to show her appreciation for nature's offerings. As an artist, she has worked in many mediums, but her current favorite is fluid acrylics. She combines wood, metal, cement and found objects to create whimsical garden sculptures. Barbara also teaches drawing and painting to children through ArtCentric. She loves sharing ideas with children and is continually delighted by their enthusiasm and creativity. In response, she tries to capture their freshness, boldness and imagination in her own artwork. Barbara was also one of Old Mill's Skinny Pig Out fiberglass pig artists. We have enjoyed having her "Peace Pig" displayed in our agency and look forward to auctioning it at this spring's annual auction on April 11th.

For more information about Barbara and her art, see her web site at www.barbaralevine.com.



Old Mill Center...

*"The finest place
for all children"*

Thanks to our Donors

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Volunteerism: Alive, Well and Flourishing at Old Mill Center

... by **Cindy Bond,**
Early Education Coordinator

I used to think that volunteering was something you did when you retired. Or, perhaps if you were a stay-at-home mom with time on your hands, you volunteered at your children's school, PTA, local hospital, homeless shelter or church. It's what my parents and their generation did. It's what my generation and the "baby boomers" do. But what is amazing me is that it's what young children are doing, too!

Old Mill has always had a strong contingent of volunteers, helping us with our fundraising endeavors and anything else that needed doing at the center. The preschool classroom has always been a draw for those wanting to make a difference in the life of a child, as demonstrated by some of our long-term volunteers such as Jim, Ron and Alan. What has been truly inspiring to me is the diversity that we have in our volunteers in our classroom. Alan, a now retired OSU Human Development and Family Sciences professor has been with us for the 30 years Old Mill has been serving families in our area. Jim, a retired attorney began nearly 15 years ago at Bev Larson's invitation, thinking he'd try it for a couple of weeks before gracefully bowing out, but he was hooked from the get-go. Ron, a Vietnam veteran who lost his legs in the war has also been here nearly 15 years, and while he's helped out at other agencies as well, always makes his way back to us, "because of the kids." Lorrie, a beautiful young woman with cerebral palsy began her volunteer experience 9 years ago through the 509J WINGS program, and has committed volunteering 5 days a week since then. Maureen and Consuelo continue to come and give when they can, always connecting and helping those children who need a little extra...whatever. What amazing kind and giving hearts these volunteers share with us each week! What enrichment they bring to our children through generational differences, cultural diversity and differing physical abilities!

Mary is relatively new to our classroom, volunteering the last two years through the Foster Grandparents Program. While not a grandmother herself, she's a passionate and caring woman who now has "25 lovely grandchildren." Teresa began this past spring, reading books during story time to our children. She's not a librarian-just a magical story weaver with a desire to bring joy through literacy into the lives of young children. But here's where it gets interesting. Our newcomers are not just adults. They are children, community members and former Old Mill graduates wanting to give back and help other children! Holly, 14 was in the preschool my first year teaching at Old Mill. I think she definitely taught me more than I ever could have taught her! She is home-schooled and volunteers every Monday morning in our preschool, playing games, offering a lap at circle time and talking with the children. Shawn is 10 and also a preschool graduate. He comes once a week after school. He says he really wants to help the children, and his energy and enthusiasm is always visible, as shown by the huge grin on his face (or perhaps it's because he has 5 children all trying to sit on his lap at once!) Emily, 13 pours her heart into her work and with her calm, serene demeanor, bright eyes and glowing smile, it appears she indeed has a gift in working with children. Our newest volunteer, Sarah, comes to us again through the WINGS program. She appears to be a kid magnet, as she is always swarmed by children asking her to push them on the swings and chase them.

These volunteers give to all of us, not just the children a wonderful gift-the precious gift of time. They lead by example. Their kindness and generosity mean more to me than I can ever express. The words, "thank you" will never be enough. All I can tell them is that when I grow up, I want to be just like them!

Director's Message

Continued from page 1

from a client who could not name a single positive thing about himself to a classroom volunteer, teaching children drawing and origami. Yes, the light has been turned on!

With your help this upcoming holiday season, Old Mill can continue to bring light out of darkness for the growing number of children and families who, during these difficult times, are struggling with poverty, joblessness, drug and alcohol problems, domestic violence, depression, anxiety, abuse, autism, ADHD, and mental health problems. The need for these children, youth and families to see light and feel hope, to feel respected, to feel cared about and encouraged that change is possible and that Old Mill staff will be part of a solution is vital. It is not seasonal...it is permanent!

Gifts and donations may be sent to OMC see donation form on back!!

Play Is The Language Of Children

...by Melinda Croft, MA, CCC-SLP,
Speech Therapist

Play is the language of children, and it is so essential to optimal child development that it has been recognized by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights as a right of every child. Play is important for optimal brain development and it influences development in these areas: cognitive, social-emotional, language and literacy, physical and motor. Play progresses through developmental stages, beginning with Sensorimotor-Exploratory play that emerges around the age of 2 months. This type of play is all about the sensory input it provides, through the child's manipulation and inspection of objects (especially by putting things in the mouth!). Next comes Relational-Nonfunctional Play that emerges around 5-10 months, where the child relates objects to one another in a nonfunctional way, and also can act on more than one object at a time. Functional-Conventional Play emerges around 10 months and the child reproduces typical actions with objects in context, such as banging a drum. Symbolic Play then emerges between the ages of 12 and 18 months, in which a child can have objects, toys, or actions represent another. Pretending that two dolls are 'me' and 'Daddy' is a powerful cognitive step in being able to represent the world imaginatively, and realize that other people have a different perspective. By the time the child reaches three, Constructive Play begins to develop, in which the child has an end goal in mind that requires objects be transformed into a new arrangement (building a castle out of blocks).

Play with peers is an important part of development that also can have different characteristics that exist on a continuum:

- Unoccupied Behavior: The child spends most of their time looking around or moving around but is not involved actively in a task.
- Onlooker Play: The child observes other children.
- Solitary Play: The child does not interact with others, but plays independently with toys.
- Parallel Play: Children play independently with like materials, near each other, but not obviously interacting.
- Associative Play: Children play together and use similar materials.
- Cooperative Play: Children play in a group which is organized around a common goal.

The therapists, teachers and staff at Old Mill Center are wholehearted proponents of play! We utilize play in our assessments and treatment, and of course in the classroom. If you have concerns about your child's play development or any other areas of development, give Old Mill a call.

Wishlist (new or next to new)

digital camera, floorlamps, weight scale, one or two bookshelves, diapers, children's clothing sizes 3t -6, rubber boots - children's sizes 9-2, children's hats and gloves, stickers, computer for classroom, computer learning games

Programs of Prevention

...by Melissa Moser, MS, LPC,
Director of Programs

Old Mill Center (OMC) works with families and community partners to decrease the incidence of child abuse and increase family involvement in our community. When we hear the words "child abuse" we may think of many things, mostly, perhaps, that we do not want any child to ever suffer at the hands of an adult, let alone a parent or care provider - the only person that a child may have in the world. Child abuse is a complex issue. It can be generational, situational and/or chronic. Stress plays a role in child abuse; parents may lack resources, skills or abilities, are isolated or have suffered abuse themselves, either by a spouse or parent.

At OMC we believe that parents do the best they can for who they are and what they know. It is a challenge at times to hold this philosophy when a child's well-being is in the balance. We do all we can to support children, and in our efforts to unlock the mystery and power of child abuse, realize the parent needs our attention as well. To only serve the child and not the family system continues to put the child at risk. Many times we see children and families with difficult behaviors and we may question their actions and reactions. With this we also believe that the hurt that a troubled child or family create is never greater than the hurt they feel. We have to meet this distress with support, with problem solving, and with acknowledgement of their strengths every step along the way.

I once had a parent tell me that before she became involved in an OMC program, she sat in her home with the curtains drawn, fearful of the outside world and lost in the memories of her own traumatic childhood. Through a referral to an OMC home visiting program, she slowly gained confidence to begin interacting with the "outside" world and was able to advocate for herself to get the help she needed to grow and become who she wanted to be,



or as she said, "...become who I was MEANT to be." In addition, she enrolled her child in preschool where she and her child became involved in group activities. She connected with other adults with whom she could share her thoughts and experiences and felt less alone in her world. She now opens her curtains every morning with a new plan for the day.

OMC Programs help support these changes in the families we serve; we help families tell their stories, learn new skills and discover different ways to view their developing child and their developing sense of self. Supportive, structured, yet flexible programs facilitate change through personal growth and development. This isn't to say that hard decisions or actions are avoided by program staff, for example, child abuse reporting. We are required by law to report known or suspected child abuse and we strictly follow this rule. But it is our hope and commitment that our close working relationship with the family and the reporting agency helps us navigate through these tough times and work collaboratively whenever possible to help the family move to a safer situation, figuratively and/or literally.

OMC Programs strive to develop relationships, work collaboratively with community partners and agencies to attain these goals for children and families. Many of our programs are at capacity, verifying that the work staff do with families attracts and keeps families involved, most likely decreasing the incidence of child abuse and increasing the family's skills. Recently OMC adopted Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) as an approach to working with children and families in our programs. CPS was developed by Stuart Ablon and Ross Greene and highlighted in the book *The Explosive Child*. CPS works to bring families together with phrases such as "Let's make a plan" and that phrase can often be heard in the hallways at OMC. I recently heard a mother who was attempting to get her child in the car in the parking lot say, "Let's make a plan" and I knew that the problem-solving had begun; a step in a new direction of changing the beat of the family's interactions. For more information about specific programs at OMC, please contact Melissa Moser MS LPC at melissa_moser@oldmillcenter.org or 541-757-8068.



★ Old Mill Center...
"We're here for you"



Thanks for all your hard work and support!

1st Annual Skinny Pig Out

Our 1st Annual Skinny Pig Out was a huge success thanks to our sponsors: Barnhisel, Willis, Barlow & Stephens, PC; Crystal Lake Public Storage; Gretz Goldsmiths; Heresco Chiropractic; Ryan Sparks, DMD; Starker Forests, Inc; and Valley Eye Care, and to our Pig Artists: Cherrill Boissonou; Yuji Hiratsuka; Steve Piepmeier; Judi Sander; Cynthia Spencer; and Carrie Tasman. The live music by Ray Brassfield, Chic Coburn and Neil Grandstaff even had our Director, Bev Larson, dancing and singing along! We look forward to making this an annual event and hope you will join us next summer!



12th Annual Old Mill Golf Classic

Old Mill's 12th Annual Golf Classic enjoyed a beautiful day on the links at Trysting Tree Golf Course. A fun day was had by all thanks to: Barker-Uerlings Insurance; Bourne Enterprises, Inc. Brown & Tedstrom; CH2M HILL; Corvallis New Holland; Corvallis Radiology; Ellingson Brothers; Hilton Garden Inn; Holiday Tree Farms; Hull-Oakes Lumber Co; Jeanne Smith & Associates, PC; Korvis Automation; Les Schwab; Miller Timber Services; NW Natural; PLC Asset Management; Scott Travelstead; Spaeth Lumber Co; Statit Software, Inc; Stover, Neyhart & Co; Timber Supply Co; Wilbur-Ellis; and Willamette Graystone. A special thanks to Golf Pro, Bob Gilder, for taking a day out of his busy touring schedule to host our "Bet Against Bob" hole - this year almost every player placed a bet to raise over \$600!



★ Old Mill Staff List

- Olga Alvarez BS, Healthy Start FSW
- Malia Arenth MS, Family Support & Connections
- Mary Arthur-Young MSW, Healthy Start FSW
- Cindy Bond MS, Early Education Coordinator
- Catherine Bramwell BS, RAFT Lead Teacher/Program Liason
- Eveliina Calder Office Specialist
- Consuelo Carbonell-Moore Preschool Bi-lingual Aide
- Jessica Carroll BS, RAFT Teacher/Home Visitor
- David Carter MSW, Child & Family Therapist
- Erica Crimp MA, Child & Family Therapist
- Melinda Croft MA, CCC-SLP, Speech/Language Pathologist
- Chris Elgin MA, LPC, Child & Family Therapist
- Heather Fredericks Classroom Aide
- Derek Gale MA, Child & Family Therapist
- Elsie Grimler MS, LPC, Child & Family Therapist
- DeAnne Hanvey Office Specialist
- Lee Harrington MD, Medical Consultant
- Cherry Hartman LCSW, Clinical Supervisor
- Jason Haas BS, Preschool Teacher
- Kory Hibbs RAFT Program Assistant
- Jill Irwin MS, ITS Lead Teacher
- Josh James Network Support
- Art Koebel MS, Facilities Maintenance Tech
- Donna Kreliech BS, Preschool Teacher
- Chad Lahr RAFT Childcare Provider
- Keli Kuykendall MA, Director of Finance
- Angee Langevin BA, Healthy Start FSW
- Bev Larson PhD, Executive Director
- Casselle LaTourrette MA, Child & Family Therapist
- Nancy Leeper MA, Director of Operations
- Angela Meyer AA, Billing/Collections Specialist
- Melissa Moser MS, LPC, Director of Programs
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- Ben Newman MN, PMHNP Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
- Annamarie O'Daniel MS, LPC, RAFT Family Therapist
- Chloe Ortega Office Specialist
- Lin Parkison Office Specialist
- Eve Peirce MA, Child & Family Therapist
- Lisa Rae Penter Director of Development
- Nate Perry BS, ITS Program Assistant
- DeAnna Roberts MS, Child & Family Therapist
- Amy Rowland MS, ITS Child & Family Therapist
- Makiko Suezumi MEd, Child & Family Therapist
- Pamela Swafford MA, Child & Family Therapist
- Kerrie Tarkinton Support Services Coordinator

*"Being a child is a hard job," said Joey, age 4.
 "I don't know how to do it."*

Please take this opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child like Joey ...to help make being a child a little easier.



- Yes! I will help make a difference.
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