



The Dougy Center

The National Center for Grieving Children & Families



Photo by Brittney McChristy

2010 Report to the Community

2010 by the numbers:

- 18,418** Number of hours contributed by more than 200 volunteer group facilitators
- 12,163** Number of books and other resources sold through The Dougy Center's online bookstore
- 2,736** Number of people who attended a Dougy Center training to learn how to support grieving children and families
- 667** Number of children, teens and young adults served in bi-weekly support groups
- 458** Number of children and their families who were introduced to The Dougy Center at our Family Orientation sessions
- 428** Number of parents or adult caregivers served in bi-weekly support groups
- 51** Number of support groups that meet every two weeks in Portland, Hillsboro and Canby
- 37** Number of news stories around the country that cited The Dougy Center



From the Director

All of us at The Dougy Center—our families, staff and volunteers—are grateful for the support of the community following the fire that destroyed our facility. We've had our plates full and our responsibilities stretched, but our many friends buoyed us in our time of grief and sadness. We're excited and relieved to be discovering new strength and energy as we envision how the next chapter of The Dougy Center can serve even more children, teens, young adults and parents grieving the death of a family member.



The kids at The Dougy Center remind us daily of the importance of play. Psychiatrist Stuart Brown states that “play allows us to develop alternatives to violence and despair; it helps us learn perseverance and gain optimism.” We appreciate how children make sense of their world, even the hard parts, through play. Thanks for helping them, and us, regain a sense of joy and optimism.

Sincerely,

Donna Schuurman, Ed.D, FT
Executive Director

2010 Financial Report*

Support & Revenue Sources:

Individual Contributions	\$426,085
Foundation Contributions	274,552
Corporate Contributions	51,738
Victims of Crime Act Grant	20,875
Gifts In Kind	73,078
Special Events (Net)	454,961
Training & Bookstore (Net)	104,629
Other Income	21,975

Total Support & Revenue **\$1,427,894**

Expenses:

Program Services	\$806,401
Management & General	236,258
Fundraising	164,366

Total Expenses **\$1,207, 025**

Net Operating Revenue **\$220,869**

Net Investment Return	86,017
Fire Insurance Settlement (Net)	938,658

Total Increase in Net Assets **\$1,245,544**

* For the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2010
Independent audit by Hoffman, Stewart & Schmidt, P.C.

The mission of The Dougy Center

is to provide support in a safe place where children, teens, young adults and their families grieving a death can share their experiences.

Through our National Center for Grieving Children & Families, we provide support and training locally, nationally and internationally to individuals and organizations seeking to assist grieving children.

The Dougy Center Staff

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Brennan Wood
Director of Development
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Beverly Chappell
Founder

Playtime: The importance of play for grieving children

Children at The Dougy Center use play as a way to help with their grief.

When five-year-old Molly started at The Dougy Center, she was struggling to understand her mother's death from cancer. Molly knew that doctors fix people and make them well. So why couldn't her mom's doctor make the cancer go away?

Molly spent the first few months at The Dougy Center playing hospital. She was the doctor and the dolls were her patients. Week after week, Molly would save the dolls from their ailments. But one day, she pulled a blanket over one doll's head and said, "I'm sorry you died. I just couldn't help you." Molly then moved on to play something else.

Play is an important element in The Dougy Center's support model. "Young children don't always have the experience or the words to say what they're feeling—especially in difficult situations," explained Joan Schweizer Hoff, The Dougy Center's Program Director. "Play is their normal way of making sense of what has happened to them and to their world."

For Molly, playing doctor was her way of working through her questions about her mother's death. Eventually she was able to connect and understand the concept that doctors could not fix her mom, and she turned to other kinds of play.

"We believe that children are resilient and have the capacity to heal," said Joan. "They know—sometimes subconsciously—what they need to do. It is important for us to provide choices and activities that help them deal with the particular issues they are having."

Play can take many forms. At The Dougy Center, children can play with toys, dress up, go to the high-energy Volcano room (a padded room with soft toys), and create art and music. The Dougy Center has a large collection of "traditional" toys, but also some not so traditional options, including toy grave markers and coffins for sand table play.

"Many children are working to understand the concept of death, burial and funerals," said Joan. "We provide them with toys and tools to help."

Through a partnership with the Children's Cancer Association, The Dougy Center has two facilitators who work with children specifically through music. Music can be an outlet for a wide range of emotions, and can also help trigger memories.

"One Dougy Center participant was just five when her mom died and has no concrete memories of her," said Joan. "She asked the music facilitator to play songs her mom use to sing—and it helped her to remember and feel closer to her mom."



Children also use play as a way to express uncomfortable feelings and thoughts. "Many times, kids will say things through a puppet or doll that they couldn't say on their own," said Joan.

Because toys and play are critical to helping grieving

children, there are plans for the new building to incorporate even more play area activities, including a hospital room. If you would like to donate toys to The Dougy Center, visit our wish list on the donation page at www.dougy.org. ■

Thank you

Because The Dougy Center does not charge families a fee for its programs, we greatly appreciate your generous gifts of time, money, and goods and services throughout the year. You will find a list of donors on pages 8 to 11, as well as on The Dougy Center's website, www.dougy.org.

Here are a few recent gifts...

» Through a generous gift from the estate of **Erwin Ashenbrenner**, The Dougy Center established the *Erwin Ashenbrenner Child Sponsorship Fund*. The fund will sponsor one child at The Dougy Center each year into perpetuity.

» **Bill Skorohodov**, owner of **Empowered Hands**, recently built a wheelchair ramp for The Dougy Center's temporary program site in Northeast Portland.

» A \$15,000 grant from the **PGE Foundation** is funding a new support group for young adults. The Dougy Center began offering young adult groups in 2008, and now have more than 50 participants.

» Since 1994, **William and Nancy Blount** have generously sponsored 24 children in The Dougy Center's grief support program. ■



*The Dougy Center congratulates **Sarah Schreiter**, Dougy Center teen participant, volunteer and advocate, on being selected as the 2011 Lincoln High School Rose Festival Court Princess. Sarah spoke about her experience at The Dougy Center and the impact of her father's death during her speech.*

Building update

The Dougy Center is moving forward in its efforts to rebuild its Portland center, which was destroyed in an arson fire in 2009.

Scott | Edwards Architecture is working on the preliminary drawings for the new home, based on feedback from families, volunteers, staff and community members. The new building will have separate areas for "Littles" (three to five year olds), six to 11 year olds, and teens, as well as new play areas.

More information on the rebuilding process will be available in the coming months. ■



The new Dougy Center will be built on the same location as the old building (pictured above), which served as The Dougy Center's home for 22 years.

Dougy Center alumni reunite for *CONNECT*

The new group brings together young adults—former Dougy Center participants—for special projects to support grieving children and families.

Twenty-nine years and nearly 25,000 children later, The Dougy Center has had an immeasurable impact on the families who have walked through our doors. As a way to give back, several former Dougy Center participants started *CONNECT*, an alumni group dedicated to supporting The Dougy Center programs.

“Looking back on my own experience with The Dougy Center as a child, and also now as a member of the staff, I have seen how much The Dougy Center has helped grieving families,” said Brennan Wood, The Dougy Center’s Director of Development & Communications and Founding Co-chair of

“There are many of us who want to stay connected, and to say ‘thank you’ for all that The Dougy Center has given us.”

CONNECT. “My life was forever shaped by the opportunity to come to The Dougy Center after my mom died. There are many of us who want to stay connected, and to say ‘thank you’ for all that The Dougy Center has given us.”

The group will work on fundraising events, share information about The Dougy Center with schools and community groups, and help with other volunteer projects.

“*CONNECT* is one way to ensure that the magic of The Dougy Center lasts for future generations of grieving kids,” Brennan added.

If you are interested in *CONNECT*, contact Brennan at 503.542.4823 or brennan@dougy.org.

Special thanks to DHX Advertising and Board Member Jeff Smith for their support of *CONNECT*. ■

Alumni Association Founding Members to date

Shawna Lowy,
Founding Co-chair
Brennan Wood,
Founding Co-chair
Allison Bailey
Meghan Conway
Lauren Dillard
Alex Hughes
Josh Hull
Devon Kelley
Kristina Levelle
Julia Noble
Jenny Isabella
Amber Roberts
Krystal Saling
Diana Stephens
Rachel Stephens
Jasmine Stoner
Lisa Wood



Ways to give

There are many ways to support The Dougy Center, including named funds, planned giving, and child sponsorships. For more information, contact Marcia Director, 503.542.4827 or marcia@dougy.org.

Walk the Grand Floral Parade route while supporting The Dougy Center

Join us on Saturday, June 11, 2011 for the Regence Grand Floral Walk benefitting The Dougy Center.

Visit www.rosefestival.org/events/grandfloralwalk for more information.

Special thanks to:



Where are they now?

Shawna Lowy, *CONNECT* Founding Co-Chair, and Meghan Conway, Founding Member, both came to The Dougy Center as children. We asked them about their experiences at The Dougy Center, and how The Dougy Center made a difference in their lives.

Shawna Lowy, age 33

Director of Business Services, Oregon Automobile Dealers Association; Mom of Gracie, age five; Hillsboro, Oregon

What brought you to The Dougy Center? My mom brought me and my younger brother Ryan after my dad died of cancer. I was 12 years old.

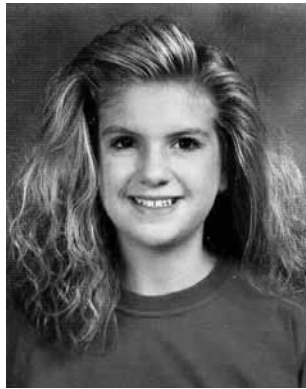
What do you remember most about your group when you were younger? My group had the most amazing pillow fights! When it came time to gather in a circle for discussions, we were always so sweaty and out of breath that we had to have cool-down sessions.

What was your favorite activity at The Dougy Center when you were younger? The foosball table in the basement was a highlight. My brother and I won and lost many wagers during fierce foosball competitions. I also liked getting to choose a “feeling word” off the wall that described how I felt about losing my dad. For the first few weeks, my brother and I weren’t able to say a feeling word out loud. Several weeks later, I told my group that I was ready to share a word—it was “sad.” From then on, that one word each week was the thing that got me to start talking about my dad’s death.

How has The Dougy Center made a difference in your life?

Being a 12-year-old isn’t easy...then add the death of a parent to the scenario, and you’ll likely end up with a very angry and destructive teenager. It was a time in my life when I could have easily veered off onto the wrong path. The Dougy Center kept me pointed in the right direction.

Why is *CONNECT* important to you? I know that I could never repay The Dougy Center for what it has done for me. While I’m not always able to donate a lot financially, being part of *CONNECT* gives me a chance to give back in other ways. I’m excited about having an outlet to share my experiences with families and organizations. ■



Shawna age 12



Shawna today

Meghan Conway, age 30

First Grade Teacher, Happy Valley, Oregon

What brought you to The Dougy Center? In 1988 my father died when I was seven years old. My mother brought my sister and me to The Dougy Center for about two years. In 2000 my sister was killed in a car accident, but I wasn’t aware there was a young adult group until 2008. I started coming to group again, and it was the best decision ever.

What do you remember most about your group when you were younger? I remember two facilitators that my sister and I especially liked named Deb and Mary.

What was your favorite activity at The Dougy Center when you were younger? I liked going to the Volcano Room, but we also put on a lot of plays too.

How has The Dougy Center made a difference in your life? I was very shy as a child and didn’t like talking about my dad’s death. After my sister died, my perspective changed. I knew I wanted to get involved in something like The Dougy Center again, but didn’t know where to turn. When I heard about the young adult group, I was ecstatic. Just being at The Dougy Center gives me a sense of support. Knowing you aren’t the only one going through this was the most important. As a child, The Dougy Center felt a lot safer than school. In the past, I have had students who have lost people in their lives, and I have referred them to The Dougy Center. It makes me so happy to hear they are going and enjoying it.

Why is *CONNECT* important to you? This is a way I can give back. I can be an advocate for The Dougy Center, whether it be recruiting or raising funds. I am so excited to be a part of this group! ■



Meghan age 7



Meghan today

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