



September 2016

## LATEST NEWS



### FROM JEFF CARR, CEO

My professional background for nearly 30 years has been primarily in the field of youth development. I've had the joy of having my life woven into the lives of children and teens from many different backgrounds, cultures and socio-economic status. On a personal level, my wife and I have two teenagers, one of whom just started her freshman year in high school in Portland. For many kids, the beginning of the school year is a time of great stress, rather than the excitement of the starting a new year of school.

For those kids, school can be a place they feel unsuccessful, unwanted, left out and more alone than they are when they are not in school. Albertina Kerr's vision and mission is to provide the support for those kids who find themselves in a dark space. We are here to provide them a caring adult, relationships that matter and a guide to help process their feelings to give them a road map for success as they grow into life.

While the demands and circumstances of our society are more challenging and quite different than they were 100 years ago, the fundamental mission of what Albertina Kerr is about has not changed over the years. We've provided that nurturing and caring experience in the lives of vulnerable children and youth through our programs and services since 1907.

Thank you for being part of Albertina Kerr and our Army of Angels.



### From Linda Schmidt, MD, Medical Director - Youth & Family Services Division

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness month. According to The State of Mental Health in America 2016 report released earlier this year, 12.65% of Oregon youth between the ages of 12 to 17 experienced at least one major depressive episode (from 2012-2013), compared to 9% nationally. During that same time period, 10% of Oregon youth experienced a severe major depressive episode compared to 7% nationally. Between 2010 and 2014, 62% of Oregon youth with major depression did not receive any mental health treatment (compared to 64% nationally). This means that 6 out of 10 Oregon youth who most at risk of experiencing suicidal thoughts

receive no mental health treatment. During this same time period, 56% of those youth with severe major depression had no mental health visits. So more than 50% of all severely depressed kids in Oregon receive no treatment.

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in youth 10 to 17 years of age nationally according to the Centers for Disease Control. Oregon's rate of youth suicide is approximately 11 per 100,000 youth, ranking us 14 out of the 51 states/D.C. As a nation, we tend to not spend money to fund research on those illnesses for which we blame the victim. Suicide kills nearly as many people as breast cancer yet the National Institutes of Health spends approximately 8 times the amount of money on breast cancer research than it does on suicide and suicide prevention. Until we can set aside the stigma and begin funding research at a level commensurate with the national and global toll of mental illness and suicide, I fear that the suicide rate in this country is unlikely to decrease.

There are warning signs to watch out for in individuals who may be at risk for committing suicide. If your child or friend shows or expresses any of the behaviors or symptoms listed below, they may signal a suicidal crisis. Get help immediately from a mental health professional or a professional in a hospital emergency department, or call 9-1-1. An evaluation by a mental health professional is essential to rule out the possibility of suicide.

- Threatens to hurt or kill him or herself; or talks of wanting to hurt or kill him or herself; and/or
- Looks for ways to kill him or herself by seeking access to firearms, pills, or other means; and/or
- Searches the web for means to kill oneself; and/or
- Talks or writes about death, dying or suicide, when these actions are out of the ordinary.
- Expresses feelings of hopelessness, no reason to live, no sense of purpose in life
- Anxiety, agitation, trouble sleeping or sleeping all of the time
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and community
- Feelings of being trapped - like there's no way out
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, expressions of wanting or seeking revenge
- Reckless behavior or more risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Dramatic mood changes
- Giving away prized possessions
- Increase alcohol and/or drug use

## IN MEMORIAM

Dolores Atiyeh, Oregon's former first lady who advocated for children's health and arts-related issues for decades, passed away last week. Dolores was a charter member and volunteer of The Old Kerr Nursery Association (TOKNA) and was the spokesperson at a press conference TOKNA held regarding the remodeling of the nursery building and the plans for the volunteer-run businesses that became Albertina's Place. After three years of planning, fundraising and remodeling, the nursery building reopened in May 1981 as The Old Kerr Nursery with three volunteer-run businesses. This year, Albertina's Place is celebrating its 35th anniversary and that is in part to the dedication Dolores provided. Dolores told us once, "We know that every time we give, we get back much more." Dolores will be missed by many and our thoughts go out to her family.



### 24 HOURS OF KERR EVENT - SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars for September 17 and 19 for our annual 24 Hours of Kerr fundraiser event culminating a year of community giving into 24 hours of events to support Albertina Kerr. 24 Hours of Kerr includes dinner, a live and silent auction, musical entertainment and world-class golf. [Learn more.](#)



### Down Syndrome Awareness Buddy Walks

The Buddy Walk® was established in 1995 by the National Down Syndrome Society to celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October and to promote acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome. During the month of October, we celebrate people with Down syndrome and make people aware it's not about celebrating disabilities, it's about celebrating abilities. There are many community Buddy Walks throughout Oregon in September and October that you can be a part of to help spread awareness. [Learn more.](#)



### Kids Day & 2016 NIKE GOLF Junior Clinic

Albertina Kerr had three youth group homes participate in a Kids Day at the WinCo Foods Portland Open on Thursday August 25, hosted by Nike. The youth were invited to showcase their skills and learn golf tips from world class golfers. This was an amazing experience for all youth that participated. Thank you to Nike and the WinCo Portland Open for making this possible.

## KERR CALENDAR

**September 17 | 24 Hours of Kerr Dinner and Auction**

**September 19 | 24 Hours of Kerr Golf Tournament**

24 Hours of Kerr culminates a year of giving into 24 hours of events to support Albertina Kerr. [Learn more.](#)

Thank you to our partner [McMenamins](#) for hosting "Food Never Felt This Good" on August 30 where 50% of the evening's sales at their Broadway location was donated to Albertina Kerr. They will be recognized at 24 Hours of Kerr. If you're interested in hosting a partner event to raise funds for Albertina Kerr, please reach out to us at [Development@AlbertinaKerr.org](mailto:Development@AlbertinaKerr.org)

**October 24 | 109th Annual Meeting & Community Awards Luncheon**

Join us as Karen Gaffney discusses her personal story of living with Down syndrome and her accomplishments of full inclusion for families, schools, the workplace and community for people with developmental disabilities. [Learn more.](#)

These are a snapshot of upcoming Albertina Kerr events. Learn more about additional Albertina Kerr events [here.](#)

Albertina Kerr strengthens Oregon families and communities by helping children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges, empowering them to live richer lives.

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Albertina Kerr

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