

REVEALING A COMMUNITY'S BEST KEPT SECRET



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It's not often that a decades-old community institution, considered the "best in the state," is simultaneously a place few have ever heard of. But such was the case with Saint Vincent's Day Home. The oldest and largest child development center in Alameda County, Saint Vincent's had operated for 75 years by 1986, yet lacked broad visibility and the funding that usually goes along with being well-recognized.

Hired to develop materials in conjunction with the organization's anniversary and to kick off Saint Vincent's endowment, Fern Tiger Associates determined that if potential funders and audiences weren't visiting "Oakland's best kept secret" on their own, then the materials would need to bring Saint Vincent's to them. The center's historic Victorian building, the activity and energy of the children it served, the professionalism and joy of the staff, and even the tunes sung daily on-site were captured in a 24-page publication, media, and an identity campaign highlighting all that made the Day Home special. Oakland residents, many of them seniors, who had attended Saint Vincent's as preschoolers, shared their memories and thoughts on how its quality programming had touched their lives. The 10-year endowment campaign, originally intended to raise \$1 million, resulted in \$3 million for the center and helped inspire a capital campaign, which enabled the Day Home to expand in 2002.

In the midst of one project for Saint Vincent's Day Home, FTA was called to observe "Circus Day." Expecting to find guest circus performers when they arrived, FTA staff were pleasantly surprised. Circus Day was actually a child-run event and very participatory – the ring leader, ticket-takers, "animals," and acts were all children in the Saint Vincent's Day Home program!



Since 1911, SAINT VINCENT'S DAY HOME has offered high-quality child development services in West Oakland. Preschool, kindergarten, and after-school programs are offered on-site.

