

Winter/Spring 2019

Volume 17, Issue 1

Suzanne's Message:

Let's Talk About Change...

By Suzanne Kornblatt, LMSW

I am not talking about nickels, dimes and quarters - I am talking about the question "how in the world do we *change* a behavior?" And, what has to *change* to begin that process...to influence us to set that as a goal?

Usually, something highly impactful, often distressing, has occurred to focus our attention on the need for *change*.

Your child screams at you in front of his friends. You scream back. "How dare he?" you think, incensed. *A child yelling at a parent is just unacceptable. Ask almost any parent. You wonder, "Where did he learn such disrespect"?*

At this particular moment do you self-reflect? "Has he learned screaming from me?" And if you are following this script, do you ask yourself where should he have learned a quieter means of communication? After all - you have modelled a lack of control and now you are asking him to hold down his explosive feelings, find his inner peace and quietly express his frustrated feelings?

In actuality, do you explore your own communication style to try to understand your child's better? We may have owned a particular behavior for so long we cannot remember the first time we used it. Or, as it may happen with a son or daughter, perhaps it is a new behavior that just cropped up. You might have learned it from your parent and your own offspring might have developed it from your modeling. Whatever the root cause, when your kids yell at you, it can be earth shattering; a defining moment in your life as a parent. A time to change their behavior!

But what if your child does not cooperate with your plan to invest in making a change? "So take my technology away...you'll give it back to me sooner or later," they respond defiantly.

Now for the dilemma: if the child won't change, if we cannot get them to *buy in* no matter the miserable consequences we can come up with, how can we make change happen? After-all, something's *gotta give*. So here is an idea- "What can you do differently that might help the child to *change* - albeit unwittingly?"



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Let's think back to when our children were babies and we had some control. Remember how easy it was to change their feeding routine to attempt to improve sleep habits? As they grow, when they cry because they want something we choose not to give them we can stop their noise by changing our plan and giving in to them - that influences change...it stops them from crying. Over time, however, that choice instills their sense of *power through manipulation*. They learn that if they are annoying enough they will eventually get what they want; a short term benefit often helping to create a long term problem...the inability to cope with delayed gratification or simply the word "no". Now what?

Let's look at another choice we might have made. *A child cries for something we are thoughtfully depriving them of. We help to soothe them without giving in. We say calming words, we teach them to breathe in and out to the count of four. We try to offer another reasonable option. Outcome: typically the child is being helped to develop the capacity to promote his/her own self-soothing techniques - and so effect change with a good resolution for all.*

But what if all of our efforts to influence improved behavior lead to a lack of success? No matter how many ways we try to change someone else, we fail. Intense frustration helps us recognize that we can no longer accept the status quo. Are there other perspectives to explore? Do we fight the alternative or admit to ourselves that if we can't facilitate someone else's change, than *we will have to do something different*.

Hmmm - can it be you? What if you do the unexpected? Will the other person in the room respond differently? Instead of the rote response do they have to stop and think? Would their usual response be out of place? Makes you wonder...Let's explore this alternative.

Your child screams at you in front of his friends. You have experienced the disrespect in front of others before. In the past you screamed back at your child and apparently the cycle continues. Although now, prepared because you have recently considered options, you quietly respond "I have no problem with my hearing. Please try to speak to me quietly. I imagine it will make your friends more comfortable, as well." Secondary benefit: child can no longer say to friends *"See what I have to deal with,"* because you did not engage in the screaming.

Just think of all the energy you saved. Realize the control you have displayed. Notice how your child is thrown off-balance and look at the faces of the friends. You feel a shift from the usual interaction. Your child's angry rhetoric might quickly de-escalate, the look on his friend's faces might deter him or there might be a loud - although delayed response. You shook something up!

Now that you feel more empowered, when you are alone, you can re-enforce your behavioral expectation and let him/her know, calmly, what the consequences are for not complying.

Being able to adapt to the many challenges, transitions, disappointments and losses that occur in life is essential. It is a requirement that helps create the internal construct for resilience. Whether the parent or the child, recognizing our family and life goals and our path to success includes assessing our chances of meeting them, knowing the players we must engage, and making adjustments in communication so that everyone understands their roles will help improve outcomes. Children grow, expectations change, parents adapt, children will learn to also. Hopefully we will all remember to keep our eyes open, notice what is in front of us and then look within to find our true power in making and/or influencing change.

LIFE ISN'T ABOUT WAITING FOR THE STORM TO PASS.

IT'S ABOUT LEARNING TO DANCE IN THE RAIN.

VIVIAN GREENE

A Walk Down Memory Lane - Summer 2018

Oceanside Pre-K/Elementary School # 6

Walter Kaner Children's Foundation

This is what you made possible:

Q-Zar, Mini-Golf, HorseAbility, Zumba, Daisy the Dog Therapist, Movies, LI Aquarium, Pieces of Energy, Bowling, South Shore Arts, Dubin BBQ, DogAbility, Hot Skates, Long Island Children's Museum, Escape the Room, Aladdin on Broadway and Sport Set

A picture is worth a thousand...



Thank you for Your Kind Hearted Generosity in Gifting to SIBS

Meadowbrook Women's Initiative (MWI): School supplies and winter gear

National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW): Back 2 School Store

Sharon Eriksen: Ice cream and other treats

Carrie Davis: pillow cases and quilts for SIBS kids and Pediatric patients

Peninsula Kiwanis: School supplies

Sysco Foods: snacks and refreshments

Caroline Bert: Photography, Zumba and dance choreography

Michael Magro Foundation: Gift cards galore

Joseph Vissichelli: Caricature Art for SIBSPlace kids and their parents

The Giving Dolls: SIBS and Pediatrics/Child Life gifts

Steve Biscotti: Safety Training for families

Mars: for SIBS logo m&m's give away gifts at Auction

Natasha Coles: guest author



SIBS Kids were gifted with an abundance of school supplies from NCJW's Back to School Store (Left);

(Below) Caroline Bert displaying her SIBS gear after one of her many visits

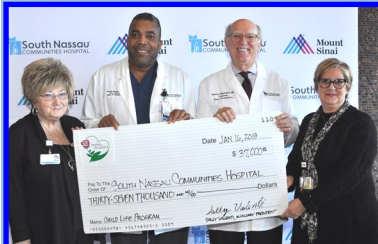


(Left) SIBS Kids with Steve Biscotti, SNCH Director Safety & Security; (Above) The group displaying their new books from guest author Natasha Coles



A Message from Child & Family Life by Kerri Wagner, MA, CAT

The Child & Family Life Program is forever grateful to the SNCH Auxiliary for recognizing the value of our program



Sally Valenti, President of the SNCH Auxiliary and SNCH Board Member, presenting Dr. Lincoln Ferguson, Vice Chair of Pediatrics, Dr. Warren Rosenfeld, Chair of Pediatrics and Kerri Wagner with a donation for Child Life programming

and choosing to support its growth. We look forward to working together to create a more positive experience for our SNCH families.

This holiday season, the Child & Family Life Program was fortunate to have received an abundance of donations for the pediatric patients. These art, play, reading and comfort materials are gifted to the children during their admission.

Thank you again to all of our donors for your generosity and compassion for the children in our community.

Thank you, Starlight Foundation, for your generous donation of the Starlight Fun Center to the Child & Family Life Program. This mobile entertainment unit equipped with a Wii U and access to Netflix and Hulu offers our pediatric families opportunities for positive interactions, distraction and a sense of normalcy. With their continued support we hope to enhance the hospital experience for our pediatric patients and their families.

It seems that whenever the Child & Family Life Program is in need of art and play materials Autum's Colors is there ready to fulfill the requests. Autum, herself, knows exactly what art and play materials will help our pediatric patients and their families through their hospitalizations and is always exploring new items and fundraising ideas. So once again we say thank you, Autum and all of your supporters, for sharing your rainbows!



*In 2018-2019 we said goodbye to
Melissa Ortiz, Mike Siciliano, Meghan Roach,
Donna Burke & Richard Talledo*

*You are forever in the hearts of our
SIBSPlace Family*

*We will remember them fondly
throughout the years.*

A Message from Lauren Cummings, LMSW

Feelings Group is a place where children ages 5-8 years old meet to learn how to express their emotions about a loved one's illness or death. Children learn to identify feeling words and talk about their feelings. They also learn coping skills to deal with their feelings in a positive way. Each time the group meets, they read a book related to the theme of the month and then do an art activity or play a game that is connected to the messages found in the book. Many different topics that the children can relate to are discussed. Identifying emotions that come up for the characters in the story such as anger, sadness, disappointment, loneliness, jealousy and frustration, often helps the children to relate. Then we help them explore their own emotional responses to their life. Friendships, relationships with family members, self-esteem and teamwork are some of the topics that are often discussed in group.



Young children have the opportunity to learn not only about feelings but also how to conduct themselves in a group. It is important that they learn to wait their turn to speak and listen to their peers when they share. Gaining these skills is important because the children use them in their lives outside of SIBS. It also gives them a solid foundation so they are prepared to move up to the older children's group - a goal they all set for themselves. When it is decided that a child is ready to move up to the older group, they are given a certificate and the feeling of pride is evident by the expression on their faces.

The group benefits the children by allowing them to feel less alone in their anxiety around their loved one's illness or their grief reactions. Children have the chance to connect to their peers who have also experienced the traumatic illness or loss of a family member, which helps them to feel less isolated. At SIBS, children don't feel different than their peers, whereas in school or other areas of their life, they sometimes feel very different. Most children who come to SIBS feel that they belong and can share things that they aren't ready to share anywhere else.

Whether it's a child sharing his or her experience with another child or cheering each other on while playing an egg relay race, the Feelings Group members are offered opportunities to support one another. As the facilitator of the Feelings Group, watching the children grow as they learn to express themselves, develop coping skills they can utilize in their daily lives and support each other during program, has been a very rewarding experience.

The Holiday Season at SIBSPlace

Thanksgiving season and Family Event—had a "sweet" start by **Mark Head**, VP of External Affairs for SNCH who prepared a yummy and wide array of cookies for the children at SIBS and educated them around their preparation. Participants were de-lighted!

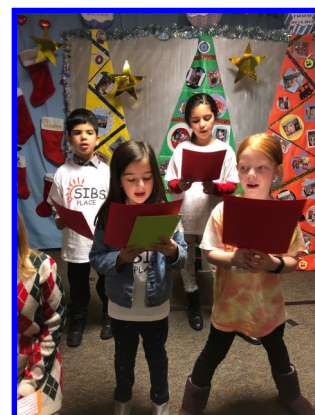
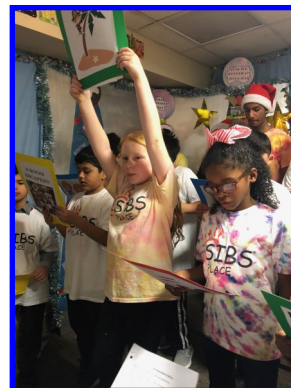
Walter Kaner's Children's Foundation sponsored our Thanksgiving Feast at SIBS. Autumn was the décor and tables were beautifully dressed. The event was heartwarming and soul/tummy filling!

Executive Chef Bello and **Kyle Mungul** prepared another fun evening of cookie decoration for SIBSPlace. The joy the children display as they create their own masterpieces, and then devour them to the last morsel is a pleasure to behold for staff and volunteers alike.

The winter **Holiday Show** amazed our audience. The talent was equal to any show on "Broadway"! This 1420 Broadway (LOL) rendition of "December to Remember" written by Joanna Formont, displayed unique skills and the camaraderie of the cast members brought the performances to a new level of joy for our audience.

Families not only reveled in the entertainment, but the banquet and gifts so generously and purposely provided by our community members were unsurpassed. What love was felt and shared at SIBSPlace this December 2018!

Thank you Hewlett Fire Department for always bringing Santa Claus and the Elves on the Reindeer (otherwise known as a Fire Truck) to heighten the excitement.



SIBSPlace Support Services

Tuesday 3-8 pm	Wednesday 5-6:30 pm	Thursday 3-8 pm	Friday 5-9 pm
<u>SIBS Groups:</u> Support services for well children with a sibling with cancer or another devastating medical illness, or a parent with cancer.	<u>Bereavement Group:</u> Time limited, age-appropriate groups are scheduled for support services. Referrals made by community agencies, schools or parents.	<u>SIBS Groups:</u> Same children's services as on Tuesday. Parent support group is offered at 7 pm.	<u>Teen Night:</u> Age-based groups discuss issues faced by 13-17 year-olds living with an ill family member.

Mark Your Calendar

Camp SIBS:

July 9, 2019

Bill Dubin

BBQ: July 24, 2019

Schamroth BBQ:

August 11, 2019

Cycle Date: September 2019

SIBSPlace Staff Presentation at Mental Health Association of Nassau County:
October 11, 2019



Therapeutic Value in Story Telling

by Joanna Formont, LMHC

In September we prepared ourselves for the challenges we may face heading back to school, by **Following the Yellow Brick Road** after Dorothy and Toto. Much like in the *Wizard of Oz*, starting a new school year requires the *courage* to make new friends and meet new teachers; *heart* to explore what activities and classes you will be passionate about this year; *brains* to meet with the academic responsibilities; and the importance of knowing that at the end of a long day there are people who make you feel special and safe waiting for you at *home*. We didn't even need to click our heels three times to know that there's no place like SIBSPlace to practice the skills needed to start the school year off right!



Eliana knows there's no place like home!

At SIBSPlace we always celebrate and recognize that even though our family of origin may appear to be different from others, in the end the love shared between family members is a universal feeling. Family members care, support and look out for each other, especially when facing hard times, just like in the movie *Hotel Transylvania*. We embraced and reinforced this concept during October's monthly theme of **Hotel SIBSylvania**, which we ended with a costume party that included siblings. We all realized that even when in disguise, under the costumes, we were still the same people and our different appearances didn't matter, just like in life.



SIBS Kids creating their own Color Monsters

November winds allowed **Mary Poppins' Return to SIBSPlace**. Flying kites, decorating umbrellas and drafting letters about ideal caretakers, encouraged discussion about goals and dreams the children have and the people in their lives who support them on these endeavors. Most of the SIBS Kids agreed, Mary's sweet and kind nature mixed with her firm boundaries and expectations is what made her *practically perfect in every way*. And each child was able to list one or more adults in their lives who provide the same support and guidance. Ending the month with a Family Thanksgiving Feast left us all feeling *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!*

It is common to end a year looking back at past accomplishments, which is why we celebrated **Remember December**. Participants reflected on the past year and how many of their lives have changed. Some children focused on growth in school or recreational activities. Some discussed how family dynamics shifted because loved ones had died, new family members moved in or they were preparing to move out of their current homes. This theme was further explored, as our holiday show looked back to SIBSPlace productions from years gone by. Incorporating elements from previous years allowed staff and the children to acknowledge the growth at SIBSPlace and recognize how when we face change there is potential to strengthen both our resolve and resilience.



It's always a Jolly Holiday when siblings Brian C. and Amanda join us at SIBSPlace



SIBS Kids spread enough Holiday cheer to last us the whole year during our December Party and Show

With a winter chill in the air, in January, we decided to cook up a warm pot of **Feelings Soup**. Focusing on common feeling words our SIBS Kids often share like, embarrassed, jealous, scared and disappointed, we looked to normalize and expand their emotional vocabulary, while encouraging self-expression. Exposing the children to different creative arts mediums, like video making, Andy Warhol-style art, graffiti art and cooking, sparked creativity and further enhanced engagement, warming both our hearts and souls.



Nathaniel performing at the Truth or Lie Puppet Show

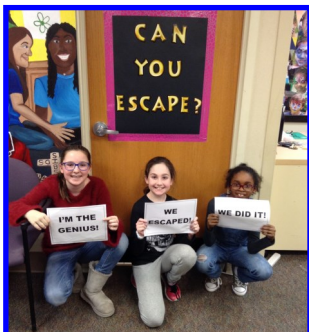
Classic children's stories remind us of the places we can travel to using only our imaginations. During February's **Love a Good Book** month, we traveled across the globe. In reading the Chinese folk tale *Tiki Tiki Tembo* we explored the importance of our names and family history. *Madeline* brought us to France and expanded our empathy for our loved ones when they are in the hospital, as well as highlighted the importance of peer support. *Paddington Bear's* adventures as he ended up unexpectedly at a London train station, taught us that sometimes life's surprises can bring us as much joy as a delicious marmalade sandwich. Making marionettes and performing a puppet show, like in *Pinocchio*, opened discussion about telling the truth and letting your conscience be your guide; While *Ferdinand* taught us the importance of staying true to yourself and your convictions, even in the middle of a bullfight in Spain. Closing the month with a special toy "show and tell" and the story of *Corduroy* allowed the children to share what makes their home, belongings and friends so special and treasured.



Did Kerri just give us permission to color the wall at SIBS? Yes she did!

Using effective problem solving and communication skills was the focus of **Mysterious March**. Each program evening the children completed puzzles, optical illusions, secret codes and other challenges that both engaged and

tested the participants. Working as a group provided greater insight, validating the benefit of peer engagement. The month culminated in an "Escape the Game Room" activity, where all teams demonstrated strong group cohesion, cooperation, compromise and active listening. Facilitating and practicing activities, such as these at SIBSPlace, reinforces the skills that the SIBS Kids will be able to translate and easily apply to help them cope and overcome whatever obstacles and other mysteries they may face in the future.



Go Girls Group - they Escaped the Game Room in record time!

Action-Packed April kept us moving and allowed us to channel excess energy as we played SIBSPlace soccer, completed an obstacle course and played a team tossing game that tested how well the SIBS Kids knew their peers. Balancing the dynamic activities with mindfulness and relaxation exercises, helped to reinforce coping skills and remind the participants how necessary it is to stop and breathe deeply every so often.

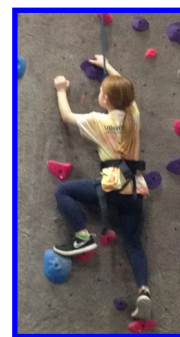


Hunter and Kai diligently practicing their plate spinning techniques

In May, the SIBSPlace players worked together to create the **Greatest Show at SIBSPlace**-our annual Talent Show. With clowns, magicians, Daisy the Great, tightrope walking puppets, and for the first time ever spinning plates, devil sticks, and diablo acts the show was a true success! Each child left with smiles on their faces, feeling empowered and proud of their *great* accomplishments and amazing synergy with their peers.

We closed the year with **You've Got a Friend at SIBS** in June, using *Toy Story* characters and themes to remind the SIBS Kids that at SIBSPlace there is always someone to support them, listen to them and care about them - our friendships last *to infinity and beyond*!

Thank you Walter Kaner Children's Foundation!





**Thank You to our Holiday Elves
who helped to make the SIBS Kids
wishes come true:**

Debbie Andreuzzi	Lori Jackson
Baldwin Middle School PYA	Rita King
Jonny & Julia Baron	Pnina Knopf
Mark & Donna Baron	Suzanne Kornblatt
Basner Family	Brett & Ashley Kornblum
Judy Bernstein	Melissa Kotcher
Brandewiede Family	Ethan & Christina Lahey
Judi Braverman	Martha Leviton
Chira Budick	Jay Levy & Family
Carris Family	Lippens Family
Lindsey & Nick Caffiero	Litt Family
Chen Family	Vanessa LoPiccolo
Chieco Family	Jennie Ma
Ciyilan Family	Margolies Family
Hope Coleman	Kristin Masterson
Concannon Family	Amanda Mastronardi
RuthAnn & Giovanna Corazza	Mastronardi Family
Louanne Cummings	McManus & Pocook Family
Adiba Degennaro	NCTW
Michelle DeMott	Denise Nunez
Fran Denny	P.S. 174
Paul DiBenedetto	Quaco Family
Keith & Sharon Eriksen	Ed & Pat Rizzo
Renee Fischer	Carol Rizzo
Abby Fox	RVC Boy Scout Pack #163
Tracey Friedman	Joel & Susan Schneider
Elisa Frischling	SNCH Gertrude & Louis Feil
Lauren Gartenstein	Cancer Center
Annmari George	Dena Stein
Michael & Alexis Gilbride	Sally Telias
Jenn Goffner	Carole Tolkin
Linda Gorin	Audrey Turetzky
Randy & Rachael Gwirtzman	Naomi Usdan
Hewlett Fire Department	Vera Family
Ronnie Hirsh	Ashley Weiss
Vic & Judie Horowitz	Georgene Winick
Stephanie Inelle Pepe	Joanne Witkower

Change Challenge: In May 2018 SIBSPlace Board Members asked local business to display SIBSPlace donation boxes, which have raised \$1249.03 just from their customer's change! Thank you *Front Street Pizza, Pat's Pergament Barber Shop, Tulip Deli, J + M Haircutters, Poodles in Blue* and *Woods Ave Animal Clinic* for your continued support! If you would like to display a donation box at your business please call 516-374-3000.



Michael Magro Foundation

This year SIBS reached out to Terrie Magro from the Michael Magro Foundation. Terrie is a mom who has raised her family through the storm of cancer. Two sons, two diagnoses, one child lost his fight. The Magro family surely understands the impact of cancer on the family system.

When we reached out to Terrie Magro she was especially gracious. The Magro family gifted SIBSPlace with a very generous assortment of gift cards to ease the financial burden on SIBSPlace families.

Terrie, Paul and Marc Magro - your family's commitment to the Michael Magro Foundation has benefitted so many, by "lifting them up" throughout the years. Thank you for including SIBSPlace as one of the beneficiaries of your kindness. You are inspirational in demonstrating the power one can take back in the face of adversity.

Charity Buzz

Drum roll please! SIBSPlace will be launching online bidding throughout the year utilizing the Charity Buzz website! We are so confident that the opportunities this new venue offers will promote awareness of our mission and boost financial support necessary for sustaining SIBSPlace. Please visit www.curates.charitybuzz.com Keep an eye out for our SIBSPlace online auction experiences! Then join in the fun and place your bid.



We have a saying at SIBSPlace, once a SIBS Kid, always a SIBS Kid. - Always a member of the SIBSPlace family! In the spirit of *Ohana* (aka. family) it was wonderful to see some of our young adult participants celebrate the wedding of Alana Keane to Justin Saville. Alana invited Kristina Grupe, a friend she met at SIBSPlace, some years ago, to be a bridesmaid and also included the Grupe family in her special day. Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Saville and the whole Keane family!

Best friends Alana Saville and Kristina Grupe with their brothers, William Grupe and Robert Keane reuniting for a wonderful occasion!



#KidsHelpingSIBSKids

Hewlett High School Cabaret Night 2018 & 2019: Monetary donation

RVC Brownie Troop #825: Monetary donation for a pizza and movie night

RVC Boy Scout Pack #163: Prepared and donated 50 comfort bags for the SIBS Kids

Celebration of Morgan's Supporters Bowling Party: Monetary donation

P.S. 174: Monetary donation for the holidays

Three Heart Strings: Raised money through SIBSPlace bracelet sales

Summer Sellers (Kelly & Meghan Walsh & Connor & Charlotte Formont): Monetary donation

Peninsula Kiwanis Builders Club: Monetary donation

Franklin Early Childhood Center: Gift cards for birthday gifts and to support families

Autum's Colors: art supplies for SIBS and Pediatrics/Child Life

Garden City School: Annika Margolies Collected books, toys, crafts and games

Oceanside School #6: Hop for SIBS and Fun Run donations fund our CAMP SIBS summer program

Leo Surillo: Collected new toys, games and books for birthday presents for SIBS Kids

Owen Basner: Monetary donation

Healthy Living Health Fair: Angie Baselice provided community outreach for SIBSPlace at Oceanside High School



Franklin Early Childhood Principal Dr. Lorraine Smyth and Suzanne Kornblatt stand in front of Kindness display at FECC



Angie Baselice spreading the word about SIBSPlace services!



Gifts and birthday surprises for the SIBS kids from Leo Surillo (Left); Annika Margolies with her donations for SIBSPlace (Right)



"Loose parts"...What are those? by Kerri Wagner

"Loose parts" are the materials that can be used in open-ended situations and with infinite possibilities. They are not costly nor do they need to be purchased in a store. They may include recycled materials, odds and ends found in the home or classroom, or materials from nature. They can be used alone or combined with other materials. The options are limitless.

When children are given the opportunities to explore loose parts they feel a sense of freedom. Each child may use the same material in a different way. For one child the large cardboard box is a shuttle transporting him/her to outer space and for another it is a home for his/her treasured companions.

Recently at SIBS while we were discussing jealousy, our SIBS Kids worked together to transform their large cardboard box into a green-eyed monster (pictured below). While they were designing and constructing they were also fostering their communication skills and promoting positive peer relationships. Imaginations soared while they were busy manipulating and creating.

Through trial and error, children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. There is never a right or wrong when working with "loose parts". Children are able to make sense of their world through these uninhibited experiences. These experiences are particularly beneficial for children living with an ill family member. Witnessing transitions while learning to adjust and adapt are part of their everyday challenges.



It is our role as parents, educators and therapists to provide an environment that is full of open-ended materials and activities that will stimulate children to explore, imagine, engage, relate and create.

"Loose Parts": rocks, shells, leaves, balls, marbles, gems, buttons, nuts, bolts, spools, wire, wrapping, fabric, wood, ribbons, yarn, tiles, cans, bottles, jars, cardboard rolls, boxes, bubble wrap, pipe cleaners, pom poms, cups, feathers, beads, cotton, greeting cards, magazines, toy parts or as far as your eyes can see!



A message from Joeanna Greenberg-

I met Suzanne and learned about SIBSPlace at the annual Schamroth BBQ in 2012 and I immediately felt a connection. I was always supportive of nonprofit organizations that friends and family members were involved in and happy to show support by participating in events, giving feedback or suggestions and making a donation, but I never felt an instant connection or a desire to get more involved like I did with SIBSPlace.

Immediately I started the application process through South Nassau Communities Hospital to be a Tuesday evening volunteer at SIBSPlace. Once approved and after training, my Tuesday nights took on a new shape and had never been better. In my 7 years as a volunteer I always looked forward to my Tuesday evenings.

When my friends would ask me about SIBS and what I did as a volunteer my answer was always simple. I show up.

Each child at SIBS is going through something different, but all impacted by the medical illness of someone in their family. On my Tuesday evenings there, I am me, I am there, I show up. We share stories, laugh, tell jokes, talk about our day, share thumbs up and thumbs down and have dinner together. We celebrate good times together and support each other in the not so good times. We are a family and all are accepted. Whatever is going on, it's ok. Together we can and do get through everything.

During feeling activities we learn that SIBS Place is a safe sharing space. What happens at SIBSPlace, stays at SIBSPlace. We share the things that are going on in our lives. Things that make us feel happy, scared, sad and mad.

As all the kids know, the art room is my favorite! I love the creative therapeutic activities Kerri Wagner the Art Therapist plans for the kids and I was always the first adult volunteer to take an empty spot and make a kite, a lava lamp or stress ball.

When I was offered the position as counselor, it was such a touching compliment; although, it was a hard decision to make. Joining the SIBSPlace team as a part-time employee meant giving up my seat on the SIBSPlace Board. Deciphering where I will have an opportunity to make the strongest impact was something I thought about a lot and talked through with my daughter and close friends. Ultimately, I decided that spending more time at SIBSPlace with the kids and working for and with Suzanne, Joanna, Kerri, Lauren and Susanne (the intern) was the right decision for me. I see and feel my relationship with the kids and staff changing and growing.

Being involved and seeing firsthand the strategizing, thought and attention to detail that goes into planning all of our program days and special events, is amazing. While at SIBS, the activities flow so naturally and seamlessly. All the care, love and planning that goes into making this program the special place it is for the kids, families and communities makes me feel proud and confident of this wonderful community resource of which I am a part.

With so much more knowledge and understanding of the work done at SIBS, I am more emboldened than ever to help cultivate the expansion of the financial growth and development of this program. And so, I have decided to return to my position on the SIBSPlace Board even more invigorated to escalate fundraising opportunities and regain my title of very honored volunteer!



Auction 2019 Accolades

The exciting Annual Auction to benefit SIBSPlace was held at the Garden City Hotel on May 4, 2019. The elegant layout and smoothly run function was organized by Lynne Nordone and the SNCH Development department, along with Auction Chair Joeanna Greenberg and the 2019 Auction Committee. Lew Okin was this year's worthy honoree and Bruce Levitt received the distinction of being the second annual recipient of the Helene Wrenn Memorial Award.

A Kentucky Derby theme, included horse racing and casino tables to enhance the fun of the live and silent auctions. Jason Vera, a SIBS parent spoke emotionally of his family's journey through his wife's illness and ultimate loss of her battle with cancer. He has three surviving children.. The event raised \$300,000.



Top L to R: Mike Schamroth, Suzanne Kornblatt, Maureen Greco-Blois, Jason Vera, Joeanna Greenberg, Judie Horowitz, Susanne Bennett, Vic Horowitz, Joanne Witkower, Bottom l to r: Kerri Wagner, Lauren Cummings, Joanna Formont and Kristen Margolies

SIBSPPlace as Seen Through the Eyes of an Intern by Susanne Bennett

It was Valentine's Day 2018 that I walked through the doors of SIBSPPlace for the first time. I nervously entered the front door, the bright decorations for the SIBSPPlace Share the Love celebration spoke to me, and I was overwhelmed by the friendliness of the staff. Suzanne immediately put me at ease, and I was extremely pleased to be given this opportunity to assist the staff and volunteers with their mission of easing the lives of children with a seriously ill parent or sibling. I excitedly waited for September to join the team as a social work intern.



September came, and so did the children and their families. The warmth that was exuded at SIBSPPlace was palpable. The first time I knew I was in the right place to learn the skills that would help me to fulfill the mission of the social work profession, which is to enhance the well-being of others, was when one young boy, age 9, who has a seriously ill sibling reached over to his SIBSPPlace friend during an emotional group session. His friend who is eight was articulately speaking about his dad who had passed away with raw emotion, and the young boy with the seriously ill sibling said, "It will be okay, buddy." Wow! What a moment. I was learning firsthand the essential social work skills of expressing empathy and providing support and encouragement.

I was amazed by the capabilities that these children had acquired to express their unconditional support for each other. The group went on to effortlessly talk about their feelings of sadness, jealousy and disappointment that often accompany having an ill parent or sibling and to discuss the coping mechanisms that they had learned to utilize at SIBSPPlace. Whether it is working on homework, enjoying free time when we play board games and talk, sharing dinner or participating in evidence based therapeutic processes such as Verbal, Art, Music or Pet Therapy Sessions or the multitude of other therapeutic activities, we are always sharing and growing. At SIBSPPlace we utilize an ecological lens focusing on the unique micro, mezzo, and macro systems that each child is involved with embedded in an overarching strengths perspective. We employ cognitive behavioral techniques to enhance each child's communication and coping skills, which in turn will promote resilience. The children grow, the staff grows, the volunteers grow, and I have grown. I look at the world differently as a result of my experiences at SIBSPPlace, a place where the children truly matter most.

As I watch in awe every Tuesday and Thursday during our regular program at SIBSPPlace, I reflect upon how we are assisting these children and their families to foster resilience. I also reflect upon how we are helping future generations as these SIBSPPlace children will undoubtedly continue to utilize the emotional identification, communication and coping skills they have learned at SIBSPPlace with their own families someday. I feel incredibly blessed to have had the opportunity to be a part of such a meaningful organization where the lives of children, their families and every person who walks through the SIBSPPlace door is positively impacted.

Thank you Maple Lanes in Rockville Centre and all of our families and friends who supported our Annual SIBSPPlace Bowl-A-Thon on June 1, 2019. We had a BALL! Contributions made will help support our Teen Night programming!



Thanks Kyle and Brian for bringing your families to support the Bowl-A-Thon!

News 12 LI reporter Elizabeth Hashagen highlighted SIBSPPlace services!



We are Grateful For This Year's Generous Donors - You Ensure The Existence of SIBSPlace

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Thank you to our Volunteers

SIBSPlace celebrates our volunteers who this year have given 1021 hours of their precious time and diverse talents to support our SIBS participants.

The only payment that our volunteers receive in return - a fulfilled heart!

Angie Baselice	Cassie Butkereit
Joeanna Greenberg	Zoe Greenberg
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(Top) Joanna Formont, Suzanne Kornblatt, Joeanna Greenberg, Susanne Bennett, Kerri Wagner, Lauren Cummings, Ronnie Hirsh, Audrey Turetzky (Bottom) Georgene Winick, Joanne Witkower, Judie Horowitz, Vic Horowitz

Board Members Support for SIBSPlace

CYCLE FOR SIBS- In October, Dave Harrison with the support of Star Track and WBLI's Andrew (Syke) Sykora and the WBLI



Dave Harrison and WBLI posing with our riders!

Team spearheaded our Second Annual Cycle for SIBS event at Cedar Creek Park in Seaford. There was food, music, games, extra bicycles and helmets, bicycle lessons and a cycle-ride along a lovely path. Multiple raffle items including a 47" TV was auctioned-off

thanks to a fabulous donation by Jeff Rosenthal of HOME Appliances in Oceanside. All of these activities added up to a successful fundraiser, and a dynamic and empowering day for our SIBS kids! Who cared that it rained, drizzled and was quite chilly? We were having too much fun to notice.

HOOPS FOR HOPE- a Hewlett High School fundraising initiative that was begun 15 years ago by Coach Bill Dubin was replicated this year by Oceanside High School for the second time, and for the first time in West Hempstead. We now have had four high schools follow Coach Dubin's model and host a "Hoops" event.

We are grateful to Coach Joseph Supple and the Oceanside Basketball team and Coach Ed Cosgrove and his West Hempstead Basketball team for so energetically supporting SIBSPlace in their exciting Hoops for Hope games.



West Hempstead's Coach Ed Cosgrove, Annika M., Joanna Formont and Coach Bill Dubin are ready to cheer on the basketball teams!



Hewlett's Coach Dubin, Peninsula Kiwanis member, Howie Tompkin, and Suzanne Kornblatt receiving a citation from Assemblywoman Missy Miller

ROCK FOR SIBS-Lowell Frey and his band Six Degrees North gifted SIBS with their time and talents for the Fifth Annual Rock for SIBS- a night of great music and fun. Raffle prizes galore, hardy food and refreshments rounded out a community event that left us dancing in the streets! BTW- Sam Frey, past SIBS volunteer, now college graduate, rocked the sax like nobody's business. Next time you see the "Rock" being advertised run to your computer and sign up...It will make you happy!

Thank you all for supporting SIBS so generously!



WBLI's D.J. Syke with his nieces taking a break from bike riding at the Cycle for SIBS



SIBSPlace Board President, Arlene Basner, with her husband Norman enjoying a summertime SIBSPlace event

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The **SIBSPlace Board** has been creative in supporting traditional and developing new fundraising initiatives to help bring awareness to our mission and inspire expansion of our services to the broader community as well as increase our funding to help make that goal attainable.



Rockin' father and son duo - Lowell and Sam Frey taking a break from a night of music, fundraising and fun to smile for the camera!



SIBSPlace

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**A Place Where A
Child Matters Most!**

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Lauren Cummings, LMSW

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(unofficial staff members, of course)

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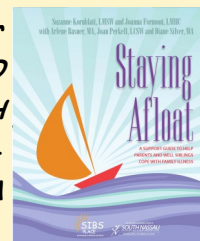


**More information to follow on
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SIBSPlace is an available choice when shopping through [amazon.smile.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile). Check it out and make sure to select SIBSPlace as your non-profit recipient!



Staying Afloat: We are happy to share that our book, *STAYING AFLOAT, A SUPPORT GUIDE TO HELP PARENTS AND WELL SIBLINGS COPE WITH FAMILY ILLNESS*, can be purchased for your family, school social worker, doctor or a friend in need at www.sibsplace.org and on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Honor/Memory cards are available at SIBSPlace

Call (516) 374-3000 for information

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