

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact for Brighter Beginnings

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### **Brighter Beginnings Launches Friends of Brighter Beginnings**

*Organization to provide volunteer resources for non-profit agency.*

Oakland, Calif., January 2, 2008. Brighter Beginnings, a non-profit agency serving low-income families in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, has launched Friends of Brighter Beginnings. The auxiliary organization has been established to provide volunteer resources and fund-raising support for the agency.

Friends of Brighter Beginnings will be assisting with fund raising activities, sponsoring a series of educational lectures, organizing collections of diapers and baby items such as formula and baby food, managing donations closets, and volunteering at specific center activities.

“Friends of Brighter Beginnings accesses resources that are a dream for an agency like us. This organization provides a very effective way for us to organize our volunteers into meaningful activities that are directly connected to our needs,” said Dr. Barbara Bunn McCullough, Executive Director, Brighter Beginnings. “We find that many people really want a volunteer connection that is meaningful and where they can make a difference. Friends provides an opportunity for individuals to connect at a level that fits their own interests, skills and circumstances.”

The organization held two information sessions in November 2007 and received a very enthusiastic response. Initial projects included participating in the 2007 Adopt-A-Family program and assembly for holiday mailings. The group also rallied in response to a special need for a family in extreme circumstances. Additional information sessions are planned in the East Bay in January.

“Friends of Brighter Beginnings helped us out for the first time in December with some special needs for our Adopt-A-Family program. The group came through quickly and in ways I could not have imagined. They heard the needs and

responded with unbelievable energy and generosity,” said Jennifer Shallat, Alameda County Program Director. “Our staff was overwhelmed and touched by how much everyone connected and cared.”

The organization is also launching a Lunch and Lecture series to further an understanding of the underlying issues facing the families of Brighter Beginnings. The first lunch will be held on Thursday, January 31 at Postino Restaurant in Lafayette. Anita Siegel, Deputy Director Alameda County Health Department, will present – “integrating Resiliency Factors in Early Childhood – the three most important things in a child’s life to succeed in school and life.

### **About Friends of Brighter Beginnings**

Friends of Brighter Beginnings serves as an auxiliary to Brighter Beginnings for fund raising activities, Adopt-A-Family needs and coordination of in-kind resources and donations. The organization also facilitates connections with community organizations that want to support Brighter Beginnings, such as scout troops and school leadership organizations. Additional information about Friends of Brighter Beginnings is available at [www.brighter-beginnings.org](http://www.brighter-beginnings.org) or by emailing [friends@brighter-beginnings.org](mailto:friends@brighter-beginnings.org).

### **About Brighter Beginnings**

Brighter Beginnings reaches out to vulnerable, low-income families, providing home-based support and center-based services to promote healthy births and the development of babies and young children. Each year the non-profit organization serves more than 2,200 families in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Funded historically by government grants, Brighter Beginnings has recently expanded its appeals for private donations to add essential services for families in critical need. A professional management staff with decades of experience in non-profit family support groups supervises 50 paid staff members at three East Bay locations in Oakland, Richmond and Antioch. Additional information is available at [www.brighter-beginnings.org](http://www.brighter-beginnings.org) or by calling 877.427.7134.

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