

Volunteer Spotlight - November 2009

Carrie Detwiler

Compassion, one of the core values upheld by Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, is also one of the defining characteristics of many volunteers. Carrie Detwiler, a Mother-Baby program volunteer since February 2009, has demonstrated true compassion for the families served by SFBFS. Carrie, a retired Sacramento area elementary teacher, had always been interested in volunteering at SFBFS since she had several students over the years whose families benefited from Food Assistance and other SFBFS programs. After retiring, Carrie began volunteering in the Mother-Baby program at Oak Park, and her involvement grew over time.



Starting off as a mentor to new families, Carrie would sit down and talk with new moms and dads about raising their babies. It became obvious that Carrie has a unique ability to bond with families and provide them the guidance needed. Her compassion and ability to really listen are the keys to her connections with the families. New parents appreciated Carrie's kind and caring nature. Eventually, Carrie started making a difference in the lives of hundred of families by leading some of the Family Life workshops in the Mother-Baby program. These parent education workshops teach new parents skills to help them raise their children. Carrie currently leads classes on Child Safety, Developmental Stages of the Newborn, and Story Time, which is a perfect fit for the former teacher. Carrie also recently organized an event for the children of Mother-Baby clients. On September 29, she held a special Story Time celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the popular children's book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Through events like this, Carrie has shown many families just how fun story time can be.

In addition to her work mentoring the Mother-Baby families, Carrie also sorts donations, hangs clothing, organizes the baby food and diapers, and assists parents in shopping for baby clothing when they come to the Mother-Baby program. During the summer, Carrie noticed a need for donations of diapers, and started a diaper drive in her community. The diapers came at a particularly difficult economic time for many families.

Carrie jumps in wherever she is needed. When the time came for SFBFS to recruit volunteers to speak at outreach events in the community, Carrie was one of the first to volunteer. Her compassion for all the families served in Mother-Baby is evident to all she meets, making her a wonderful ambassador for the organization. Lorena Carranza, Mother-Baby program manager at Oak Park, comments on Carrie's compassionate nature, saying "All volunteers, staff members and clients who know her always find that Carrie is a wonderful person with a beautiful heart."