



*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*

MARGARET MEAD

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## From the Board of Directors

July 2007 from

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### ***From the Board of Directors***

Dear Friends and **FACES'** Members,

The tragedy at Virginia Tech was a heart breaking wake up call to the Commonwealth. It showcased multiple failures in a mental health system that ultimately led to the loss of 33 lives. Many are outraged; but who will step up and speak up?

**FACES** is poised along with other mental health organizations from the state of Virginia to advocate for changes in the badly broken mental health system. **FACES'** immediate response to the events in Blacksburg was to draft a position paper with our first hand knowledge of the changes needed and to send the letter to Chief Justice Hassell, Governor Kaine and all the state legislators in Virginia.

Recently, we participated in the Richmond Times Dispatch Mental Health Forum and received press coverage on four occasions with quotes from spokespersons from our organization. We bring the unique and desperately needed viewpoint of the families.

Won't you support our efforts and make a contribution and become a member of **FACES**?

Our programs are all offered free of charge and funded nearly exclusively by membership dues and an annual fundraiser. **FACES** is a 501©(3) organization. All gifts are tax deductible.

**FACES** now serves over one thousand people annually through the following activities:

- Monthly advocacy meetings that bring notable speakers on key mental health topics.
- A bi-monthly support group for families.
- A peer to peer consumer support group hosted by **FACES**.
- A monthly newsletter that informs of **FACES'** events and educates through articles.
- A full time executive director staffing the **FACES'** Center.
- Social events at Central State Hospital for patients and staff.

Future activities planned are the following:

- An educational program, A Family Educational Guide to Brain Disorders, will begin in the fall of 2007.
- A conference on depression and suicide prevention for middle school aged teens which is a continuation of our successful 2006 conference, "Shattering the Secrecy."
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As a result of our work, **FACES** has been appointed to the Virginia Network of Suicide Prevention, formed by the Virginia Department of Health. **FACES'** board members are participating in Chesterfield County's Partnership Building and Collaboration, a cross training for mental health and criminal justice sponsored by the Community Criminal Justice Board.

Thank you for your continued support of **FACES**. Your generous donations enable us to continue to achieve our mission of support, education and advocacy for families of those who are challenged with brain disorders. Of course, our long term goal is to develop a state of the art residential treatment center, Justin's House. We pledge to work passionately and diligently for positive change in Virginia's treatment of the mentally ill.

### ***From the desk of Barbara Kunowsky, Executive Director***

Today I am asking you to think about what you can do to make a difference.

You can help by supporting **FACES**. Your financial support is what we need.

Life is busy in the summer months with vacations, home repairs, day trips to the beach, company outings, and family reunions. While you enjoy all the joys of summer, please keep in mind those less fortunate, those who need our support, and those who suffer daily with the efforts of keeping their loved ones safe. I remind you of this because **FACES** is in need of your financial support more then ever. Please take a moment from your busy summer day and send your membership dues for 2007 of only \$25.00, or more if you can, so we can continue to speak for the families and the ones we love. Help us to make a difference. NOW is the time for positive change, and we have a lot of work to do before the General Assembly meets in 2008. I can not emphasize enough the importance of your help at this time. It is time for us to understand that the system, as it is now, is not working and we are working to promote a rational and realistic approach for safe and consistent treatment for our loved ones.

Thank you for your support in the past and your future support. Only \$ 25.00 from each of you can make all the difference in the ongoing work of **FACES**.

Have a safe and wonderful summer, and please consider making a donation today. Also, we hope you will join us for our annual picnic on July 24th.

Your devoted servant,

Barbara