

THE South Boston Bulletin

a newspaper dedicated to your community

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 19

OCTOBER 26, 2006

FREE!

'Julie's' is a neighborhood jewel

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Walking past the brick building with the colorful adjoining playground at 133 Dorchester St., one can be forgiven for thinking that the occupants inside might be the happy participants of one of the day care or nursery school programs that reside in South Boston's neighborhoods.

One might even be excused for believing that the building might be owned and operated by the South Boston Community Health Center, especially if they were to look at the chis-

eled words that sit above the building's former entrance:

But the organization that operates just beyond that zig-zagging brick path leading to the blue awning depicting a butterfly in full-flight is neither a nursery or day care program - though children are cared for and nurtured within - nor is it a health center - though the health and well-being of many residents from South Boston and beyond are looked after in-

side. Julie's Family Learning Program is a self-described "community based family support and education program that

is committed to the development of strong, healthy family functioning."

Founded in 1974 by the Sisters of Notre Dame (SND) who have witnessed first-hand the overwhelming numbers of families, headed by single parents, living in poverty in the South Boston area. Named after St. Julie Billart, Foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the program started as a Montessori pre-school called "Julie's Children's House," which was developed through the efforts of Sister Jean Sullivan as a means of mitigating the needs of residents with

low-income status living in the D Street Development Project

By 1980, the Adult Learning Program which was developed by Sister Louise Kearns merged its education program for low-income adult single-parents with Sr. Sullivan's program, and thus, the new "Julie's" was born.

Bouncing from temporary home to temporary home, including the basement of St. Vincent's Church and most recently at the South Boston Community Health Center,

Julie's

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