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**It Takes A Village to Fill A Sand Box....Multiple Businesses and Agencies Come Together to Help
Family Connections**

MENLO PARK, CA , July 18, 2005- Two companies, three non-profit organizations and one church group all came together on a sweltering Saturday morning this past weekend to help Family Connections, a free preschool program, refill its large sand box and play area. Materials were donated by Lyngso Garden Materials, Inc., transportation and equipment was donated by DPR Construction and volunteers were provided by Hands On Bay Area – in partnership with a youth group from the Neighborhood Church in Castro Valley and residents of the Clara-Mateo Alliance Homeless Shelter (which provides space to Family Connections). This two day project involved over 70 volunteer hours of labor to complete as 5 tons of sand and 60 yards of playground fiber were moved from a large pile in front of the homeless shelter to a play structure located in an inner courtyard.

“When you volunteer not only do local organizations and those less fortunate benefit from your help, but often you benefit from the experience yourselves,” explained Hands On Bay Area East Bay Program Assistant, Janssen Silva as he held a short wrap up meeting with his group of youth volunteers from the Neighborhood Church in Castro Valley.

During the Saturday morning project there were several shelter families on hand to help including small children who delighted in rides back and forth in the empty wheelbarrows. Despite the sweltering heat the group of volunteers and staff from Family Connections completed the project in record time. Prior to Saturday DPR Construction facilitated the pick up of materials (and donated the use of wheel barrows and shovels) from Lyngso Garden Materials, Inc. who provided all of the sand and playground fiber at no cost. The play ground, located at the Clara Mateo Alliance Homeless Shelter in Menlo Park, had not had the sand or play ground fiber replaced in over five years.

“We are very fortunate to have had the help of so many individuals and companies in this effort. As a small agency it would have been prohibitively expensive to refill this play area. And because we serve very young children ages 0-5 years old it is important that we keep this play area safe at all times. The children are going to be so surprised when they return to class on Monday and see their new playground,” commented Family Connections Executive Director, Renee Zimmerman.

Family Connections, founded in 1993, is a free parent participation preschool and parent education program aimed at improving school readiness and strengthening parenting skills among low income families in San Mateo County. Family Connections currently serves over 100 families through its three locations in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. For more information visit www.familyconnections.org.

Hand On Bay Area is a local non profit creating social change by mobilizing communities. Every day Hands On volunteers are helping to address the needs of more than 300 community-based organizations in a wide variety of meaningful, flexible volunteer opportunities. For more information visit www.handsonbayarea.org.