



**For Immediate Release**

**Date:** October 18, 2010

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## **“Child focus” in families explored at conference**

“The Ties That Bind: Child Focus in Families” a workshop led by Kathleen B. Kerr, MSN, MA, faculty of the Bowen Center for the Study of the Family, will be held October 22 from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines.

Sponsored by Catholic Charities’ Professional Counseling Program, the workshop is the 37th bi-annual conference in Bowen Family Systems Theory to come to Des Moines. The Bowen Center is internationally recognized for its research, training and clinical service programs in family theory and therapy.

The conference is open to the public including mental health professionals, teachers, students, parents, grandparents and religious personnel and anyone interested in looking at behavior through a family systems lens. Continuing education credits are available. Cost is \$100 with discounts available for students and religious personnel. In addition to the Friday conference, a special, small group session with Kathleen Kerr is available from 8 a.m.- 10:45 a.m. for \$50.

The conference will explore a common process in families in which parents may over-help and care for the children with the result of feeling less anxious themselves. Doing so beyond the needs of the child hinders their development of a robust “self” to deal with the struggles of life. The parents will then tend to feel more stable in caring for the “needy” child and contribute to the child being less functional than the parent. The conference will describe this family projection process/child focus and present several parents’ attempts to dent the process by working on their own part in it.

Staffed by licensed therapists, Catholic Charities’ Counseling Program serves not only clients, but also colleagues and other interested individuals through conferences and other post-graduate training opportunities. The counseling staff strives to provide supportive relationships to individuals and families struggling with a variety of issues concerning relationships, child behavior problems, marital conflict, eating disorders, depression, stress, sexual abuse, separation and divorce issues, criminal behavior, addictions, physical handicaps, health problems or spiritual crisis. For more information, contact Stacie Weires, LISW, at 244-3761 or [sweires@dmdiocese.org](mailto:sweires@dmdiocese.org)

*“Guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church, we serve all people in need with compassion and competence, advocate for justice, and encourage all people of good will to share in these efforts.”*