April 11, 2020

Dear Friends,

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, A Wider Circle’s team is continuing to telework, following the precautions being taken across the region. We are working closely with a physician on our Board with frontline COVID-19 experience who is serving as our Medical Advisor. While our instincts are to run into the fire and help anyone in harm’s way, we have seen good intentions lead to tragic results, so we are following guidance from local and state leaders, as well as our Medical Advisor.

Our Essential Support Program staff has maintained close contact with the hundreds of families whose furniture appointments have now been postponed. Appointment confirmation calls that typically lasted three minutes have become 40-minute calls where we not only reschedule appointments, but use this time to build deeper relationships, assess evolving needs, and help individuals and families to access emergency food, housing, and health services.

As job losses mount, our Workforce Development staff works daily with new and existing clients to provide services remotely – reviewing resumes, identifying job leads, and providing coaching. We offer video conferencing for job seekers, address the emerging challenges of the rapidly changing job market, share strategies for coping during the crisis, and when necessary, we are providing assistance to those filing for unemployment benefits.

We are also preparing for what we know will be a significant increase in demand when we reopen. This virus has hit low-income communities harder than anyone else in our country. We will expand all of our services, meeting this unprecedented crisis with an unprecedented commitment to making this a recovery for all.

Finally, we are preparing to shift from teleworking back to working at our centers. We are staying whole (maintaining our full staff), gathering resources, and hoping to solidify our financial footing. A donation today will allow us to stay strong and ensure that we are there for all those we serve.

As events continue to unfold, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns, or ideas you may have.

Wishing you health and safety,

Mark Bergel, Ph.D.
Founder, President & CEO
A Wider Circle