



Protective Services

in Harris County

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“We’re Open for Business”



Employees, Theron Eagleton and Anna Bell enjoy the new Youth Services Center (YSC) Building at 6300 Chimney Rock Road.

At 8:00 AM on Monday, December 5, 2005 the newly constructed Youth Services Center (YSC) Building opened for business. The new facility replaces the aging Chimney Rock Center (CRC) facility, which officially closed at the same time. In addition to providing office space for all the previous programs located at CRC, the new YSC also incorporates the addition of the Harris County Protective Services for Children and Adults Medical/Dental Clinic and Pharmacy (formerly located at 2525 Murworth) and the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department's Community Unit Probation Services (CUPS) Zero Unit. Furthermore, the YSC will provide the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) with a single 24-hour Point of Entry Department. Finally, the YSC will also house the former CRC Emergency Shelter, which has been renamed the Nancy and Rich Kinder Emergency Shelter, in recognition of the generous donation made by Mr. and Mrs. Kinder during the “Caring for Our Kids” Capital Campaign. ♥

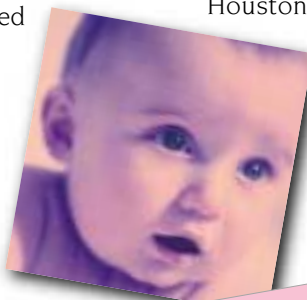
LIFE Stories

WITH HCPS

It happened again! A newborn female infant was found abandoned by some

mailboxes in an apartment complex on the first Saturday in February. The infant, who appeared to be one day old, was wearing a diaper and pink hat and was dressed in a blanket. Her umbilical cord was still attached, tied with a rubber band.

Last year, three babies were abandoned in the Houston area. One baby was abandoned in an alley and is now in an adoptive home while a second baby was found dead in a garbage bin. The third was turned over to officials at a local fire station under the “Baby Moses” Law. This law allows a parent to anonymously put her child into the arms of someone at a Safe



Haven site - usually a hospital or fire station - without fear of being prosecuted. As long as the child is 60 days old or younger and unharmed, a mother is not required to provide identifying information. She is asked only to fill out a voluntary form used to provide medical information for the child. There are 89 fire stations in the City of Houston designated as “safe baby sites” with bright yellow signs bearing the image of an infant cradled in an arm.

In a nine-month period during 1998 and 1999, thirteen infants were abandoned in the Houston/ Harris County area. The abnormally high number of abandoned infants and the community’s response generated significant national publicity. The Texas Legislature responded promptly passing the first “Baby Moses” law, which took effect in September 1999. Forty-five states have since followed Texas in passing similar laws. At that time, HCPS took

Do Not Abandon Your Baby.
1-877-904-SAVE
No abandone a su bebé.

Life Stories continued on page 3



Harris County Government Officials

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Editorial

March 2006



Senate Bill 6 makes dramatic system-wide changes to child protective services in an attempt to strengthen investigations, improve the effectiveness of its services, and increase local community involvement. There is a requirement in the legislation that the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) outsource all substitute care, case management services, and the corresponding administrative functions of these services to private entities with full statewide implementation planned by September 1, 2011. The outsourcing of the case management and substitute care services will occur in stages over the course of the next three legislative sessions. One region will be outsourced beginning in September 2006 with full implementation by December 2007. Two additional regions will be outsourced in September 2009. A decision regarding the first region to rollout is expected to be announced mid to late March 2006.

These provisions do not make the county an eligible service provider for certain services the county is currently providing. These services include emergency shelter services, preparation for adult living services, assessment services for children and families, and medical services. As a result, it is my view that it is preferable that the first region selected be one other than the Harris County region unless there is a provision for HCPS to be eligible to provide all the services being outsourced. These services have been developed in cooperation with the State in Harris County during the almost 40 years since Harris County Commissioner's Court and the State entered into an agreement for the provision of a child welfare program in Harris County. Harris County is one of over 200 counties that provide local support to the DFPS program but certainly the program is more developed in Harris County. This county provides over 4.7 million dollars of support services for the benefit of children and families who are clients of the Department of Family and Protective Services. In addition to support from the county, private support has been evident through the construction of the Children's Assessment Center and the recently completed Harris County Youth Services Center.

DFPS recently wrote, "Outsourcing offers a significant opportunity to address problems that exist in the current CPS system and to raise expectations as to what can be achieved through fully engaging public and private sector resources". This does not happen when counties are not deemed to be eligible service providers for services currently being provided. The legislation does not afford the opportunity for the full resources that Harris County has committed to be fully utilized. The legislation, while addressing statewide issues, had the unintended consequence of compromising significant levels of support for the program in Harris County. I am working with the local members of the Texas Alliance of Children and Family Services to seek to have legislation introduced during the Special Called Legislative Session on School Finance that will occur this spring that will address this situation.

George Ford J. D.

Executive Director, HCPS

The HC Region 6 Training Institute Teams with Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

The Harris County Protective Services Region 6 Training Institute brings cutting edge technology to the County through implementation of distance learning. Debra Andrews, Director of the Training Institute will introduce this Spring, a newly collaborative partnership with the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Baltimore Maryland. The HCPS Training Institute and Johns Hopkins have entered into an agreement to provide the Guardianship Program with a monthly two-hour distance-learning program that will provide extensive information on mental illness including schizophrenia, bipolar and mood disorders, dementia and more. Dr. Susan Bailey, a renowned psychiatrist of Creative Alternatives, will conduct the training.

Computer Based Training (CBT)

Who's Next on Board?

The Children's Crisis Care Center (4C's) is the newest member of the agency Computer Based Training Project Initiative. Computer Based Training is an interactive self-paced approach to learning from one's computer desktop.

What are the Benefits of CBT/E-learning?

- Train anytime, anywhere
- Cost savings
- Higher retention of content through self-paced learning
- Reduced learning time

Please contact the Training Institute Director, Debra Andrews for more details at 713-394-4026.

Happenings at HCPS

The National Organization of the Urban League came to Houston on Friday February 3rd to honor the Houston Area Urban League for having the most participants in their National America on the Move initiative which encourages a healthy lifestyle. The event was held at 2525 Murworth because the Harris County CPS staff (State and County) had the highest number of participants in the Houston area and led to the Houston Area Urban League becoming the National winner. The event featured a healthy dinner buffet, awards and lots of raffle prizes.



Life Stories

continued from page 1

the lead in working with 12 community-based agencies to promote public education and media coverage regarding the legislation.

HCPS implemented the Baby Abandonment Hotline in December 1999. Anyone can call the Hotline, 1-800-904-SAVE to discuss abandonment and especially options to abandonment. The TRIAD Prevention Program provides staff resources for the Hotline. Five of the eight children abandoned in Houston in the last three years were left in the care of authorities under

the Baby Moses Law.

HCPS is now collaborating with Methodist Hospital on an initiative designed to bring awareness to the Baby Moses Law. An abandoned baby poster with information about the current law was designed and will be distributed to various fire stations, hospitals and other locations. The intent is to educate pregnant mothers about the options available to them when faced with a difficult situation. A press conference will be held in the near future to launch this campaign.

This newborn female infant is safe and thriving in an agency foster home. "People don't have to leave (babies) in dangerous areas, they

can safely surrender them" states Public Information Officer Estella Olguin. HCPS continues to offer workable solutions to this preventable tragedy. ♥

CPS in Harris County

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (FPS)

Harris County Protective Services for Children and Adults (HCPS)

To report abuse or neglect call 1-800-252-5400. Outside TX, AR, OK, NM or La. call 1-512-834-3784
www.hc-ps.org • 713-394-4000

Thank You for Your Help

Thanks to the generous support of the community, the BEAR's Spirit of Christmas program provided 18,000 gifts to 6,000 children. More than 400 volunteers contributed over 1600 hours of service. The total donation for cash and in-kind donations exceeded \$300,000.

Over 200 Harris County Guardianship Program wards received donated holiday gifts. Donors included the University of Houston and Duchesne Academy, as well as several businesses and generous individuals.

On December 2, 2005, approximately 120 foster youth, foster alumni, and their caregivers attended the annual Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program Winter Holiday Celebration at 2525 Murworth Dr. Festivities began at 7:00pm and included lots of party food and dancing. A local DJ provided music for the dancing. Holiday gifts were presented to each young person toward the end of the evening. All attendees reported having a wonderful time.

Then on December 22, 2005, approximately twenty After Care Young adults attended the Houston Alumni and Youth

(HAY) Center's first Winter Holiday event. They danced to a variety of music and sang along with the Karaoke Machine. All enjoyed a smorgasbord of cheeses, fruit, salads, chips, cookies and cakes. Everyone appeared delighted with the gifts they received at this event as well.

Thank you for your help in making the holidays brighter for children and adults receiving care from Protective Services in Harris County. ♥

Harris County Guardianship staff sort gifts for their wards.



Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner

Woven Into the Lives of Others was the theme of this year's event that took place on December 1st, 2005 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Jim "Mack" McIngvale, co-owner of Gallery Furniture, was the guest speaker for this year's event. ♥



Kent Farr, President of the Harris County Foster Parent Association, presented the "Worker of the Year" award to **Doris Cleveland**.



Ms. Willie Browder, was presented the "Foster Parent of the Year" award by HCPS Board Member, **Janice Beal**. Ms. Browder has been a foster parent for 26 years and has fostered a total of 126 children. She has worked with young children with medical and developmental delays through the years, and has always had a special place in her heart for the infants in her care.

Ms. Browder feels there is a child somewhere that needs her and that she was placed on this earth to be a mother. She wants to continue fostering children indefinitely and has commented that she plans to foster in heaven.



Harris County Protective Services

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