



Protective Services

in Harris County

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Hearts for CPS Children Adoption Festival



Staff entertain children available for adoption during the 4th Annual Hearts for CPS Children Adoption Festival.



CPS Program Director Pat Johnson, prepares for door prize drawings.

The 4th Annual Hearts for CPS Children Adoption Festival was held on February 6, 2010. The festival allows children who are available for adoption to meet families who have gone through the process to become adoptive parents. With all the games, food, balloons and



fun, over fifty families were able to interact with one hundred and fifty available children. Thanks to all the staff for their hard work in making this day special and to Harris County Protective Services for their support. ♥

Boys to Men Shop Talk

The Boys to Men Shop Talk Mentor's Workshop is a collaboration established by the TRIAD Prevention Program. The initiative provides an outlet for discussing issues and questions that boys bring up. The program was developed to create an inviting and safe arena for young men to learn, and to be heard. Many do not have "ears" at home to listen to them or to hear their concerns and questions. In the group they are able to speak freely about what is on their mind without limitation other than to respect each other with common dignity.

During the February meeting, guest speaker, Dr. Miguel Ruiz delivered a strong message the young men could identify with. The in-depth personal issues Dr. Ruiz shared alerted the young men that the failure they now see in themselves could be a potion for future success. There



Pictured from left to right: Frank Vasquez, Jr., JPO Group Leader, Miguel A Ruiz, Jr. DDS, Gene Fisher, quality control inspector, Christopher T. Stanley, JPO Group Leader and Jason Alaniz, Dental Assistant

was rapt attention and complete silence as he spoke and challenged them to conquer their fears as well as negative environmental influences and peer pressure. ♥



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Editorial



March 2010

The alarming rise in child deaths has garnered great media attention. In 2009, the number of child deaths related to abuse or neglect increased by over thirty percent statewide. Harris County experienced the most dramatic increase, where numbers almost doubled, from 35 child abuse/neglect fatalities in 2008 to 67 child deaths in 2009.

In August 2009, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) began a statewide review of Investigations and Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) cases as a result of concerns regarding child safety evidenced by child abuse related fatality cases. The report for the Region 6 review, which includes Harris County, included a series of recommendations DFPS is in the process of implementing. Among the recommendations included in the review were accelerating the hiring of newly allocated FBSS positions and fully utilizing the expertise of Special Investigators in FBSS cases. DFPS has also started a Child Fatality Response Initiative, an effort between DFPS and Health and Human Services Commission designed to take a comprehensive look at trends in child abuse /neglect related fatalities to better understand and reduce preventable child deaths.

Locally, the Harris County Child Fatality Review Team has been tasked with examining child abuse/neglect child deaths in Harris County to help identify causes and indicators for the increase in the deaths. We at HCPS are supportive of the steps DFPS is taking to address the dramatic increase in child deaths in Harris County and statewide.

George Ford J. D.

Executive Director, HCPS

CPS in Harris County

Texas
Department
of Family and
Protective
Services
(DFPS)

Harris County
Protective
Services for
Children
and Adults
(HCPS)

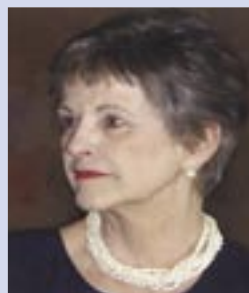
To report abuse or neglect
call: 1-800-252-5400.
Outside TX, AR, OK, NM or LA.
call: 1-512-834-3784
www.hc-ps.org • 713-394-4000

IN MEMORIAM: Dianne Wilson Bynum

HCPS Board Member
2002 -2010

HCPS Board President
2008-2010

Dianne Bynum led a truly remarkable life. Following her retirement in 2001 from a distinguished career, Dianne choose to continue serving her community supporting March of Dimes,



July 1936 – March 6, 2010

Houston Community College and Madres a Madres.

In 2002 Dianne joined the board of HCPS and was elected Chair in 2008.

This strong, extraordinary woman will be missed by her family, friends and all of us at HCPS. Ms. Bynum's courageous battle with

pancreatic cancer has been an inspiration to everyone who knew her.

The Innocence Lost, A Pathway to Hope and Healing



Harris County Systems of Hope is co-sponsoring *the Innocence Lost, A Pathway to Hope and Healing* four-part series with Harris County Ju-

venile Probation Department, Fort Bend Juvenile Probation Department, DePelchin Children's Center and Children's Assessment Center. The series seeks to raise awareness and educate practitioners and the broader community on the grave issues confronting children and youth, as well, present resolutions to aid victims towards recovery. The seminar includes topics on Human Trafficking, The Effects of Religion and The Occult on Children, Child Sexual Abuse, concluding with Child Trauma and Recovery. The series features experts from various disciplines and organizations coming together for the common goal of improving the lives of children, youth and families. The series will continue through August, 2010. ♥

Engaging & Supporting Fathers to Strengthen Families

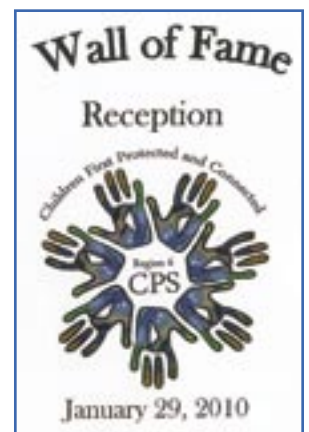
The Fatherhood Symposium "Engaging & Supporting Fathers to Strengthen Families" presented by Harris County Region 6 Training Institute provided an opportunity for participants to discuss community-based services, policies, and laws relating to fatherhood involvement and families. Speakers included Reverend Dr. William Lawson, Judge Frank Pierce (Second Administrative Judicial Region, Harris County), Robin Wright King (Author, CEO & Founder of Detroit Fathers & Families Coalition), Kenneth Thompson (Fatherhood Specialist for Department of Family and Protective Services), James Rodriguez, MSW (President/CEO Fathers & Families Coalition of America) and J. Michael Hall (Executive Director/Founder, Strong Fathers-Strong Families). ♥



Happenings at HCPS



During a ceremony on Friday, January 29, 2010, the first Wall of Fame honorees were congratulated by their friends, family members, supervisors, Scott Dixon CPS Regional Director, George Ford Executive Director of Harris County Protective Services and special guest, 315th District Judge Michael Schneider. The Wall of Fame is a part of the Continuous Improvement Program which began in the fall of 2007. The Wall of Fame salutes employees who go above and beyond in their services to children, families and/or their co-workers. ♥



Pictured from left to right: Executive Director of Harris County Protective Services for Children and Adults, **George Ford**, Judge **Michael Schneider**, **Frank Chinh** (CPS), Wall of Fame Honoree **Kristina Belcher** (CPS) and CPS Regional Director **Scott Dixon**.

HCPS Celebrates Black History Month



For thirty years, February has been celebrated as Black History Month as a collaboration between HCPS and DFPS. The Black History Program was initiated by the late Odessa Sayles who was the first Black Lead Program Director for Protective Services in Region 6.

This year's theme was "Celebrating our Heritage; Investing in our Future". ♥



Windsor Village
United Methodist
Church Praise
Dancers.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

To kick off the observance of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month, Child Protective Services (HCPS and DFPS) is participating in a press conference on April 1, 2010 at DePelchin Children's Center. The Harris County Child Abuse Task Force is holding a press conference to promote awareness about the prevention of child abuse and neglect and the role the entire community plays in preventing and reporting child abuse and neglect. Mayor Annise Parker, Judge Ed Emmett, District Attorney Pat Lykos, County Attorney Vince Ryan, along with other representatives from city and county government, law enforcement, child protection agencies, child advocates, and the legal and medical community will attend the press conference as a show of unity in the fight against child abuse.

In 1989 a grandmother in Virginia tied a blue ribbon to her car antenna as a tribute to her grandson who died as a result of abuse. This started the "blue ribbon" campaign which has expanded across the country. We encourage you to wear a blue ribbon or display them in your place of business during the month of April as a way to bring awareness to child abuse and neglect. ♥



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