



**2014
PRESIDENT'S
REPORT**



Presbyterian Children'sSM
Homes and Services
of Texas and Louisiana

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO



Ed Knight with 2014 PCHAS High School and College Graduates

Have you noticed from one year to the next how this President's Report continues to reflect new and different activities and accomplishments? As you review this year's report, you will again see how we have continued to grow and change. At Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS), there is no such thing as "the same old, same old." I am very proud of that fact. It reveals a nimble organization that is in touch with the evolving needs of young people and families in today's complex and rapidly changing world. To be sure, beyond the needs of youth and families, there are also many other factors external to PCHAS that exert force. These include social, political and economic conditions.

Most of us have likely heard the phrase, "May you live in interesting times." An ancient Chinese blessing, it is often referred to as both a blessing and a curse. We most certainly live in interesting times and it impacts the way in

which we address the mission of PCHAS. Our interesting times reveal more families in crisis, more children living in extreme poverty and more young adults who are so beaten down, so discouraged that they have lost hope and are no longer setting goals for the future. To them, the future looks very bleak. Responding to these circumstances can be a curse for an organization that is unable or unwilling to change. But they can also be a blessing for an organization such as ours. We get excited about new opportunities to help those we serve, and to serve them well – to serve them with compassion and with the state-of-the-art programming that is our hallmark.

I hope you will enjoy this president's report and rejoice in the fact that PCHAS takes such good care of young people and families in the name of Jesus Christ – that we continue to be a relevant force in today's world. Thank you for joining forces with us as we move forward, continually improving our services and constantly evolving to meet our clients' changing needs.

For the Children,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Ed Knight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Dr. Ed Knight, President and CEO

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



We all desire the life abundant. To many of us that means meaningful and lasting relationships, a loving family and friends that we can count on. For children in

the care of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, there are many barriers to achieving the life abundant. To experience the life abundant, the homeless child living in the backseat of the family car must first have, at the very least, a warm bed and a safe place to sleep. The abused child must be, at the very least, surrounded by the love and support of caring and nurturing adults. The hungry child must have, at the very least, nutritious and regular meals and relief from wondering where the next meal will come from.

We know that God has a plan for each of us. He sent his Son to intercede for us — to ensure that we have the full life that He envisions for us. I am humbled and grateful to be

a part of an organization that provides Christ-centered services for children and families in need. I am especially thankful for the friends of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services. I am thankful that you support the children in PCHAS' care with your prayers and support. I am thankful not only for your financial contributions, but also for the many hours you spend volunteering for PCHAS. You make it possible for the PCHAS staff to provide the care these children need. In all these ways, like Christ, you intercede for them. You help to remove the barriers that separate children and families from the full life that God envisions for them. On behalf of myself and the trustees of this organization, please accept my sincere and heartfelt thanks for all that you do to ensure that all children and families can experience the life abundant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy H. Jezek". The ink is a light blue or teal color, matching the page's theme.

The Honorable Nancy H. Jezek

EVOLVING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN CRISIS







As Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services grows, we realize the need, now more than ever before, to remain agile and flexible as we meet new challenges faced by today's client. We are continually evaluating our programs and services to maximize the best use of our resources and the best practices for serving traumatized children.

To help guide our efforts and make best use of resources, Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS) conducted a study to examine program outcomes and other statistical data for a ten-year period from 2002 to 2012. The PCHAS Board of Trustees used the results of this study to help guide its strategic planning process. The data collected helps us make better strategic decisions, embrace current research and implement best practices. Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services' staff has renewed its focus on reaching the following organizational goals:

- Realize economies of scale
- Reduce the silo effect (redundancy of effort)

- Improve internal communications
- Provide better "wrap-around" services for our clients
- Be more responsive as an agency

We do not hold onto established ways of doing things simply because that is the way we've always done it. The initiatives below are just a few examples of the ways our programs are constantly evolving to meet our clients' changing needs:

- **Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI).** Based on research developed by Texas Christian University's Institute of Child Development, TBRI is a therapeutic model that provides a systemic approach to addressing children's experiences of trauma. More than 100 PCHAS staff members have received TBRI training and are now integrating this therapy in their services, with very encouraging results.
- **Quality Assessment.** To help us reach our goals, we have established a Quality Assessment (QA) office. The QA staff closely

PCHAS touches the lives of more than 4,500 children and families each year.

monitors and analyzes “outcomes” data for our programs, allowing us to better evaluate our services and make the changes necessary to better serve our clients.

- **Single Parent Family Program Expansion.**

We are pleased to announce that our current Single Parent Family Program, with locations in Weatherford and Waxahachie, has expanded to include a second home on our Waxahachie campus, a home in San Antonio and a new campus with four duplexes in Houston. The Houston campus will also have a playground and landscaped courtyard.

- **My Faith Family.** Developed over a period of three years, this congregation-based program equips each participating church to surround its own foster families with a community of caring volunteers we call “the Village.” The village and other volunteers embrace the call to care for foster parents so they can better care for their foster children. PCHAS launched the program in North Texas in 2014 and hopes to expand it to other parts of the state in 2014-2015.

- **Group Homes to Foster Care.** For many years, the state of Texas has shown strong preference for placing children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect in foster care homes rather than in group homes. This has resulted in lower enrollments in our Austin and San Antonio group homes. In response, we have repurposed our two Austin Group Homes to foster homes. We have also elected to repurpose our San Antonio Group Homes in two ways; one home will be used for young women who have aged out of foster care (Transitional Living Program) and the other home will be used to serve struggling single mothers and their children (Single Parent Family Program).
- **Transitional Living Program.** PCHAS recognizes that there is a critical need to help youth who are aging out of foster care. Our new Transitional Living Program will help them successfully move toward adulthood and independent living. In 2014, we will open our first Transitional Living Program in San Antonio.

- **Expansion of Kinship Care (Fostering Connections) Program.** Since 2008, the federal "Fostering Connections" bill has made it easier for children in the foster care system to live permanently with relatives. Fostering Connections helps grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members of a child (who has been removed from his/her birth parents) qualify as foster parents which enables them to receive state funding. PCHAS' Foster Care and Adoption staff has seen a huge growth in the number of families interested in the Fostering Connections

program. PCHAS works closely with these families to prepare them for the review process so that they can be approved as a foster or adoptive family. Support continues for as long as we are needed.

PCHAS is grateful for the many benefactors who make our ministry possible. We are also grateful to our 631 volunteers who provided 8,870 hours of service in 2013. With your support, PCHAS is the strongest it has ever been in its 111-year history, we touch the lives of more than 4,500 children and families each year.



The Itasca Campus Changing and Growing

In 2013, PCHAS built a new group home on our Itasca campus for the first time since 1970. The "Bradley Home" provides a safe and loving home for up to eight children and includes two guest rooms for Relief Home Parents and visiting birth parents. The home also includes a three-bedroom apartment for the

Home Parents. Itasca also saw the opening of a new guest house, which features eight bedrooms, a kitchen/dining room and a newly furnished living room and family room. This guest house is made available at no cost to visiting PCHAS volunteers, children formerly in our care, and Grace Presbytery pastors.



Profile of a Former Group Home Resident: Chris Craft Uses His Social Work Degree to Improve Child Protective Services

Chris Craft, a former Waxahachie Group Home resident, graduated in the spring of 2014 from The University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor's degree in social work. The first in his family to earn a college degree, he is excited to have begun a career with Child Protective Services as a Conservatorship Specialist and plans to pursue a graduate degree in social work at The University of Texas at Austin in 2015. His own experience in the foster care system sparked his interest in the field of social work. In his first job, he is focusing his attention on youth "aging out" of foster care. In his spare time, he lobbies for changes in public policy that he hopes will lead to better outcomes for this population of young people, specifically in the area of education. With other social workers, he works with the Texas State Legislature on these issues.

Chris had been in and out of PCHAS' care since he was 13 years old. He left PCHAS at age 17 to live on his

own, but while enrolling in classes at a local junior college, he reconnected with PCHAS and learned that he was eligible for assistance from the agency. He then worked closely with Gayle Jordan, PCHAS' Advanced Education Coordinator, who helped him apply for financial assistance and also helped him navigate the higher education system.

Chris got off to a rocky start his first semester (as many first-year students do!), but with Gayle's help and encouragement, he eventually graduated from the The University of Texas with honors. Chris felt a close connection to Gayle, partly because she had also been raised in PCHAS' care. Chris says PCHAS' financial support made it possible for him to consider pursuing higher education, but it was the emotional support and guidance provided by Gayle and other caring PCHAS staff members that made it possible for him to succeed.

FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION PROGRAM

Foster Care

The decision to remove children from their birth families is almost always accompanied by trauma and heartbreak. The children are frightened and confused, unsure of what will happen to them. Will they suffer more abuse at the hands of strangers? Will they be separated from their siblings? Who will care for them now?

Sadly, recent statistics published by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services indicate that in 2013 more than 66,398 Texas children suffered from neglect and abuse. Of these 17,022 were removed from their parents and entered the foster care system. That's where PCHAS steps in. Our Foster Care Program provides case management for both emergency and long-term foster care solutions for children. Our professional case managers, many of whom have advanced degrees in social work or a related field, create individualized service plans based on recommendations from a multidisciplinary team determined to secure the best outcome for each child.

What sets PCHAS apart is that our approach closely adheres to the principle of providing Christ-centered care and support for both the children and families. We understand the trauma

these children have been through and we strive for permanent placements for them, which could mean reunification with their birth family, placement with a foster family, adoption, or placement with a relative who becomes a foster or adoptive parent. We carefully screen, select, train, supervise and support foster families, and when sibling groups come into care, we work diligently to match them with homes that will keep them together.

Fostering Connections is a federally-sponsored program that extends services to relatives caring for children. If a child is removed from his/her home and placed with a grandparent or other relative, the family is now eligible to receive state assistance, just as a regular foster care provider would. PCHAS' Foster Care and Adoption Programs enthusiastically embrace the Fostering Connections initiative, as it is almost always in the children's best interest to find permanent solutions within their own family.

As we work closely with the prospective foster family to prepare them for the approval process, our services often include helping the family find enough beds for the children, obtain new clothing, or procure smoke detectors and fire extinguishers

In 2013, PCHAS found loving homes for 301 children through foster care and found “forever” homes for 46 children through adoption.

so that the home is a safe place. Once the family is approved, they will receive a stipend for each child's care and the children's medical costs will be covered by Medicaid. The foster child is also eligible for college tuition. Our case managers continue to work with the families for as long as they are needed.

In 2013, 60 children were served through our Fostering Connections (kinship care) program.

Adoption

Every child is a gift from God. But when a woman experiences an unplanned pregnancy, the experience can be traumatic, especially if she chooses to create an adoption plan for her child. PCHAS'

adoption services helps smooth the way for adoption, helping women experiencing unplanned pregnancies as well as families hoping to adopt. We guide adoptive families through the home study and legal process and train them so they're prepared to bring a child into their home. We also provide counseling for the birth mother during and after her pregnancy. If she needs help that extends beyond six weeks after delivery, we connect her with a PCHAS Child and Family Program specialist. All work together as a team to provide whatever care and support are needed for both birth mother and adoptive family.

While most adoptions today are “open adoptions,” in the past, the records were usually sealed. Adults who were adopted as children often ask us to help them search for, and reunite them with, their birth parents. Currently, we are managing between 70 to 75 searches in our Search and Reunion Service. Because this process is emotional for everyone involved, we offer counseling for all parties.



CHILD AND FAMILY PROGRAM

The Child and Family Program provides in-home family preservation services focused on helping families who are experiencing extreme stress. These families face enormous threats to family unity that include: poverty, the death of parents, divorce, illness, homelessness, violence and substance abuse. They find their way to PCHAS through a variety of channels such as school counselors, church pastors, other social service agencies and former clients. But one thing they all have in common: is they are families facing stressful situations who are voluntarily seeking help.

What makes PCHAS' approach so different is this: the services are free of charge and there is no time limit. Many similar programs have an eight-week maximum, which can be devastating to families

who have finally built a trusting relationship with their social worker. PCHAS works with clients for as long as necessary to ensure they overcome the challenges they are facing, and ultimately, thrive together as a family. This could be several days, several months, or many years. Sometimes the bonds formed between clients and Child and Family Specialists last a lifetime. According to Vice President for Community Services, David Gibson, "There is no other program like it in Texas, or, we think, nationwide." And he should know. As the director of the Child and Family Program, he travels the state of Texas on a regular basis, monitoring the work of PCHAS' 21 Child and Family Specialists in seventeen cities who serve more 2,400 children and 1,120 families each year.

In 2013, the Child and Family Program provided services for 2,465 children and 1,121 families

When working with a family, our specialists first make sure the children are safe. Then the specialists provide services, depending upon the family's needs that include:

- Identifying a family's strengths and determining areas where they can grow
- Working with the family to develop goals to help a family, promote change and instill hope
- Helping a family locate and access community services
- Offering parenting and life skills training, as well as individual and group counseling
- Teaching a family the importance of daily routines, managing behaviors, and sustaining healthy relationships
- Assisting a family with temporary out-of-home placement of the children if the family requires some time apart

Susan Provides a Stable Home

Susan is a single mother whose two-year-old daughter, Faith, has never known her father. He does not contribute to her support. When a PCHAS Child and Family Specialist first met Susan, she was in dire straits and at the end of her rope. She could not get on top of her bills, was tired and overwhelmed, and she found herself losing her temper with her daughter. The smallest things set her off. Believing that she just wasn't a good mother and that someone else could provide a better life for her daughter, Susan wondered if friends would consider raising Faith. ➡

The PCHAS specialist began working with Susan on two fronts: developing parenting skills through the principles of Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) and developing budgeting skills to help relieve her financial stress. After the first TBRI homework assignment on parenting, Susan called to share what she had learned: her troubled past was affecting her relationship with her daughter. Raised mostly in a group home, Susan never had a true connection with her parents. She had to confront her own childhood scars in order to build a healthy, nurturing relationship with her daughter. In just under two months, Susan has established a stable routine in her home and is seeing positive changes in her own demeanor, as well as her daughter's. She also now has a savings account and budgeting plan to help her live within her means. She's doing well and PCHAS is proud of her!





Student Profile: PCHAS Former Group Home Resident Overcomes Major Obstacles to Graduate from High School

Alex came into PCHAS' care in June 2013 when he was 17 years old. Sadly, he was one year behind his peers. When he began his senior year, he had accumulated only eleven credits of the required twenty-two needed to earn a high school diploma. His academic struggles are typical of most children in foster care. Recent studies of Texas school children reveals that children who come into foster care are, on average, two to three years behind their peers in school.

Understandably, Alex was discouraged and frustrated. He was also embarrassed that he had been held back year after year. However, he was determined to graduate high school with the other children his age at the end of the school year. To help him achieve this lofty goal - doing two years of school work in one year - the PCHAS staff and PCHAS

tutors helped Alex create structured study time at home and offered constant support and encouragement. The staff greatly admired his work ethic, as he attended tutoring twice a week on the PCHAS campus and also received tutoring at school.

A self-paced online high school degree program allowed Alex to recover the credits he needed because it enabled him to work at his own, accelerated pace. It was just what he needed to be successful. In eight months, he was able to complete the eleven credits he needed and graduated - on time - in May! The computer-based program also helped Alex in another way - he fell in love with computers and technology. Having found his passion, he is looking forward to a career in a technology - related industry. Congratulations Alex! The PCHAS staff is proud of you!



EDUCATION PROGRAM

When children come into PCHAS' care, they are traumatized and may have experienced chaotic home lives, suffered emotional or physical abuse, and perhaps attended school only sporadically. If children have been in foster care for any length of time, they may also have experienced frequent moves, causing them to start a school year in one school district but finish in a nother. All of these things can add up, placing a child at a serious disadvantage within the educational system.

Recent studies of Texas school children found that youth who come into foster care are, on average, two to three years behind their peers in school. Only 2% will ever graduate from college. PCHAS' Education Program focuses its services on children served through its residential programs: Group Homes, Foster Care, and Single Parent Family.

PCHAS' experienced educators and tutors help them maximize their academic and vocational potential.

K-12 Education

For students in grades Kindergarten through grade twelve, we develop individual educational plans designed to help them reach their educational (and life) goals. Each PCHAS Group Home offers individual tutoring and our education team proactively (and passionately) advocates for each child with his/her teachers and school principals. Our education team acts as a liaison with the public schools, reviews records, attends parent-teacher conferences, and works with the PCHAS Home Parents to help keep children on track. In addition to serving children in PCHAS Group Homes in Itasca and Waxahachie, our education team consults with foster parents and Child and Family specialists about

In 2013, PCHAS served 178 children in our Education Program.

ways to emphasize education with children in our care and how to work with schools to help students succeed.

Of the eleven teenagers served by our Advanced Education team in 2013, ten are actively pursuing college.

Advanced Education Services

As our Group Home children get closer to high school graduation, our Advanced Education team begins to work with them, helping define their educational goals and develop a goal-oriented plan. As they get closer to “aging out” of the foster care system or one of our group homes, we make sure they know that they can depend on PCHAS’ help long after they graduate from high school. In

addition to helping them define their educational goals, we also help them submit applications to educational institutions, apply for financial aid and scholarships, and secure housing. Many of the children in our care qualify for grants and scholarships on their own, but PCHAS’ endowed scholarship fund provides additional support for tuition, room and board, books, and other expenses. The state of Texas also provides tuition assistance for some foster children.

Like all college students, our Advanced Education Students need a lot of support. Our team continues to work with them throughout their college experience, which includes helping choose courses, getting them settled in a dorm or apartment, and visiting them regularly after they begin their journey in higher education. Most of the children stay in touch with PCHAS long after graduation and some even keep in touch throughout their lives.



GROUP HOMES

When most people hear the term “group home,” they think of a sterile, institutional setting. Our Group Homes are quite the opposite. For more than 111 years, PCHAS has been providing a safe, secure, and loving environment for children who, for one reason or another, are unable to live with their biological families. Our Group Homes each serve six to eight children between the ages of five and 18.

Children placed in our residential programs are typically coping with multiple challenges, such as family conflict, behavior problems at home and difficult experiences at school. Our trained Home Parents and support staff embrace these children and help them create individualized treatment plans designed to enrich their emotional, physical and spiritual well-being.

The PCHAS residential programs are family centered, strength-focused, and goal driven. The

PCHAS staff concentrates on building each child's strengths and focusing on his/her future. When possible, they also work with the child's biological family to build their strengths and develop new skills for interacting more successfully as a family.

As with other PCHAS program staff members this past year, all Group Home Parents and supervisors have been trained in the principles of Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI). (You can read more about TBRI on p. 6, 21 and 22.) They now have additional tools to help traumatized children find hope and healing and acquire the coping skills necessary to become successful adults.

Changes on the Horizon for Group Homes

PCHAS responds to the changing needs of society and to the requirements of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. In recent years, there has been a shift in how the state cares for children who have been removed from their

115 children lived in our Group Homes in 2013.

homes due to abuse or neglect. There is a renewed focus on placing children in foster homes rather than in group homes.

In response to this changing state policy, PCHAS is transforming four group homes to foster care homes — two in Austin (that were underutilized) and two in Waxahachie (that were formerly used by Methodist Children's Home). These homes will be rented (at very low cost) to foster parents who will care for up to four foster children (in each home). In this way, we are able to accommodate more sibling groups and relieve some of the trauma experienced by children in foster care who are separated from their parents as well as their siblings.

Another critical area that must be addressed is the need for "transitional living" services for young adults who age out of the foster care system. According to a March 2013 study by the Children's Defense Fund, more than 88,000 at-risk youth in Texas age 16 to 19 are not enrolled in school and

have not graduated from high school. These young people desperately need help to transition successfully to adulthood. In response to this need, PCHAS is transforming one of our group homes in San Antonio to a Transitional Living Program, which will serve young women ages 16 to 19.

The ultimate goal of our Group Home Program is to reunite children with their families. Sometimes this is a biological parent, but often it is an aunt, uncle or grandparent.



SINGLE PARENT FAMILY PROGRAM

The poverty rate among single mothers is on the rise, especially in Texas where 42% of single mother-headed households live in poverty. The challenges that single mothers face often stem from a combination of family crises, that include a lack of education, hard-to-find affordable child care, and low-paying jobs that offer little or no health benefits. Sadly, the odds sometimes seems

to be stacked against them, and many of these single mothers are desperate.

PCHAS recognizes the struggle these mothers face as they try to build lives for themselves while caring for their children. This is why we created our Single Parent Family Program. This program helps vulnerable single mothers as they try to overcome poverty, homelessness, unemployment, abuse, divorce, abandonment or violence.

We currently operate a large Single Parent Family home in Weatherford, Texas (with room for four single parent families) and two homes on our campus in Waxahachie (with room for nine single parent families). In the fall of 2014, PCHAS will add an additional home in San Antonio (with room for three single parent families) and dedicate a

“Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge.”

Ruth 1:16

Our Single Parent Family Program helped 32 children and 17 families in 2013.

Houston campus (which will accommodate seven single parent families). Struggling mothers and their children will find a safe haven where they receive services ranging from employment assistance, counseling, help obtaining food stamps and health insurance, money management, life skills training, and parenting, wellness and nutrition classes. Families usually stay between nine to 15 months, as the mothers strive to reach their own personal goals and ultimately independence for themselves and their children.

An exciting development for our Single Parent Family Program is happening in Houston. Thanks to the generosity of Houston's St. John's Presbyterian Church, many generous benefactors, and many in-kind donations from 90 local merchants and 10 Presbyterian congregations, PCHAS began construction of a Single Parent Family campus in 2013. The new campus, which will be dedicated in the Fall of 2014 and will open soon thereafter, will feature seven 1,000-square-foot living units for seven single mothers and their children, as well as one for an on-site manager.

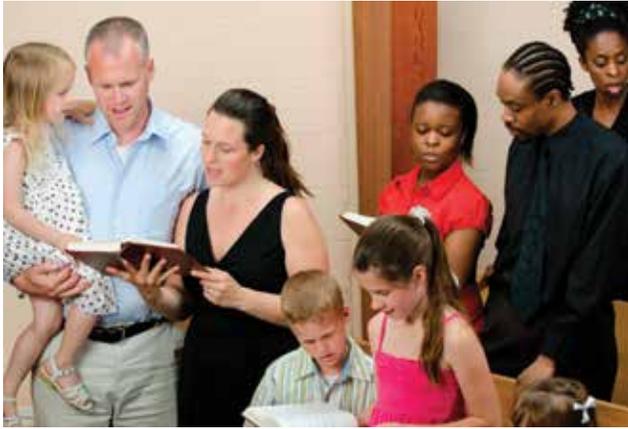
Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)

Many children in foster care and in families in crisis suffer the effects of abuse and neglect, leading to a host of social, emotional and behavioral issues. These issues can range from harming themselves or others, acting inappropriately in social situations, upsetting family harmony, or being disruptive in the classroom. Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) is a therapeutic model that trains caregivers to provide effective support and treatment for at-risk children.

Based on research developed by Texas Christian University's Institute of Child Development, TBRI provides a systemic approach to address developmental ➡

trauma in children. The process incorporates three main tenets: attention to the physical needs of the child (allowing them to feel safe); promoting deep emotional healing (allowing them to make connections with others); and teaching self-management and coping skills (allowing them to correct their own behavior). After many years of developing and testing these principles, TCU reached out to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, inviting PCHAS to be a pilot organization and receive training materials and support in exchange for feedback and data concerning the effectiveness of the program. More than 100 PCHAS staff members have received training and have been integrating this approach into all of PCHAS programs, as appropriate. Our foster care case managers, Child and Family specialists, and group home parents and staff report encouraging results.





A New PCHAS Initiative: My Faith Family

One of the biggest obstacles to finding permanent homes for foster children is finding loving foster parents who are willing and able to provide long-term care. A recent study commissioned by PCHAS indicates that nearly 50% of foster parents quit within the first year. The reasons most often cited are feelings of isolation and lack of support.

My Faith Family is a PCHAS initiative designed to empower congregations to surround foster families with a community of care. With PCHAS' help, church members are trained to embrace

foster parents so that they can better care for their foster children. PCHAS works closely with these congregations, providing professional case management and support.

PCHAS has launched the My Faith Family initiative with three pilot congregations in North Texas. Working with these faith communities, we hope to improve the lives of foster children. The My Faith Family initiative will help foster parents provide nurturing, long-term care for foster children.



*Churches caring for those who
care for orphaned children*



Ed Knight gives PCHAS trustee Rep. Jim Pitts a tour of the campus.

Single Parent Family Program Expands

It's an exciting time at the site of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services' Single Parent Family Program on the campus of St John's Presbyterian Church in Houston! Construction is progressing steadily and each day we get closer to our goal: giving struggling mothers a chance to raise their children in a safe, nurturing environment.

Most people don't realize that single mothers with children comprise the largest segment of the homeless population. They struggle to build better lives for themselves while caring for their children.

That's why Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS) created its Single Parent Family Program. This program helps single mothers who are facing homelessness due to poverty, abuse, divorce, abandonment, violence or other crises. We give these women a chance to become strong and self-sufficient without constantly fearing for their and their children's safety. PCHAS has Single Parent Family Programs in Weatherford, Waxahachie and San Antonio. When the Houston program opens, we'll have a total of 24 homes dedicated to helping single parent-headed families at any given time.

A "graduate" of one of our programs had this to say about her experience with PCHAS: "I held a position with a day care facility, but the wages were too low for me to be able to provide for myself and my two children.

I didn't have savings to fall back on. That's when someone told me about Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services and their Single Parent Family Program. If it weren't for this program, my children and I would probably be living in my car. If I hadn't been rescued, I would have lost my job and perhaps my beautiful son and daughter too. Through this program, my family was provided with a safe place to live, and PCHAS treated me with dignity."

Our new Single Parent Family Program campus in Houston would not exist without the prayers and financial support of many generous donors. We would like to especially thank:

- Mark Atkins of Masa Studio for his leadership of this project
- Rev. Jon Burnham and the members of St. John's Presbyterian Church for providing the land
- HomeAid Houston and Ryland Homes for helping us build our Houston campus
- The 90 vendors who reduced their rates to make this project more affordable

Most of all, we are very grateful to the individuals, congregations and foundations who have contributed \$1.4 million to our Living Water Capital Campaign for this project. For more information about our new campus and our dedication plans this coming fall, please contact Jana Hobbs, Senior Development Officer, at jana.hobbs@pchas.org.

Administration

Dr. Ed Knight, President
David Thompson, Vice President for Administration and General Counsel
Linda Bishop, Vice President for Finance
The Rev. Peter D. Crouch, Vice President for Development
David Gibson, Vice President for Community Services
Randy Spencer, Vice President for Residential Services
Celeste Ross, Associate Vice President for Adoption Services

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Margaret Barry, Director of Communications
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Tom Anthony, Development Officer
Jamie Buchanan, Development Officer
Signe Fredrickson, Development Officer
Lynn Howard, Development Officer
Steve Hurst, Development Officer
Tiffany Ritter, Development Officer
Mary Ann Rector, Volunteer Program Coordinator

Poems by Tiffany Sweet

Former PCHAS Group Home Resident

Heart Weather

Heart Weather
Today is a Dark
 Gloomy
 Rainy
 Smudged
 Unhappy
 Day.
Tears are leaking out of my eyes.
 sniff
Today will never end. It's one of those
Sad
 Crying
 Upsetting
 Days.
Oh, but your hug is so nice
 And warm
 Comforting and
 Lovely.
Your eyes so sincere
 Understanding and
 Kind.
And outside
 Oh look
The clouds are clearing up
The rain is stopping
The sun is coming out.
Guess it's gonna be alright.

Hope

Hope is not just a four-letter word to me.
Hope is the success of all beautiful things.
It keeps me going when I am down,
Makes me stop and turn around.
The trees will grow, the flowers will bloom,
So keep in mind, hope is all around you.
In the shadows when life is dark,
Just remember who you are.
You're not just a waste of space,
You have the ability to make hope stay.
The scars in your heart won't stay for long,
As long as you have hope and keep pushing on.
The past is done, but the future is yours to create,
Take your heart and fly away.
So remember this in good and bad,
Hope is the best thing you could ever have.



"Heart Weather" was written by Tiffany when she was 15 years old after speaking with her mentor Jill Parr. Jill helped Tiffany cope with the struggles of her youth.

Tiffany is a student at the University of Texas at Dallas — a junior majoring in Arts and Technology. She appreciates the financial support and guidance she receives from PCHAS' Advanced Education Services.



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