



# HARBOR HAPPENINGS

2004 EDITION, VOLUME 1

## EMPLOYERS AGREE – HRC CLIENTS ARE A VALUABLE RESOURCE

McKenna's on the Bay in Long Beach is a fine dining restaurant with many employees, but according to General Manager Debbie Hagger, no employee is more valuable than Harbor Regional Center client Bruce Harvesy. To everyone at McKenna's, Bruce has no disability, he is just a valuable employee who cares, is extremely responsible and always works hard.

In the past, many adults with developmental disabilities were limited to taking jobs in sheltered workshops, but today clients are working throughout the community, supported in their endeavors by supported employment agencies. These programs help clients with interview skills, training, and monitoring once they're on the job.

"What has changed over time is that employers have found that people with developmental disabilities can be a critical resource in the work force," states Kent Yamashiro, Harbor Regional Center Day Program Specialist.

For McKenna's, hiring Bruce was their first experience working with a person with a developmental disability. He has done so well that the restaurant is looking forward to hiring another client. Bruce loves working at McKenna's and

## NEW GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSALS IMPACT REGIONAL CENTERS

Governor Schwarzenegger's pledge to balance the state budget without new taxes has been at the forefront of the news for several months now. He has warned that difficult decisions would have to be made regarding cuts to state-funded programs, and we knew we could expect some of these difficult decisions to come our way.

Still it came as a shock when, in late November, the Governor released proposals for extremely deep cuts to regional center services in the form of enrollment caps, and the elimination of numerous services including respite care. The media covered the ensuing outcry by citizens, and in mid-December, reported that the Governor had made a "startling reversal," because he did not think the cuts would be "consistent with my record as an advocate for the developmentally disabled."

The Governor's Budget for 2004-05 was released on January 10th, and we now have preliminary information about what it includes for developmental services, and the alternatives adopted to achieve additional savings in regional center expenditures. The proposals assume that reductions from the last two years, such as rate freezes for service providers and reductions to regional center staffing, will be continued.

The proposed budget for regional centers does include a net increase of \$154.4 million for Purchase of Services (POS). This amount includes funding which was transferred to regional centers from the state Department of Rehabilitation, due



*(above) During a break at work, Bruce has a laugh with his McKenna "family", Manager Debbie Hagger and co-worker, Amanda Bernard.*

*(below) McKenna's on the Bay shines because Bruce Hardesty takes pride and works hard at his job.*



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*California Budget..  
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to the transfer of Habilitation Services to our system. At the same time, however, the total figure for the POS budget is based on a \$100 million decrease made due to the expectation of “cost containments” for our programs using the following proposed methods:

Implementation of Parental Co-Payments was introduced by the Davis Administration and approved by the legislature in 2003, to be put into place by July of 2004. The Department of Developmental Services staff report that they have been working on the details to present to the legislature in April, and that the plan will involve a “fair and equitable sliding scale” for families of regional center clients between 3 and 17 years of age who live with their families.

The Department of Developmental Services is also exploring a new proposal for assessment of fees for adult clients who have substantial trust assets set aside for their care.

The Governor’s Budget proposes the establishment of “meaningful statewide standards to allow regional centers to prioritize and manage the resources provided through the budget process.

Regional Centers also received a reduction of \$6.5 million to Regional Center Operations, or funding for staff and administrative activities.

### **Other Program Reductions**

The Schwarzenegger Administration’s proposal also includes substantial cuts to other programs that will have an impact upon some individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. These include: an additional 10% rate reduction for Medi-Cal providers; a reduction of \$375 million to In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), “requiring immediate family members to meet more of the responsibility and/or costs of caring for disabled and elderly persons”; a \$40 million savings through adjustment of rates for the Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment Program (EPSDT) for children and young adults; and controlling expenditures in the Healthy Families Program by capping enrollment as of 1/1/04.

These proposals must now go through many months of review and are likely to change. Regional center clients, families, service providers, and staff can provide input to their legislators about the above proposals, or thoughts on other fair and reasonable ways to reduce the budget shortfall, in the form of letters or phone calls to their elected officials. **A list of local legislators is provided in this newsletter (see page 13).**

As we continue to learn about potential changes to our budget, and how they will affect services, we will make every effort to keep you informed. Together we will do all that we can to advocate for the best possible outcome. Thank you again for your continued support.

Harbor Regional Center encourages you to stay informed of major developments in the budget crisis, and what you can do to help maintain our service system. We will help you to do so in the following ways:

- The way to receive the most frequent and current updates is to join the HRC E-mail Network. Send an e-mail to [Nancy@hddf.com](mailto:Nancy@hddf.com) and ask to be added to the network list.
- You can log on to the Harbor Regional Center Web site at [www.HarborRC.org](http://www.HarborRC.org) for periodic budget updates.
- You can check the latest issue of Harbor Happenings, for quarterly updates.

You can also visit various state Web sites for further information, such as Welcome to California at [www.ca.gov](http://www.ca.gov), the Department of Developmental Services at [www.dds.ca.gov](http://www.dds.ca.gov), or the Department of Finance at [www.dof.ca.gov](http://www.dof.ca.gov)

*Employers Agree – HRC Clients are a Valuable Resource (continued from page 1)*

feels like he is part of a family. “The other employees always show me respect,” Bruce relates, “and trust that when I say I’m going to do something I will.”

Ted Casey is the Operations Manager for Toyota Motor Corporation, and currently employs 22 HRC clients. Toyota has been hiring clients for approximately 12 years, and finds that they have very low turnover, an exceptional attitude, low absenteeism, and a tremendous work ethic.

HRC client Barbara Cleveland works in the mailroom at Toyota and is proud not only of the work she does but also of earning a paycheck. Before she began work at Toyota, Barbara had little contact with others. Now she is happy and appreciates the opportunity to work. Lindsey McKay, Pitney-Bowles Senior Customer Operations Manager, considers the clients that he supervises in the mailroom very dependable, focused, and invaluable employees who consistently exceed job expectations.

For more information about supported employment services and hiring HRC clients, contact Kent Yamashiro at (310) 543-0687.



*Salome Gayap and Barbara Cleveland sorting mail during their work day at Toyota Motor Corporation.*

## LEARNING TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY RESPITE SERVICES

Harbor Regional Center realizes the need for family members caring for their disabled adult or child to receive a much-needed break to go to a movie or even run errands. Families also need to feel secure that their loved one is with a person who has the skills necessary to properly care for them. To help ensure that caregivers are prepared to provide quality respite services, HRC developed a training to give direct care staff the essential skills and information they need to provide high quality support. This required training is offered throughout the year for all new caregivers with Cambrian Home Care and Oxford Care, HRC’s “preferred providers” of respite services.

Recently, providers from Cambrian Home Care attended the “Up and Caring” Mentor CareGiver Training Program. The training included an overview of the developmental disabilities caregivers might encounter; positive behavior supports and communication; emergency procedures; crisis intervention; and many other useful skills.

According to Greg Nicholson from California Mentor, who developed the program for HRC and who has taught the class for five years, the class works because students are offered hands-on opportunities to practice what they have learned.

In the words of participant Jennifer Franklin, “I am more confident now that I have better knowledge and skills to take care of the kids that I assist as a respite worker. Thank you for this great learning opportunity!”

“I would also like to commend Harbor Regional Center for your foresight and leadership in making respite provider training a priority. As the father of a 13-year-old daughter with a developmental disability, I understand the value of high quality respite care. Your commitment to make a tangible improvement in this area is one that I’m certain will benefit families.” Greg Nicholson, California Mentor Caregiver Training Program Instructor.



*Greg Nicholson from California Mentor loves assisting these Cambrian Home Care respite providers as they offer high quality support to their clients and their families.*

## HRC FAMILIES ARE PLEASED WITH RESPITE SERVICES

“We are so happy with Cambrian. My husband and I work opposite hours and don’t spend a lot of time together. When the respite worker is there...even if my husband and I only meet for 1 or 2 hours, it is nice and we know we can trust our care-giver with our kids. It has made a world of difference for us. Thanks”

“We are very happy with Oxford and it’s employees.”

“Our respite worker has been so great and caring. We can completely feel good about leaving our children in her care.”

At Harbor Regional Center we are very concerned about the quality of services that our clients and families receive. Recently, we sent out a mail survey to find out what you think of the in-home respite services you are receiving. A survey was mailed to people receiving respite services from Cambrian Home Care and Oxford Care.

Overall, the survey responses showed a high rate of satisfaction in such important areas as ease of reaching the respite agency staff, courtesy, scheduling, problem solving, as well as the respite workers timeliness and job performance. Where concerns were identified, we are continuing to work with those agencies on steady quality improvement.

Thank you to all of you who filled-out and mailed back your surveys. Your input is appreciated and will help us to continue to work to improve these services.

### RECOGNIZING EXTRA EFFORT!

HRC is dedicated to providing **support, information and choices** to our clients and their families. Our staff, from the receptionists to our psychologists, strive to demonstrate our core values through their interactions with you.

You can help us recognize those individuals who have provided you with outstanding care and service. When you see an HRC staff member who is **demonstrating respect by treating people considerably, working collaboratively, looking for ways to be helpful, responding quickly and explaining any delays, listening, sharing information, or any other assistance you found helpful**, simply fill in this form and mail it to: **Kathy Scheffer, Public Information Specialist, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 or by e-mail at [Kathryns@hddf.com](mailto:Kathryns@hddf.com)**

We will make sure that the HRC Counselor, support staff, clinical staff, Resource Center staff or other members of the HRC team receive your note along with our special recognition.

Name of person you wish to recognize: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

How that person demonstrated outstanding service or fulfillment of our core values: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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**We appreciate your support in helping us acknowledge these outstanding individuals.**

## EXPANDING SERVICE OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM...Harbor Regional Center Meets The Challenge

In the last decade, the incidence of autism has been accelerating nationwide at an unprecedented rate. The Department of Developmental Services reported that the number of people with the diagnosis of autism being served by California regional centers increased 96.7% between 1998 and 2002. At HRC, we experienced a 13.8% increase in the number of clients whose primary diagnosis is autism. The number of HRC clients diagnosed with autism represents more than 20% of all our clients, with 66% being 12 years of age or younger.

In the face of this unparalleled challenge, we've attempted to develop resources to serve this expanding population. Here's a brief summary of some of the things we have done to help parents become better informed about autism and its treatment, expand existing resources, develop new services, and improve the quality of services provided.

### Multi-Media Information and Education

We have focused a great deal of effort on developing educational materials in a variety of formats, including print, video, and CD-ROM. Materials are available in our resource center, and through our web site at [www.HarborRC.org](http://www.HarborRC.org), in English and Spanish.



"A Parent's Guide to Treatment of Autism" is a booklet to help parents evaluate the information they receive about autism treatments, based upon comprehensive review of research and professional opinion.

"Autism" is a 25-minute video which lets the viewer hear directly from parents of children with autism and provides demonstrations of some of the behavioral treatments frequently used with young children.

"Developmental Disabilities: Faces Patterns, Possibilities" is a CD-ROM providing information on autism as well as other developmental disabilities, including personal profiles of children and adults with these disabilities, professionals' responses to frequently asked questions, demonstrations of assistive technology, and links to on-line resources.

"Obtaining Third Party Health Insurance Coverage for Autism Services: A Guide for Parents" explains Assembly Bill 88 and what this means for parents who have third party health insurance in receiving coverage

for autism-related services.

"A Parent Guide to Psychological Assessment at Harbor Regional Center" is intended to help parents understand why a psychological assessment is needed, what it involves, how it is used in the determination of eligibility, and how parents can help ensure that their child is well prepared for the assessment.

Directories of Regional Center services, and disability-specific resource packets are tools to help parents of children with autism learn about available resources, training activities and support groups.

*(continued on page 6)*

### **Autism Educational Programs**

HRC has also provided a variety of educational workshops and lectures. Presenters have included a wide range of professionals, including our own in-house staff and nationally recognized autism experts. Our ongoing training series, such as “Meet the Experts,” “Clinical Education,” and the new “Educational Outreach for Parents” each include programs focusing on autism and its treatment.

HRC’s staff psychologists have been heavily involved with the statewide California Autism Spectrum Disorders Collaborative in the development and implementation of Autism Spectrum Disorders: Best Practice Guidelines for Screening, Diagnosis, and Assessment. Besides the guidelines, the project also includes the development of curriculum for the education of psychologists.

### **Increasing Services to Young Children**

We meet regularly with providers and educators from selected school districts to increase communication, clarify expectations, improve coordination of services and continually monitor service quality.

**Social Skills Development** – We have developed three additional, time-limited social skills training programs for children and adolescents with autism, as well as educational groups for parents.

**Occupational and Speech Therapy** – HRC has significantly increased the number of providers of therapy services, and provided them with continuing education related to autism. We have also developed a group model for speech therapy to enhance interpersonal interaction and communication skills.

**Specialized Infant Development Program** – HRC has devised and implemented a new infant development program with occupational therapy and

speech components to serve children with autism and complex service needs.

**Inclusion for Children with Autism** – We have developed special programs focused on helping preschools and other typical community programs, giving them the knowledge and skills they need to include and support children with autism.

**Increased Access to Assistive Technology** – Our Assistive Technology lab provides consultation, evaluations and training, including the use of assistive and augmentative communication strategies for children with autism.

### **Support for Families**

HRC continues to focus and expand efforts to support families of individuals with autism through a variety of approaches. These include:

Family Team Meetings with interdisciplinary specialists at the regional center

Matching parents with trained Parent Mentors and training of new Parent Mentor volunteers

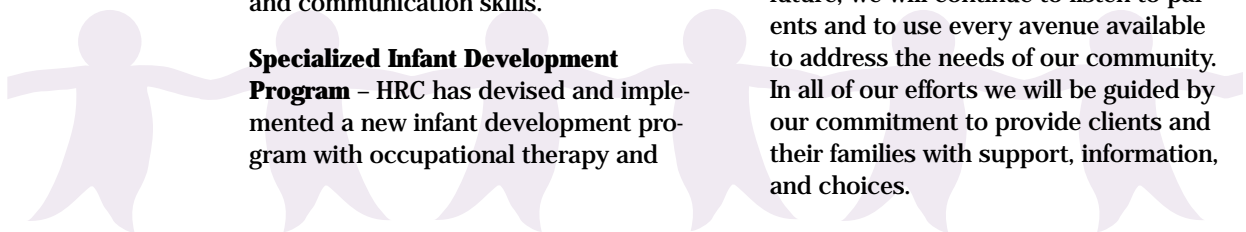
Facilitation and referral for Parent Support Groups

Consultation and support from an attorney knowledgeable in special education law

Increased coordination and collaboration with local school districts to ease transition of children into school at age three, and development of school-based services such as behavioral child-care options.

### **Looking To the Future**

We are encouraged by the support that has been provided for research into the causes and treatments for children and adults with autism. As we look to the future, we will continue to listen to parents and to use every avenue available to address the needs of our community. In all of our efforts we will be guided by our commitment to provide clients and their families with support, information, and choices.



# Client *focus*

## **A SPECIAL FAMILY REUNION...AN HRC COUNSELOR MAKES IT HAPPEN**

James McGoff has spent much of his life in foster care. At the age of seven, he went to live with his new foster family and lost touch with his six brothers and sisters. Two years ago, with the assistance of Harbor Regional Center, James began living at the Agape Home, a licensed home for adults with developmental disabilities. He has thrived ever since. The once introverted twenty-year-old, who hardly spoke and avoided eye contact, is now an outgoing young man who can't wait to tell you about his day, and especially about his reunion with his sister whom he hadn't seen in over 14 years.

The idea of a reunion with his 18-year-old sister Krystal was just a dream until James's HRC Counselor, Bernadette Strom, embraced the idea. With the assistance of James' Department of Children and Family Services caseworker Daniel Whitehurst, Bernadette began the search.

After three months, Bernadette was able to contact James's sister Krystal and brother Kristopher. Krystal is now

a central figure in his life. They try and see each other every other weekend and talk on the phone regularly. They have gone to the park, for ice cream, or a game of basketball, and revel in their new relationship. James clearly loves his sister and has a sparkle in his eyes when he speaks of her. He quickly shows anyone who visits his home his pictures of her

and the gifts she has given him, including her favorite Angels baseball hat.



*Just hanging around and watching television or just talking is a special time for James and his sister Krystal.*

James has come far with the help of his Counselor and the staff from Agape Home. He's finished high school and is now attending both the Regional Occupation Program and ARC Long Beach, where he is learning vocational skills. He's also involved in many community activities,

and is proud of the fact that he is learning to prepare his own meals.

Bernadette states that James is a new person. He is more confident, becoming independent and is very happy. James is still waiting to see his younger brother, but communicates with him regularly. In the future, James looks forward to the day that he will have contact with his other four brothers and sisters. James readily relates that the best thing that has happened to him this past year was that he was able to reunite with his sister and brother.

## HRC SUPPORTS PEDIATRICIANS AND FAMILY PHYSICIANS IN AWARENESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

*Sri Moedjono, M.D. HRC Physician*



*Interns from the Pediatrics program at the Children's Clinic at UCI Medical Center make a visit to an HRC client at home.*

Health care providers realize that they are in a critically important relationship with their patients who have developmental disabilities, and their families – particularly when it comes to directing them to needed resources such as the regional center. Most medical training programs acknowledge, however, that the subject of community resources has not been well covered during medical training.

Interns and residents have told us that while they may have referred a patient for regional center services, they probably began with only a rudimentary understanding of the system and the population it served – until they came to HRC for a unique collaborative training.

A number of medical residency training directors have recognized the need for physicians to obtain this foundation of knowledge during their postgraduate training. We have teamed up with these programs to help physicians become familiar with developmental disabilities and related community resources. In doing so we have also had the opportunity to help physicians become familiar with the scope of services which regional centers and other agencies can provide, as well as to dispel many common misconceptions physicians may have about the service system.

Since 1986, Harbor Regional Center has collaborated with several pediatric and family medicine residency training programs in Southern California, through their community/behavior pediatrics

programs. We have provided community training and orientation for interns and residents from the Pediatrics/Family Medicine program at Harbor UCLA Medical Center, the Pediatrics program at the Childrens Clinic/UC Irvine Medical Center, and previously from the Family Medicine program at San Pedro Peninsula.

Thus far HRC has had the privilege of providing this training for about 450 interns and residents.

During this training, we first provide the interns and residents with an overview of the regional center system. We also coordinate their visits to observe firsthand various programs in the community which serve our clients and families. These include the Assistive Technology Lab at HRC, early intervention programs, supported employment programs, California Children Services Medical Treatment Units (CCS-MTU), and programs for children with sensory impairments.

A favorite part of their rotation has been the opportunity to accompany HRC nurses on home visits. Here they have the opportunity to see a child in a family setting, to learn from the family about their needs, and to better understand the role of health care providers in assisting the family to access services. For a few of these physicians, this has been an opportunity to revisit a patient for whom they had provided care while in the hospital. As such, it provided them with a unique perspective about what services were needed and in place to care for the patient at home and the community.

We wish to acknowledge and thank all of our partners in this effort, including the directors of postgraduate medical education programs, our fellow agencies in the community, and participating families, whose efforts have allowed this valuable program to continue for 17 years. Together we have helped to provide graduate physicians with the information and knowledge they need, to better care for persons with developmental disabilities.

# FAMILY *matters*

## RECEIVING THE SUPPORT I NEED

*By Luz Mendoza, HRC Parent*

When my son, Aldrian (AJ), was born it was one of the happiest days of my life. My husband and I had been trying to have a child for several years. I had been on fertility treatments for approximately a year and a half and had a miscarriage before I became pregnant with AJ. AJ was a beautiful, healthy and happy baby who crawled, stood and walked all on target. Like most toddlers, he began using a few words but, by age two, I began to suspect that something was not quite normal with his development. My pediatrician recommended that I have AJ evaluated by a Psychologist. This would be the first time I heard the words Autism or Harbor Regional Center. Since AJ's diagnosis, Harbor Regional Center has become an important part of our lives.

HRC has been invaluable in assisting us with AJ. I had many questions and concerns because of AJ's diagnosis. My HRC counselor was able to give me the information I needed, relating to what I could expect now that AJ was a client with HRC. AJ received Early Intervention services, and my counselor assisted with the referral to the school district and our first IEP. When I felt that AJ's behaviors were more than I could handle, I again received assistance from HRC. My counselor was able to arrange for a behavior therapist that assisted me to learn how to manage these behaviors better. I also have been assisted with diapers and respite, which allows me to have some personal time.

Even when HRC and I didn't agree on certain services, I have always feel support-

ed. I have worked closely with Jahn Rockiki, the Director of Family Services at HRC. Even though Jahn holds a significant position at HRC, he is still able to find the time to show sympathy, understanding, and he recognizes the needs of children with developmental disabilities. Jahn attended, and was very helpful, during an IFSP meeting. Jahn assisted in making sure that AJ received a consultation at the HRC Assistive Technology Lab. In part, because of this consultation, AJ's school provided the Alpha Smart Augumentive Communication System recommended. Receiving the Alpha Smart has been very beneficial to AJ. Though he has some speech, many times he just repeats words spoken to him. He now uses both the Picture Exchange System and the Alpha Smart to communicate. He does well with these systems. If he can't get what he wants verbally or by pointing, he will go and get his Alpha Smart.

One of the most valuable services I receive from HRC is the opportunity for training and information. I attend many of the trainings offered through the Training & Events Calendar. I recently completed the training, "Working with Your Schools" and because of the information I received, I felt more confident



*(above) AJ learns to follow instructions when matching pictures with his therapist.*



*(below) The Mendoza family.*

*(continued on page 15)*

## A SAFE PLACE TO SHARE

For a sibling of a child with special needs, their world is at once enriched and very different from that of their peers. Because siblings often have concerns that need to be addressed, we began the HRC Sibling Support Group several years ago. Since that time, siblings have had a place



*(above) Amber Kito-Frekin, HRC Intern and Lisette Sandavol, HRC Counselor, with HRC Sibling Support Group participants, John Serrano and Ben Miller.*

*(below) Jorge Liberaton enjoys an art project at the HRC Sibling Support Group.*

to go to have fun and to better understand their brother or sister with a developmental disability. Tara Metsker worries about how the required extra time and effort that her son, who is diagnosed with autism, will impact her ten-year-old daughter, Brandi. "I think it is helpful for my daughter to meet other siblings of children with special needs, so she

will not feel so isolated. She loves the group and finds it very reassuring to meet other children who have had similar experiences."

The Sibling Support Group teaches brothers and sisters of our clients about developmental disabilities – particularly those disabilities that their siblings have. The group uses games, art projects, and communication to assist siblings in gaining insight and understanding about both their sibling and their family. Each member may share feelings and questions about their brothers and sisters with special needs, and receive guidance from others who share their experiences.

All the kids expressed love for their sibling, but also the feelings of frustration and anger they sometimes experience because of the attention and

time their sibling needs from their parents. Jorge is ten years old. He finds that he doesn't always understand his brother with a developmental disability and occasionally can become irritated by him. Attending the group helps Jorge to better understand why his brother acts the way he does and to know that his feelings are okay.

Ben is 15 years old and is attending the Sibling Support Group for the third time. Ben sometimes worries about the future, specifically what will happen with his brother when his parents are older. He is able to get information and support from the group. He says the best thing about the group is that he can say whatever he feels, and feels safe about speaking up.

All the kids who attend the HRC Sibling Support Group have found that they are not alone. Through the eyes of others, they see themselves. They are able to have fun while learning that having a brother or sister with a developmental disability can be challenging, but also brings rewards. As John states, "Though I have to work harder because of my sister, she has added a great deal to my life because I get to have experiences that not a lot of people have."

The Harbor Regional Center Sibling Support Group meets once a week for seven months. The group size is limited but as members leave, we recruit a new member to join us. For more information or to refer a sibling to the group, please contact Lisette Sandoval at (310) 540-1711 ext. 4531. *(See page 12 for more resources for siblings.)*

*Making new friends is just one of the fun things about being part of the HRC Sibling Support Group.*



## GIVING BACK DURING THE HOLIDAYS



For more than 30 years the holiday season has been a special time of year at Harbor Regional Center. With the assistance of our community partners, we've brought our

neediest children and adults extra support, and our programs have grown steadily over the years.

The 2003 holidays were the best ever. The "Adopt a Family" program saw over 50 families receive gifts and other needed items. In addition, Harbor also distributed gift certificates for food and other items to more than 700 families in need.

### **A special thank you to all the organizations and individuals that participated in the "Adopt a Family" program.**

City of Carson  
 Development Services Group  
 Economic Development Group  
 Cub Scout Pack 922  
 Deleon Homes  
 Fluor Corporation, Long Beach  
 Gena Henke & Family  
 Inclusive Education & Community Partnership  
 Laura Wolsey & Family  
 Northrup-Grumman Employees  
 Ralphs Grocery Corporate Office – Distribution Department  
 Sandpiper Foundation  
 Southbay Credit Union  
 Sr. Sabot Fleet  
 Theresa Laird & Family  
 Hacienda La Puente School District, Twin Towers Correctional Facility Employees  
 Valero Wilmington Refinery Employees

Our major endeavor during this time of year is our Holiday Family Event. Our 2003 collaboration between Harbor Regional Center and the South Torrance/BIGGS Neighborhood Gift Scout Council was a joyous and spectacular

event that allowed more than 200 families living at or below poverty levels to enjoy a special day just for them. More than 700 children received toys generously donated by Mattel and Small Fry Designs. All the kids received a picture with Santa Claus, and tested their carnival skills at game booths created by Girl Scouts from throughout the south bay.



A favorite activity is the man-made snow run that allowed the children – some for the first time – to play in the snow or sled. The event also featured Dodger player Rudy Law signing autographs, a wonderful caricature artist, music and much more.

The 2003 Holiday Family Event was funded entirely by contributions and could not have taken place without these sponsors. Harbor Regional Center thanks the following organizations for their generous support:

### **Event Select Sponsors – \$2,000 and over in cash or in-kind donations**

Diversified Paratransit  
 Enterprise Rent-a-Car  
 Mattel Children's Foundation  
 Northrup-Grumman ECHO  
 StateFair Foods/Sara Lee Inc.

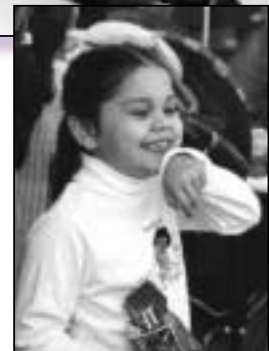
### **Event Sponsor**

City of Torrance Fire Department  
 Los Angeles Dodgers  
 Nathan Faulk  
 Pepsi Bottling Company  
 Sandpiper Foundation  
 Small Fry Design  
 Target Stores

### **A Special Thanks**

Angeles Girl Scout Council – South Torrance/BIGGS Neighborhood  
 Girl Scout Troop 195  
 Gardena High School Interact Club  
 King Harbor Church College Group  
 Harbor Regional Center Staff Volunteers

*HRC Holiday Giving Program recipients celebrated a happier holiday thanks to sponsors such as Southbay Credit Union.*



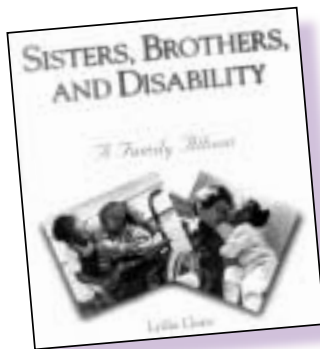
# resource center

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE RESOURCE CENTER

*By Dominique DeBorba  
HRC Parent and HRC Resource  
Center Family Support Assistant*

As the brother or sister of a child who has a developmental disability, siblings are special people. They may have problems and questions that concern their special sibling, they may not be comfortable asking their parents. Many siblings find that they benefit from extra support, and at the Resource Center we can offer that. We have many materials, some designed specifically for parents, some for children, while others are for older siblings. Highlighted this month is a small sampling of our books of this type.

### **Sisters, Brothers, and Disability, A Family Album – by Lydia Gans**



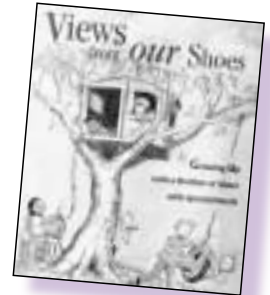
The love, respect, and problems faced by twenty-six families raising children with special needs at home are shown in this wonderful book. The compassion, patience, and the matter-of-factness sisters and brothers share as they deal with their disabled siblings is described, and the many lessons learned will benefit all siblings.

### **Brothers, Sisters, and Special Needs – by Debra J. Lobato**



Debra Lobato's comprehensive book gives parents and professionals expert answers to their questions and problems when assisting young siblings of children with chronic illnesses and developmental disabilities. It's filled with insight, knowledge and practical solutions for meeting the needs of family members, as well as the special child.

### **Views From Our Shoes – by Donald J. Meyer**



This is a beautiful collection of essays written by kids ranging from four to eighteen, whose siblings have a variety of special needs including autism, cerebral palsy, ADD, hydrocephalus, visual and hearing impairments, Down Syndrome, and Tourette Syndrome.

### **Finding A Way: Living with Exceptional Brothers and Sisters – Maxine B. Rosenberg**



Written in a direct, simple style, this book explores the feelings of three children from different families, each a brother or sister to a disabled child. All three have experienced fear, frustration and anger as a result of their home situations. But their pleasure in having brothers and sisters, no matter how much extra attention they require, shines through.

### **Special Siblings – by Mary McHugh**



This wonderful book is full of memorable stories that are vivid and affecting, and will prove enormously useful to all those who care for individuals with disabilities. The author shares her compelling insights into the sibling experience, augmented by the voices of other adult siblings, and the expertise of professionals.

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATORS SERVING THE HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER AREA 2004

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### **See Also**

[www.sen.ca.gov](http://www.sen.ca.gov)  
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## EXPANDIENDO LAS OPCIONES DE SERVICIOS PARA LAS FAMILIAS DE NIÑOS CON AUTISMO – El Centro Regional Encuentra El Desafío



La incidencia de Autismo ha sido acelerada por toda de la nación a una proporción poco común en la última década. El departamento de Servicios del Desarrollo ha reportado que el número de personas con el diagnóstico de Autismo que están siendo servidos por centros regionales en California ha incrementado 96.7% entre 1998 y 2002. En el área de servicio de HRC, hemos experimentado un incremento de 13.8% en el número de clientes del cual su principal diagnóstico es de Autismo. El número de clientes de HRC diagnosticados con Autismo ahora representa más del 20% de todos nuestros clientes, con 66% siendo de 12 años de edad o menos.

Esto ha hecho que el centro regional cambie la forma en que procuramos desarrollar recursos adecuados para servir a esta población en crecimiento, y creemos que hemos hecho grandes mejoras. Aquí está un breve descripción de algunas de las cosas que hemos hecho para ayudar a los padres de familia para ser más informados acerca de Autismo y sus tratamientos, ampliar recursos existentes, y desarrollar nuevos tipos de servicios, y mejorar la calidad de servicios proveídos por el personal de HRC y nuestra red de proveedores de servicio.

### Proporcionando información y educación para padres a través de multi-medio informativo

Nosotros sabemos que la información temprana da poder a nuestras familias y mejora su capacidad para hacer decisiones apropiadas para sus hijos con

incapacidades del desarrollo. Por esta razón hemos enfocado una gran cantidad de esfuerzo en desarrollar materiales educativos en una variedad de medios y formatos, incluyendo impreso, video, y CD-ROM. Materiales son disponibles en el centro de recursos, y a través de nuestra página de internet en [www.HarborRC.org](http://www.HarborRC.org), en Inglés y Español.

- “Guía para padres sobre el tratamiento para Autismo” es un manual preparado para ayudar a los padres a evaluar la información que ellos reciben acerca de tratamientos para autismo que enseñan la promesa en estudios científicos, basados en exámenes comprensivos de investigaciones y opiniones profesionales.
- “Como obtener servicios para el Autismo a través de su seguro médico privado-guía para padres” es un folleto que explica la propuesta de ley de la asamblea 88 (assembly bill 88), el cual se puso en efecto en California en el año 2000, y lo esto significa para padres que tienen seguro médico privado en recibir convertida apropiada para servicios reaccionados a Autismo.
- “Guía para padres sobre la evaluación psicológica” es un librito intencionado a ayudar a los padres de familia, particularmente a aquellos que están viniendo al centro regional por primera vez, a que entiendan por que una evaluación psicológica es necesaria, que implica, como es usada en la determinación de elegibilidad para recibir servicios del centro regional, y como los padres pueden ayudar a asegurar que sus hijos estén bien preparados para la valoración.

### Incrementando Servicios Destinados a Niños pequeños

Nosotros nos juntamos regularmente con estos proveedores y con educadores de seleccionados distritos escolares para incrementar comunicación, y clarificar expectativas, mejorar coordinación de servicios y continuamente vigilar la cualidad de servicios.

### Desarrollo de Destreza Social –

Nosotros hemos desarrollado tres adicionales, entrenamientos de tiempo limitado para destreza social para niños y adolescentes con autismo, así como también grupos educativos para padres. Estos grupos ayudan a padres de familia a ayudar a sus hijos a

estar mas envueltos en actividades y facilitar el desarrollo y mejoría de destreza social.

- **Terapia Ocupacional y de Lenguaje** – HRC ha incrementado significativamente el numero de proveedores de terapia de lenguaje entre nuestra área, y les prevemos a ellos con continua educación relacionada a Autismo. Nosotros hemos desarrollado un grupo modelo para terapia de lenguaje para mejorar relaciones interpersonales y destreza en comunicación.
- **Programa Especializado para Desarrollo para Infantes** – HRC ha formado y implementado un nuevo y sumamente especializado programa para el desarrollo con terapia ocupacional y componentes de lenguaje para servir a niños con autismo y con servicios complejos y necesarios.
- **Inclusión para niños con Autismo** – Hemos creado programas especiales enfocados en ayudar a pre-escolares y otros típicos programas comunitarios, dando a ellos el conocimiento y destrezas que ellos necesitan para incluir y ayudar a niños con autismo en pre-escolar, campos de verano, etc.
- **Incremento y Acceso para Tecnología de Ayuda** – Nuestro laboratorio de Tecnología Ayuda provee consulta, evaluaciones y entrenamiento, incluyendo el uso y estrategias aumentativas en comunicación para niños con autismo.

### **Mirando Hacia el Futuro**

Nosotros estamos inspirados por la confianza que se ha proveído, especialmente en California, para investigación a las causas y terapias para niños y adultos con autismo. Nosotros esperamos ver una reducción en la proporción del crecimiento de personas he están siendo diagnosticadas con esta condición. A como vemos el futuro, nosotros continuaremos escuchando a los padres y usar todas las avenidas disponibles para interceder en las necesidades de nuestra comunidad. En todos nuestros esfuerzos estaremos guiados por nuestro compromiso de proveer a nuestros clientes y sus familias con información, apoyo y preferencias.

### *Receiving the Support I Need (continued from page 9)*

and knowledgeable at AJ's recent IEP. Other classes I felt were helpful include a class in behavior management and how to work with your insurance. I feel that parents should attend as many trainings as possible because they can give you a lot of information that you may not use now, but will in the future. I also read the HRC newsletter, *Harbor Happenings* because it gives me inspiration when reading about other clients and families who are experiencing similar situations or have accomplished something special.

AJ is currently attending kindergarten in a Special Day class. I would like to someday see AJ in a more mainstreamed school program and I thing with all I have learned, and with HRC's assistance, AJ will continue to make progress.



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**BOARD MEETINGS**

March 16, 2004 – 6:30 p.m.  
 April 20, 2004 – 8:00 a.m.  
 May 18, 2004 – 6:30 p.m.  
 No meeting in June

The Board of Trustees of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc. meets regularly once a month on the THIRD Tuesday of the month.

Board meetings alternate between morning and evening times to provide opportunity to people in the community to participate. Morning meetings are from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and evening meetings are from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Board does not meet in June, August or December.

All regularly scheduled business meetings of the Board are open to the public and visitors are welcome to attend both morning and evening meetings of the Board. The meetings are held in Conference Room A1 and A2 at Harbor Regional Center.

**Harbor Happenings** is a publication of Harbor Regional Center, a program of the Harbor Developmental Disabilities Foundation, Inc.

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