



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

SPRING 2014

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER BOARD VISITS STATE CAPITOL

By Nancy Spiegel, Director of Information and Development

This March, teams of parents, clients, service providers and staff representing regional centers from across the state again came together in the Capitol, to visit our area legislators. Our aim was to raise awareness of the 265,000 individuals with developmental disabilities – and their families – that we serve statewide, and the vitally-needed services that depend on their support. Some legislators and representatives we have met before, and others gave us the opportunity to introduce our clients and services for the very first time. We also carried an important request: that they begin to reverse the impacts of cumulative funding cuts over many years, and re-invest in the stability of our service system to effectively serve and develop new programs for our growing population.

HRC team members Mary Grace Lagasca of InJOY Life Resources, Inc., Board Member Doug Erber, and Board Member David Gauthier traveled to Sacramento to speak on behalf of HRC clients and families.



The HRC Team included Board Member/Client representative David Gauthier, Board Member/Parent representative Doug Erber, Board Planning Committee member/Service Provider representative Mary Grace Lagasca, and HRC staff representative, Nancy Spiegel.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Governor Brown has appointed HRC Board Member Douglas Erber to the California Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention. Mr. Erber is the President of the Japan America Society of Southern California and also serves as the Chair of the Autism Partnership Foundation.

We urged the restoration of early start services for children at-risk for developmental delays who, as the result of cuts made in 2009, are no longer eligible for our services. Parents whose at-risk children had received early childhood development services (prior to their discontinuation in 2009) told how it had changed their lives, reducing or even eliminating the need for continued services and supports. And we pointed to the desperate need for reform of the outdated funding formulas for regional centers and service provider rates, so that together we can ensure that a comprehensive network of services and supports remains sustainable in our communities.

Members of our team reflected upon their experience of advocating for HRC clients, families, and service providers.

David Gauthier,
Client and Board Member

David told the story of support he had received through Harbor Regional Center and Best Buddies Jobs to find employment that allowed him to utilize his many talents and reach his full potential. "All my life I had worked in custodial or warehouse jobs. They

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INTERNS PREPARE FOR WORK

*By Nancy Spiegel, Director of Information and Development
Myron Chai, Client Intern*



Judge Steven Van Sicklen, interns Jason Ritchie, Hector Perez, and Richard Kim, Judge Alan Honeycutt, and Judge Eric Taylor valued the opportunity to work together.

HRC created Career Exploration Services to provide internship opportunities for adults to try different kinds of work experiences and develop skills on the job, whether they are younger and transitioning into adulthood, or are older and ready to try a new career path. Job coaches help them to learn not only their assigned work tasks, but also the work habits and social skills needed to be a good employee in any work environment. The interns in the CES program work at a variety of locations, including the Los Angeles County Superior Courthouse and Harbor Regional Center.

Carl Stuff, Intern Services Direct Support Professional with Social Vocational Services, explains that the HRC Career Exploration program helps to prepare clients for future employment by “helping them to learn some basic new skills, and fine tune the skills they have, during the time that they are involved in their job search.”

During the Fall of 2013, interns Richard Kim, Hector Perez, and Jason Ritchie were hard at work in the Civil/Family Law, Criminal, and Traffic Departments of the L.A. County Superior Courthouse in

Torrance. Court Administrator Francoise Castellano observed that “staff in the Courthouse has really enjoyed their presence. They say hello to everyone, and are always on time, anxious to assist, and ready work.”

Jason Ritchie found the internship at the courthouse very rewarding. “It’s a very good opportunity to learn how you work in an office. The job coach shows you step by step so you can keep improving your skills.”

One morning in December, Supervising Judge Steven Van Sicklen, Assistant Supervising Judge Alan Honeycutt, and Judge Eric Taylor asked to have a “meet and greet” with Jason, Richard, and Hector. They were anxious to know how the interns were doing. Intern Hector Perez said at first he was nervous that he might drop files or bring them into the wrong courtroom. Judge Taylor told Hector he had noticed his conscientiousness, adding “It is nice to have workers like you who are very organized.” Judge Honeycutt reassured them that even judges feel a little nervous on a new job. “Our first day was probably not very different than it was for you... but as the job gets more familiar, it gets easier.” Judge Van Sicklen complimented the three on their contribution to the work of the courthouse. “Your help is much appreciated. If you didn’t do your job, we couldn’t do ours.”

Career Exploration interns are also working in the offices of Harbor Regional Center, supervised by Carl Stuff and Erin Campos, of Social Vocational Services. They are learning computer skills, telephone skills and tasks involving work with documents, like making copies, filing, scanning, shredding, and protecting confidentiality. Carl and Erin also make sure that they learn about social skills for the workplace.

Carl oversees a group of 12 interns every semester. He has seen interns go on to find jobs working in mailrooms, offices, distribution centers, grocery and retail stores, with the help of their Supported Employment Job Developer. Heather

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Harbor Regional Center Board Visits State Capitol (continued from page 1)

saw something in me, and they have resources to help. Now I am working in the office of the Mayor of Long Beach. I can't begin to think what would happen if they were cut." Reflecting later on the experience of meeting with legislators, David added, "It's all about putting a face on the regional center. They need to see faces and hear the stories of the actual people that are involved. That's what they will remember."

Doug Erber, Parent and Board Member

Grass Roots Day was my first visit to Sacramento. The day-long marathon of meetings with our local legislators and their staff was eye-opening. With so many other groups in Sacramento advocating other organizations, projects, initiatives and campaigns, it is critical for regional centers' issues and concerns to be heard if critical funding is to be restored and invested in our state's population of people with developmental disabilities. Like the idiom, "The squeaky wheel gets the grease," we need to be sure our legislators hear us in order for them to pay attention and take action. I was pleased to join many dedicated representatives from regional centers across the state to collectively be that "squeaky wheel." And I was honored

to represent both Harbor Regional Center and all California parents with a special needs child.

Mary Grace Lagasca, Executive Director, InJOY Life Resources, Inc., Board Planning Committee

Being side-by-side with clients and their families advocating for our services was not easy work. I was exhausted at the end of the day after giving my elevator speech at least half a dozen times with my heart and soul on the platter. I was beginning to wonder if what we do matters to them, because we were one of so many groups here advocating at the Capitol. But fortunately for us, we had the opportunity to meet again with our representative, Assembly Member Cristina Garcia, who remembered her visit to Harbor Regional Center and InJOY Life Resources, Inc. She understood our issues and concerns because she had experienced our services first-hand. When I arrived, I felt known, welcomed and understood. I walked away with a greater appreciation for the disability movement and the significance of our work – great and small. After all, isn't this how the Lanterman Act started? I am idealistically hopeful that more is yet to come and that more relationships can be built like the ones we started or reconnected with today. ■

Interns Prepare for Work (continued from page 2)

MacPhee feels that her internship is helping her to prepare for her job search, by teaching her about the workplace, giving her an opportunity to develop the right skills, and learning how to handle herself in a work environment." She said that it's good practice, learning how to keep focused and get the job done even when under pressure. Her Intern Services supervisor, Erin Campos is helping her prepare for her job search with mock interviews and preparing her resume. "Mock interviews are helpful because they give you the experience of understanding what the boss expects of you," said Heather.

One more thing these interns all have in common: Their supervisors have noticed the results of all the great preparation, Shortly after our visit to the Courthouse, Hector Perez took his skills with him to his first job at ViaTron! ■



Interns Vanessa Caro, Tammy Kobayashi, Andrew Greenstadt and Heather MacPhee work at HRC with support from their coaches Erin Campos and Carl Stuff

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE ESTEEMED PROJECT SEARCH TEAM, INTERNS AND PARENTS

By Lorena Gallardo, Parent

Project SEARCH provides employment and education opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities. The program is dedicated to workforce development that benefits the individual, community and workplace.

I am Lorena Gallardo and I am a proud mother of Project SEARCH alumnus, Miguel Gallardo. I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my experience with the Project SEARCH program.

When my son was first introduced to the Project SEARCH program in August of 2012 I was very concerned and worried that this new venture would be too much for him to endure, but in reality I think it was too much for me.

The thought of my son having real world experiences without me by his side to ensure his safety and overall wellness had me anxious, nervous and any other

word that can explain a mother's grief when it comes to protecting her child. After careful consideration and sleepless nights my husband and I made a life-changing decision that now we consider to be the best move we could have made in helping my son gain his independence.

All my questions were answered and my nerves were settled thanks to the great communication that the Project SEARCH job coaches provided me. Upon having meetings with Miguel's job coaches I was assured that my son would be in the best possible care and given the attention he needed during his attendance in this program. They were detailed with information and sensitive

to the nature, as a parent having that was a gift in itself. Once my son started his internship at Kaiser Permanente the adventures began, he was taught skills needed to work different positions in different departments like being a transporter for the laboratories or working in the Endocrinology department, and let me tell you that my son has never been as enthusiastic about learning and achieving goals as he is now. This program has truly made my son shine and has made him develop in ways I never thought would be possible for him and his disability to achieve. Thanks to Project SEARCH Miguel is now an active member in our community and has landed a position with a well-known marketing firm that all came true with the help and support of his job coaches and this great program. I am grateful that my son was given the opportunity to attend such an empowering program that gave him the ability to achieve confidence and personal growth. Because of this Miguel has been given the opportunity to live a responsible adult life and for that I will forever be grateful. ■



Thanks to Project SEARCH Miguel is now an active member of the workforce!

ORCHARD SUPPLY HARDWARE HELPS OUR CLIENTS GROW

By Kerry Ryerson, Public Information Specialist

With his dedication to supporting the community, Orchard Supply Hardware (OSH) store manager Fabrizio Villalobos wanted to find a way to reach out to Harbor Regional Center clients. Fabrizio is familiar with the abilities of our HRC clients because in recent years he has hired two of them to work at his store. Knowing that one of his sales associates, Lee Altenes is a cycling coach for people with special needs, Fabrizio asked Lee to help him brainstorm ways to involve our clients. They came up with the idea to host gardening classes for our clients at their store.

The timing was perfect as two of Social Vocational Services (SVS) Inclusion sites had just secured leases on community garden plots at Lago Seco Park. Getting some expert gardening instruction through OSH was just what they needed to get their gardens ready for planting.

OSH's resident gardening expert and nursery sales associate George Okada met with the gardening groups for the first class back in August. The staff from SVS and their clients came prepared with great questions which George answered while capturing the attention of the group with interactive demonstrations. Lee was there to assist, and between the two of them, they kept everyone engaged in a lively discussion while providing helpful information.

When the groups had six months of hands-on gardening experience, they went back to OSH for another class with George. This time they sent their questions to him in advance so George was ready with the answers and more opportunities for planting that everyone could participate in. The groups had grown quite a variety of vegetables but found that their hard work had been eaten up by various bugs! George provided them with a few options for getting rid of the bugs while keeping everyone and the new plantings safe for their consumption.

While wrapping up the informative class, George had each client and staff member reach into a bucket and grab a surprise packet of seeds for future planting. As the group said their thanks to George and Lee, they each had their personal packet of seeds to grow and two new plants that they helped plant.

Many thanks to Orchard Supply Hardware for providing our clients with new seeds of knowledge! ■



From top to bottom: Matthew is excited to show off the tomato plant that he and George just planted!

George surprises the group with a bucket full of seed packets.

Fabrizio, Lee and George join the clients and staff from SVS for a group picture.

Preparing the soil for their spring plantings, Philip and Rannielyn water while Matthew takes a break.

FAMILY *matters*

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Parents Learn To Promote Positive Behavior, Daily Living Skills, and Social Development in Their Children



Some children with developmental disabilities need extra support to learn their daily living skills, and others display challenging behavior.

Parents can often be helped to teach these children new skills and to promote positive behaviors by HRC specialists who are trained in “applied behavior analysis.”

These behaviorists help families to assess their children’s behaviors, and develop individualized plans for modifying behaviors and developing new skills. Specialized classes introduce behavioral principles and help children and parents using practical and individualized examples.

Course topics and strategies range from toilet training to managing problem behavior, developing daily living skills, promoting self-esteem, stress management, body awareness, safety, and sexuality. Parents attend an Orientation session, scheduled with their HRC Counselor, before being enrolled in training courses.

We recently visited Family Behavioral Services’ Body Awareness and Safety classes being led in English by Iris Owens, and in Spanish by Karine Paulan. During this session parents and teens got into some thoughtful discussion about how to protect their safety and privacy on the Internet.

While their parents and older siblings attended class, younger siblings played together in the child care room. Later everyone came together to work on a fun family project. In these classes that bring parents and children together, they make sure to find ways to make learning fun.

To learn more about parent training in behavior management and to sign up for an Orientation session, contact your HRC Counselor. ■

The Topete and Thompson families work together on a fun family project.



By Kathie Sarles, Early Childhood Specialist

It is 6:00 p.m. on a Tuesday in August, and we are all sitting in a circle in the comfortable setting of the family center. The group which consists of moms, dads and the HRC early childhood specialist, are listening and responding to many questions, comments and stories relating to the ever-changing world of parenting.

Being parents of young children we have so many questions: “What can I do to get my son to brush his teeth?”, “What do I do when my toddler has a meltdown in public?”, “What is the key to “time out”?” Sitting in a room with other parents of toddlers and preschoolers, where all questions are good and the answers come from a variety of sources, helps us put our concerns into perspective. One mother told me, “It gave me a chance to rethink the way I use time out.”

How many of us take the time to think about parenting? We are parents, we love our children, but the “how to” and the “what to do” get lost in the “just getting it done.” Who has time to think about parenting while you are in the midst of parenting!

Many topics are explored in the five weeks we have together. Preventative ideas like setting limits, creating routines and being consistent are all strategies everyone can agree upon, but whether to use “time out” or other methods of discipline, or taking “No” out of your vocabulary are more vigorously discussed due to differing views. Much of these differences come from the type of parent you are: permissive, moderate or harsh, and your child’s temperament. We explore that, too.

Taking the time to think about how we parent is an important part of being a thinking, positive parent for our children. Giving ourselves the time to step aside and look at what we do makes us more consistent, more positive and allows us more time to just have fun with our children! When we take this time and connect to other parents we gain a new perspective and learn new strategies to help us through the tough times. We also gain the confidence and the realization that we are truly the expert on our children. We know them best.

Come join us for a five-week parenting class that uses the STEP curriculum, called Positive Parenting the Young Child. The next session will begin May 6th in the Long Beach office and then we are back in Torrance in August. Call Kathie to get more information and/or to register 310-792-4597. ■



Top: Jason is ready to decorate a box full of tamborines!

Bottom: Nick and his uncle share a quiet moment.

POSITIVE PARENTING: A Parent's Perspective

By Pia Rivera, Parent

At HRC we offer *Together From The Start* classes that are for families of infants and toddlers from birth to thirty-six months. One of the newest classes is the Positive Parenting Class. Always striving to teach and empower the parents, Kathie Sarles asked parents that had attended the class for their feedback.

Parent Pia Rivera has taken the class and the following is what Pia said about the benefits of what she has learned:

"I want to start off by saying that I still use many of the strategies you taught me every day! I feel as though I am a more patient, understanding parent. I can differentiate her tantrums now. I know when she is frustrated because she is trying to communicate, and when she is upset because she can't have her way. I feel like I am a better parent because of the class with you.

I try every day to take "no" out of my vocabulary. It really does help her react less intensely if she is not able to have something right away. When she is upset, I get down to her level and she knows automatically I am not there to fight with her, but that I'm there to try and help her. We have a magic bag that works wonders! And I am more confident in my parenting (especially in public).

I've given her more responsibility and she does little chores that give her a sense of accomplishment. She is more relaxed and calm at home overall." ■

Celebrate With Us!
Harbor Regional Center is celebrating our 40th anniversary.

Family and Friends Festival

Saturday, May 10
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Harbor Regional Center
21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503

Join us for a day of music, stories, dance, games, crafts, and more!
ADMISSION IS FREE.

Featuring a performance of Book Songs, beloved children's stories set to music, by The Grateful Crane Ensemble.

Food will be available for purchase from popular food trucks, The Grilled Cheese Truck and Don Chow Tacos.

Client focus

INTRODUCING MYSELF

By Myron Chai, HRC Intern

My name is Myron Chai. I am 27 years old. I was born in Torrance, CA, and began the first few years of my life in Hawthorne, CA. In 1993, we moved to Manhattan Beach, CA where I have been living with my parents and my two younger brothers since then.

I am currently working for my B.A. degree on Mass Communications at California State University, Dominguez Hills in Carson, CA. A requirement of my final semester is to complete an internship.

I wanted to intern at the Harbor Regional Center because I started being their client since I was 7 years old. I have a long relationship with Harbor Regional Center. I remember my parents driving me to a program every week, that my Counselor arranged for me. Also, my counselors attended my IEP meetings while I was in grade school.

The reason I wanted to intern at Harbor Regional Center is that they had been helping me a lot and I want to give back to them by helping them keep their website, e-newsletter, Facebook and social media blog up to date. I hope you will “like” Harbor Regional Center on Facebook, and check out some of the interesting articles and events we have posted there.

During semester and summer breaks I traveled all over the world and took a lot of pictures. In summer 2010, I went with my family to Europe and we joined a tour there. We visited countries like the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and

Austria. But most of the time, I like to go to China and Hong Kong to visit relatives with my dad. By doing that, I get to experience the other side of the world and how people live there. Someday I would like to visit other places I’ve never been to, such as Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tahiti, and the islands in the Caribbean.

Since we live in the “digital age,” I like to carry my mobile phone and iPad everywhere, and use the Internet to go on Twitter and Facebook to update my travels. This will give me plenty of practice on electronic journals, which makes it easier to spread messages to my friends and followers.

Hopefully after graduation I can find a job related to my field of study. Further on into the future, I would like to continue my travels around the world and write about the places, their people and culture for a magazine publisher. I really enjoy traveling and living in the digital age. That is why I am looking forward to eventually having a job using digital media to write about my travels and share my thoughts and experiences. I’m glad I had a chance to intern at Harbor Regional Center. ■



Myron Chai

WHEN HIS EYES BECAME HIS VOICE

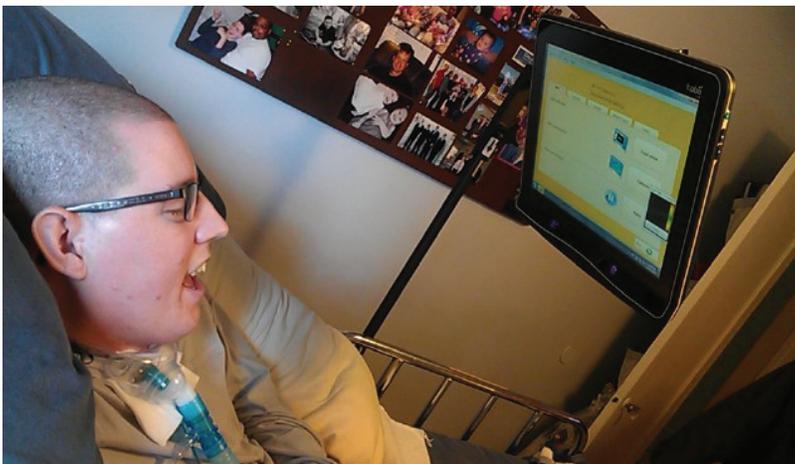
*By Kerry Ryerson,
Public Information Specialist*



Stephen pays close attention as Esteban, HRC's Assistive Technology Specialist, points to an icon for Stephen to open with his eye gaze.

With that big smile, Stephen must be opening one of his favorite Sports links!

With a beaming smile that lights up the room, 29 year old Stephen Kromminga doesn't appear to have a care in the world. Stephen's mom Sandra describes him as a "happy, positive, glass half-full kind of guy who smiles easily and often." What admirable qualities to have, particularly when considering that because of his cerebral palsy, spastic quadriplegia and recent health concerns, Stephen now spends the majority of his time in his room. He can sit in his wheelchair a few days a week for a few hours at a time but he is most comfortable in his bed.



Stephen does have many reasons to smile and his new communication device, the Tobii Eye Gaze, is one of them. Stephen's parents were hesitant to get their hopes up when they first heard about it. This device is controlled by the user's eyes, directing their eye gaze at the computer monitor to access a keyboard or icons for communication. They were concerned that Stephen would not be able to successfully use the Eye Gaze device because he has weak eye muscles and his eyes wander. He must have one of his eyes covered with a patch to increase the strength of the other eye and alternate days for covering each eye. Much to their surprise and delight, Stephen adapted to the equipment quickly with the assistance of Esteban Doria, HRC's Assistive Technology Specialist.

With his new device, Stephen tells people "I can understand everything you say" and now they are able to understand everything Stephen says too! When he wants something or needs something, Stephen has the ability to ask for it. He stays in touch with friends on Facebook. He can turn his TV on and off, change channels, adjust the volume and watch his favorite TV shows when he's not tuned into one of the many sports channels he enjoys. Stephen is quite a sports enthusiast and now that he can change the TV channels himself, he

never misses a second of a Clippers, Cowboys or Cubs game! Even more importantly than keeping up with his favorite Teams, the "Three Cs," Stephen has the wonderful benefit of communication and independence by using his eyes to give him a voice – terrific reasons to smile! ■

ROTARY GRANTS FOR ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

The South Bay Sunrise Rotary Club and the Lomita-Torrance Airport Rotary Club have joined forces for the second year in a row and asked Harbor Regional Center to write a District Grant proposal. HRC has been very fortunate to have received these two grants from the Rotary.

Last years' grant was in the amount of \$4,000 and was used to purchase the Nova Chat 7 Plus communication device and the PCS Symbol Set. This year the grant was for \$4,500 and another communication device has been purchased – the PCEye Go along with the Sensory Guru software which will be a beneficial training tool for the PCEye Go.

The communication devices and software that we have been able to purchase with the Rotary Club's District Grants provide invaluable tools for our Assistive Technology Specialist and our Speech & Language Specialist when they assess our speech impaired clients. For our clients that do not have the ability to manipulate a standard mouse or keyboard, the PCEye Go will be a device that they can learn to operate by using their eye gaze to access the computer. To learn more about Eye Gaze technology and how it can benefit our clients, please read the article "When His Eyes Became His Voice."

Many thanks to the Rotary for caring about our clients and the work we do here at Harbor Regional Center! ■



NOVA Chat 7



PCEye Go



Angelina is hard at work and all smiles!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Angelina Mejia

*By Kris Zerhusen, Assistant Manager,
Resource & Assistive Technology Center*

The Resource and Assistive Technology Center is pleased to introduce a new volunteer, Angelina Mejia. Angelina brings a keen understanding of the services and supports HRC provides as her brother has a diagnosis of autism. When she was younger, Angelina participated in the HRC Sibling Club where she met other siblings who shared similar experiences. Now as a college student, Angelina has returned to offer volunteer

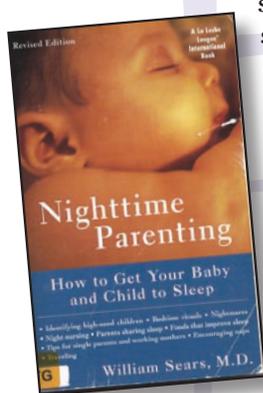
assistance to Harbor Regional Center. Angelina easily interfaces with clients and parents who visit the Resource Center. She helps compile information that is shared with parents who are new to HRC. Angelina also provides assistance to HOPE for special projects. Come by the Resource Center to meet Angelina, you will recognize her by her huge smile. ■

WHAT'S NEW AT THE RESOURCE CENTER?

By Dominique Deborba

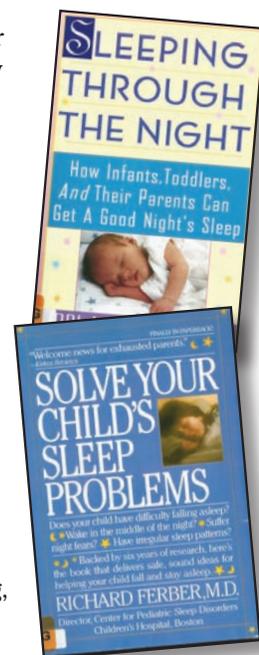
Sleep is an important aspect of a child's early development and is essential to family well-being. During their first three years, infants and toddlers spend more than 50% of their lives sleeping. However, concerns about sleep and sleep problems are among the most common issues brought to our attention from the families that we serve. Although sleep is one of the most natural things a baby can do, it presents enormous challenges for many families. The most common behaviorally-based sleep problems experienced by young children include night waking, bedtime problems, sleep-related rhythmic movements, nighttime fears, and parasomnias. One of our journals here in the Family Resource Center- ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families recently reported that up to 20% to more than 50% of young children have a sleep problem. Developmental and medical issues only seem to compound the issues. As sleep deprived families and clients come through the Family Resource Center we see them finding it difficult to cope and hard to function during the day. We can offer them hope and relief by helping them learn techniques through the many books and videos we have available on sleep disorders. This month we'd like to offer a glimpse of some of these materials.

Nighttime Parenting – In this book Dr. William Sears shows you how to find a sensitive solution to your baby's sleepless nights. This newly revised edition of Nighttime Parenting incorporates the latest findings of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and its prevention, including information about positioning babies on their backs while sleeping, as well as more research to support the hypothesis proposed in the original edition that having babies and parents share a bed reduces the risk of SIDS.



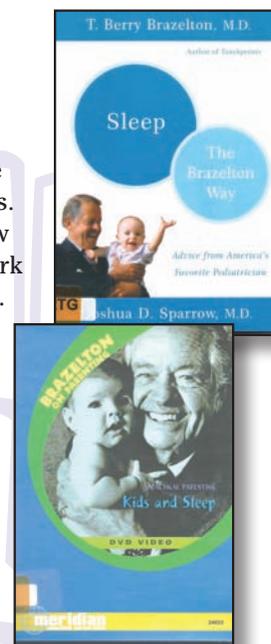
Sleeping Through The Night – This book covers everything from how much sleep children need at different developmental stages to solutions to everyday problems such as sleeping away from home or teaching your baby to sleep if you're breastfeeding.

Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems – Practical and easy to understand, this book tells you how to handle many situations, in children aged one to six, including refusing to go to bed, colic, restlessness, insomnia, night terrors, bedwetting, head banging and body rocking.



Sleep the Brazelton Way – All weary parents long for that magic time when their baby sleeps straight through the night. Most also look forward to the evenings when their active and clingy toddler is able to go to bed without some elaborate ritual that involves hours of their time. In this wise and practical book Drs. Brazelton and Sparrow provide their trademark wisdom and expertise.

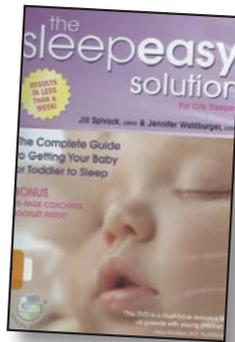
Practical Parenting: Kids and Sleep – This video explores new discoveries in sleep dynamics, discusses the treatment of sleep disorders, and explains the safe and proper way to put a baby to bed.



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*What's New At The Resource Center?
(continued from page 12)*

The Sleepeasy Solution – This DVD is a complete guide to getting a crib sleeper baby or toddler to sleep. It includes information on six sleep stealers that cause most sleep problems, a step by step guide to solving your child's nap and nighttime sleep problems and sample schedule, etc. ■



GPS UNITS ASSIST PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

By Rob Blee, Palos Verdes Estates Cares Coordinator

With technology ever-increasing, finding ways to put it to good use doesn't get any better than this. Global Positioning System (GPS) units are now available to assist in locating Persons with Special Needs.

While most people associate wandering with elderly sufferers from Alzheimer's or other types of dementia, a recent study found that 49 percent of children with autism were prone to the behavior. Given the prevalence of autism — at one in 68 children, or one in 50 school-age children — it's clear this is an everyday concern for many thousands of parents.

Statistics like this triggered a search for global positioning systems (GPS) for both seniors with Alzheimer's disease and persons with special needs.

What we found was that all of the major cell phone companies offer some kind of GPS location devices. Today almost all cell phones have a GPS system built in. The challenge is there is no way to insure that the person you need to locate has the phone with them. To inquire about this option contact your cell phone provider. Additionally, most wireless companies have some kind of standalone device ranging in price from \$29.99 to \$150.00 plus \$10.00 to \$12.50 a month for service.

Other types of GPS include, but are not limited to the three listed below. Although no one company is endorsed, we are happy to make these options known to our residents.

Navistar GPS footwear system has a walking shoe for both men and women with a GPS unit built in. The person wearing the shoe can be located online or with an app on a smart phone. Cost for a pair of shoes is \$299.99 plus \$24.99 to \$34.99 for tracking. Web address: www.gpsshoe.com

PocketFinder has a "Personal Locator" which uses AT&T wireless to monitor this product. PocketFinder is designed to track and locate people and has a one-week battery life. The cost is \$99.95 and requires a fee of \$12.95 per month. User does not need to be an AT&T customer. Web address: www.pocketfinder.com

Senior GPS Bracelet for Alzheimer's, Dementia, & Autism S-911 Bracelet Locator is a small cell phone that is worn like a bracelet. Comes with a buckle like a watch or has a security locking buckle. Has a built in cell phone with a S.O.S. button. Also has G Sensor to alert in case of impact like a fall. Cost \$339.00 to \$699.00 plus monitoring. Web address: www.locationbasedgps.com or www.tracking-system.com/senior-gps-bracelet.

As with any of these devices, it's wise to shop around to find the right product for you and your loved one. ■

THANK YOU FOR CARING AND SHARING!

*By Kerry Ryerson,
Public Information Specialist*

The 2013 Holidays Are For Sharing Campaign kicked off with donations of bountiful Thanksgiving Baskets for 39 of our needy HRC families. The baskets included traditional dinners with all of the fixings and were provided by the Carson-Gardena Rotary Club, Manhattan Beach Montessori School and Pinpoint Jobs!



The Ramirez family had just one Christmas wish – to get a Hospital bed for Vincent.

The amazing supporters from Valero Wilmington Refinery did just that and a whole bunch more!

When the Holiday season drew to a close, 104 clients and their families had been adopted by individuals and organizations in our local HRC catchment area and from locations much further away. Several additional families received gift cards, new toys, miscellaneous gifts and clothing from the donations we had collected throughout the year.

Social Media played a role in the recruitment of some of our newest supporters who discovered information

about our Holidays Campaign on popular online sites. One of our long-term sponsors posted our information on the Beach City Mammias and the Peach Head South Bay sites. Our HRC website and Facebook page advertised the Holidays program and the Sandpipers, one of our repeat sponsors, highlighted HRC on their Facebook page as their Charity of the Week.

New sponsors came to us from Autism Spectrum Therapies, the Beach Cities Roller Derby Team, Chadwick School, Murad, Torrance High School Cheer Teams, the San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront and individuals whose family members sent contributions from as far north as Sacramento, south to San Diego and east to the state of Ohio!

Here is what one of our new sponsors had to say about adopting a family: "I LOVED

this program and had such a wonderful experience!! It was great, and I plan to continue to adopt a family through HRC in the future." One of our recipient families said: "Thanks for making my children happy, for your dedication and time to be a big part of their holiday!"

We appreciate the support of the many new and returning individuals and organizations that brought Holiday cheer to our clients and their families! ■

L.A. WARMLINE: SPREADING THE WORD TO MEET A CLEAR NEED

*By Michael Tredinnick Ph.D., Supervising Psychologist, ACCESS Center,
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health*

No doubt we all know someone who wants to express something on their mind in the middle of the night, and perhaps has a limited circle of family and friends to talk to. This is particularly true of the elderly and especially those who are house-bound. However, a listening ear is only a phone call away. Hopefully, you will continue to spread the word, especially to those who need it the most; Los Angeles County's talkline, the "LA Warmline", is available from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

The LA Warmline currently answers over 1,000 calls each month, many from new callers. While the line is attracting a large number of calls from those under 60, the call agents are hoping to get your help in reaching out to a wider cross section of the community. Although the call agents speak both English and Spanish, approximately only 18% of the calls are from callers who describe themselves as Hispanic or Latino, and only 5% of the callers are 65 and older. The most common presenting issues are loneliness, relationship issues and family conflict.

For further information, contact Dr. Tredinnick at mtredinnick@dmh.lacounty.gov.

Contact Information:

LA Warmline: Tel (855) 952-9276 – Sun. - Sat. 10:00 p.m - 6:00 p.m.

Suicide Crisis Line: Tel (877) 727-4747 – 24 HRS

ACCESS Center: Tel (800) 854-7771 – 24 HRS

Hotline of Southern California: Tel (562) 596-5548 – Sun. - Sat. 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Community Helpline: Tel (877) 541-2525 – Sun. - Sat. 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Project Return: Tel (888) 448-9777 – Mon. - Fri. 5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

The LA Warmline is funded by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63). It is one of several Prevention and Early Intervention initiatives implemented by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA), an organization of county governments working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities. For more information, visit www.calmhsa.org. ■



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BOARD MEETINGS

May 20, 2014 – 6:30 p.m.
 July 15, 2014 – 6:30 p.m.
 September 16, 2014 – 6:30 pm

The Board of Trustees of Harbor Regional Center meets on the Third Tuesday of the month, with the exception of June, August and December, when the Board does not meet.

All regularly scheduled business meetings of the Board are open to the public and visitors are welcome. The meetings are held in Conference Room A4 at Harbor Regional Center.

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

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