



# HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

SPRING 2008

## HRC TEAM REACHES OUT TO LEGISLATORS IN STATE CAPITOL



### *Board Members*

*John Rea and Rhiannon Acree represented HRC in Sacramento.*

Members of the Harbor Regional Center Board of Trustees traveled to the Sacramento offices of our local legislators this March, on behalf of HRC clients and families. HRC team members included John Rea, parent, Chairperson of HRC's Board Planning Committee and Palos Verdes City Council member; Rhiannon Acree, Chairperson of HRC's Service Provider Advisory Committee and Director of Cambrian Homecare, a provider of respite services; and Nancy Spiegel, HRC Director of Information and Development.

The occasion was Grass Roots Day 2008, when representatives from all 21 regional centers arrived at the state capitol to share a common message. We acknowledged that California has, especially at times of fiscal crisis, struggled to provide adequate support for Lanterman Act services, and now faces the most serious budget crisis to date, with a projected deficit for 2008-09 estimated at \$14.5 billion or more.

*(continued on page 2)*

## GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY

Regional Center budgets are proposed to receive \$3.8 billion for 2008-09, an increase of \$141.5 million, to provide for a projected increase of over 10,000 people with developmental disabilities coming into the service system.

Cost Containment Measures are to continue indefinitely, to reduce costs of developmental services by approximately \$348.3 million in 08-09:

- Rate freezes, now in the fifth year, will continue for service providers, and will be expanded to include more categories of services.
- Rates for supported employment services will be reduced by 10%.
- The Family Cost Participation Program (FCPP) will continue to assess a share of cost for parents for respite, day care, and camping services, and will be expanded to include parents of infants and toddlers.

Proposed reductions to other programs such as Education, Medi-Cal, IHSS Domestic Services, etc., will also have an impact on our clients and service providers. 10% rate reductions to Medi-Cal rates are expected to create greater shortages in available doctors and health care providers.

In May, the Governor will release a revision to this proposed budget. In the meantime he and state legislators will continue to gather data and input and explore possible alternatives, to resolve budget problems.

*HRC Team Reaches Out to Legislators in State Capitol (continued from page 1)*

We reminded legislators that regional centers and their clients, families, and service providers have participated in a variety of cost-containment measures for many years. We expressed hope that these measures, now slated to continue indefinitely, will be reversed at the earliest possible date. For example, we are now in the fifth year of rate freezes for regional center service providers. Rhiannon Acree shared information about the dedicated efforts of our area service providers, who have worked hard to maintain a high rate of direct care staff retention and comprehensive staff training programs, but who find this increasingly difficult under the continued strain of rate freezes.



*Cambrian Homecare's Rhiannon Acree and the Honorable Tony Mendoza (Assembly, Norwalk) share goals for serving our community.*

We expressed our gratitude for the budget increases proposed to address our growing population of persons with developmental disabilities statewide. We also expressed the hope that in balancing the budget, our legislators will prioritize those services which are most critical and essential to the citizens of California, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Parent John Rea shared his family's concern for a stable future for his two sons with autism, and the need to support regional centers' continued development of needed resources such as affordable housing and licensed homes.

Our legislators understood our concerns, and voiced agreement that support for programs for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, and other vital education, health and human services should be maintained. But they also expressed unanimous concern that this deficit is greater than any faced in the past, and while cuts they have made thus far may help to close the gap, they feel it calls for what the state Legislative Analyst's Office has recommended be a balanced approach of "raising revenue and reducing spending."

Continued support from our legislators will be needed for our service system, to retain qualified, well-trained staff, develop new resources, be responsive to our clients' and families' needs, and provide the quality services we all expect for our community.

*Save  
the  
Date!*

# Tell Me A Story:

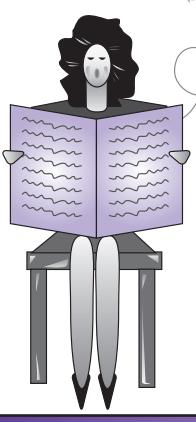
## A Harbor Regional Center Family & Friends Special Event

**Saturday, May 31st, 2008**

**11:00 am to 2:00 pm**

Harbor Regional Center  
21231 Hawthorne Boulevard, Torrance

Join us at Harbor Regional Center for a delightful day of Storytellers, RADIO Disney, Music, Dancers, Books, Crafts, and fun!



## MARTIN MCCOVEY PAVES WAY FOR HRC CLIENTS AT UPS

*By Danielle Heck  
Employment Specialist*

*Editor's Note: As Employment Specialist, Ms. Heck is in a position especially created by HRC to work together with clients, counselors, supported employment service providers and our community, to promote employment opportunities for our clients.*

I first met Martin at a going away party for his job developer, Michele Mar, of Westview Services. He kept telling everyone how much he loved his job. It was endearing to see how thankful he was for Michele's help in getting his job with UPS.

Martin has autism, but he has not allowed this to stand in his way of living a fulfilling life or accomplishing his goals. He understands the importance of responsibility and hard work to reach these goals. While attending Cerritos High School, Martin enjoyed working as an assistant to the school janitor.

Martin graduated from Cerritos High School in June 2004, and attended a continuing education program at Cypress College. Throughout this time, he knew he wanted to work. He began taking automotive repair classes, and dreams of being an auto mechanic someday.

In the fall of 2006 Martin decided that he wanted to find a job. He applied to Wal-Mart, Target, McDonald's, Blockbuster and many other places, but had no luck getting employed. His HRC Counselor referred him for supported employment services. After enlisting the services of Michele as job developer, we discovered that Martin wanted to work at UPS. She felt confident that Martin would be the perfect employee for UPS – she just had to find a way to get Martin's foot in the door.

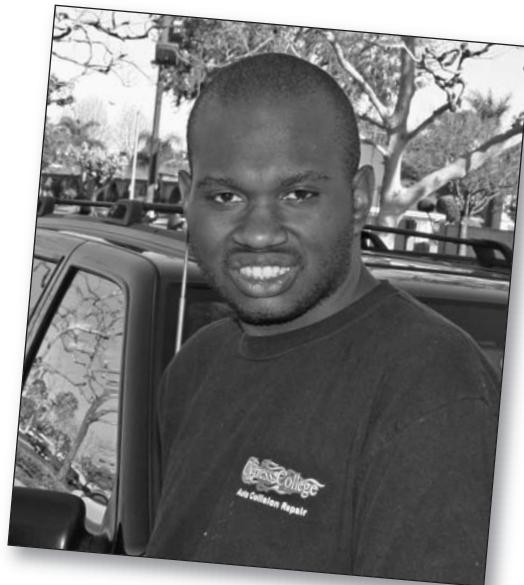
Unfortunately, finding the right person to talk to is not easy when it comes to job development, especially with a large company like UPS. All companies have

rules and regulations and often deadlines, quotas, security clearances, so finding a niche for our clients isn't always easy. At UPS the package handlers are in a fast-paced environment, requiring them to continually lift, lower, and slide packages. Michele was able to convince the hiring manager at UPS to give Martin a chance. It took four or five months to actually make it happen, but the end result was worth the wait for Martin.

Martin commented about his job coach, Erin, who now coaches not only Martin but another HRC client as well, saying "It felt good to have Erin there because there were certain things I needed help with in the beginning." Erin explained that due to the phenomenal job Martin has done working at UPS, he has paved the way for other clients to work there. Erin continues to assist Martin with asking questions, maintaining his focus, following special procedures, safety issues and social skills. On occasion Erin has been instrumental in helping educate Martin's co-workers on disability awareness.

After six months of work, Martin is now receiving benefits and has a goal of living on his own someday. Martin's supervisors have already noticed his incredible dedication and stamina in a very psychologically and physically demanding job. When I asked Martin about his future, he answered, "Maybe I can work for UPS forever and be an auto technician there." He is continuing his education in auto mechanics towards this goal.

We all agree that Martin is going to go far in whatever he does. ■



# FAMILY *matters*

## IT TAKES TWO TO TALK The Hanen Program® for Parents

*Maureen J. Fondevilla-Perez,  
MS, CCC-SLP, HRC Speech-  
Language Pathologist*



*Marian Lee observes,  
waits and listens for  
Logan's response while  
Alex Lee models for him.*

Harbor Regional Center embraces a family-focused approach in early childhood speech-language intervention. In January, seven families of children with language delays attended the *It Takes Two to Talk (ITTT) – The Hanen Program® for Parents* Orientation at HRC. The families arrived with very little knowledge of the program, but high hopes for finding ways to help improve their child's communication skills.

ITTT is a preliminary speech-language intervention program, which takes about two to three months to complete. Prior to the first session of the program, each child receives a comprehensive speech-language assessment and individualized communication goals. Families are then asked to attend six to eight group sessions where they learn strategies that promote language development during everyday interactions with their child. There are also three videotaping and feedback sessions which are completed in the child's natural environment and while interacting with family members. At the end of the program, each child receives a progress report with a description of their progress and any recommendations for speech-language services depending on the child's progress and developmental skills.

This program is for families of children ages 18 months to three years who have language delays or disorders. The families must be prepared to make the commitment of having one consistent person involved in all of the training sessions. Clients are referred by their Counselors in the Early Childhood Unit to Maureen Fondevilla-Perez, HRC Speech-Language Pathologist and coordinator for HRC's Hanen Program.

Participants in this program learn essential and basic concepts about communication and language development. They also benefit from early language intervention, because families are able to apply the strategies that they have learned across contexts, and it becomes a natural part of parent-child interactions. This program is unique in that it includes the members of the family during the intervention process. It empowers the parents to become more efficient and effective communicators with their child. Most importantly this program provides social support to families of children with language delays or disorders. The group naturally becomes a support system, because families are going through similar situations and they are able to share their experiences with each other.

Erica Wolfe, HRC Early Childhood Counselor, referred her families to ITTT and she noticed that the families who completed the first program had a very positive experience. "The parents that I talked to felt a little bit more knowledgeable and confident in interacting with their child."

If interested in learning more about this program, you may visit the Resource Center where you will find more information. If you are wondering if this program would benefit your child, please contact your Counselor for a referral. ■

# **TOOLS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD**

## **Child Development Training Series**

### **For Families of Infants and Young Children**

If your child is an infant or toddler, come join us for these monthly trainings all about your child's development. Immediately following the trainings, the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center will provide a special tour. For more information and to register for these trainings, please contact Vel Roman at (310) 792-4569. If you need childcare to attend this training, please call Rosa Olea at (310) 543-0651 at least three days prior to the meeting date. Sessions are held at both of the following locations.

#### **Harbor Regional Center, Torrance**

**First Thursday of the Month**

**9:30 am-10:00 am**

**Conference Room A2,  
Building A, First Floor**

#### **May 1 & December 4, 2008**

**Setting Up Routines – Rebecca Asdel,  
Manager, Family Behavioral Services**

Learn about establishing mealtime, play, bath and bed routines that help your child learn daily living skills and make daily life go more smoothly. Receive a schedule to take home, to help you plan family routines.

#### **June 5 & November 6, 2008**

**Child Development: What Comes  
Next? – Pam Hellmann, MA, OTR/L**

Learn about stages of early childhood, and receive a toy to take home, to help you promote your child's development.

#### **July 3, 2008**

**Food for Thought – Pat Hevessey, RN**

Learn about toddler nutrition, and receive nutritional information booklets and a child snack pack to take home.

#### **August 7, 2008**

**Learning to Talk – Maureen  
Fondevilla-Perez, MS, CCC-SLP**

Participants will learn language-enhancing activities, and receive a toy to take home, to help promote your child's language development.

#### **September 4, 2008**

**Learning to Play with Your Child –  
Vel Roman, Early Childhood Intake  
Counselor**

Learn how to use toys, receive a developmental toy and booklet to take home, to

help you promote your child's development.

#### **October 2, 2008**

**Shared Reading – Barbara del Monico,  
HRC Resource Center Manager**

Learn the benefits of shared reading, and receive a storybook to take home, to support language skill development in your children.

#### **HRC Long Beach Training Center**

**9:30 am-10:00 am**

**1155 E. San Antonio Drive  
Long Beach, CA 90807**

#### **May 6 & November 4, 2008**

**Learning To Talk – Maureen  
Fondevilla-Perez, MS, CCC-SLP**

Participants will learn language-enhancing activities, and receive a toy to take home, to help promote your child's language development.

#### **July 8, 2008**

**Keeping My Child's Records Straight  
– Barbara Guzman, Program  
Manager**

Learn tips for organizing your child's medical, school, and other records. Each participant will receive an HRC family notebook to take home, for organizing your child's important records.

#### **September 9, 2008**

**Learning to Play with Your Child –  
Vel Roman, Early Childhood Intake  
Counselor**

Learn how to use toys, receive a developmental toy and booklet to take home, to help you promote your child's development. ■

# How Are We Doing?

## Harbor Regional Center Receives High Ratings On Public Policy Measures

For the past two years, the California Department of Developmental Services has used statewide performance measures in certain targeted areas to encourage optimal service outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities, and to track regional centers' progress on these desired outcomes.

Harbor Regional Center has just received its second annual performance report. Our performance and that of the state overall is reflected in the charts below.

### HELPING OUR CLIENTS TO LIVE IN HOME SETTINGS

#### Fewer Persons Live In State Developmental Centers

##### State Average

December, 2006	1.36%
December, 2007	1.20%

##### HRC

December, 2006	1.52%
December, 2007	1.33%

- Lower ratings = improved outcomes
- HRC has supported 15 individuals to move from the state developmental centers into the community since 12/05.

#### More Children Live With Families

##### State Average

December, 2006	97.82%
December, 2007	98.06%

##### HRC

December, 2006	98.71%
December, 2007	99.21%

- Higher ratings = improved outcomes
- HRC rates above the state average and has continued to improve outcomes for HRC children.

#### Fewer Children Live In Large Facilities (for 7 or more children)

##### State Average

December, 2006	0.17%
December, 2007	0.15%

##### HRC

December, 2006	0.02%
December, 2007	0.00%

- 0 % = best possible rating
- All licensed homes being developed by HRC serve four or fewer children, including children with special health or behavioral needs.

#### More Adults Live In Their Own Homes Or With Their Families

##### State Average

December, 2006	70.68%
December, 2007	71.38%

##### HRC

December, 2006	72.64%
December, 2007	73.13%

- Higher ratings = improved outcomes
- HRC rates above the state average and has continued to improve outcomes for HRC adults.

#### Fewer Adults Live In Large Facilities

(for 7 or more persons)

##### State Average

December, 2006	5.36%
December, 2007	4.94%

##### HRC

December, 2006	4.03%
December, 2007	3.58%

- Lower ratings = improved outcomes
- HRC rates better than the state average and continues to improve outcomes for HRC adults.
- All licensed homes being developed by HRC serve four or fewer persons.
- HRC is working hard to develop more homes to serve individuals with special health care needs and to assist adults living in nursing facilities to move into more homelike settings.

### PROVIDING TIMELY RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS FOR INTAKE AND ASSESSMENT

#### State Average

December, 2006	93.63%
December, 2007	91.52%

#### HRC

December, 2006	98.33%
December, 2007	100%

- 100% = best possible rating
- Although the statewide timeline measured above is 142 days or less, HRC strives to complete the application process in 75 days or less.

## COMPLIANCE MEASURES

### Areas Measured

Passed Independent Audit	Yes
Passed State Audit	Yes
Accurately Projected Purchase of Services	Yes
Operated within Operations Budget	Yes
Met Vendor Audit Requirements	Yes
Certified to Participate in Medicaid Waiver Program	Yes
Met Welfare and Institutions Code requirements for Individual Program Plan Development	Yes

### PROGRESS ON LOCAL INITIATIVE:

*HRC will assist clients, families and service providers to be well-informed, active and successful participants in client/family-centered services.*

Harbor Regional Center continued to produce publications that provided useful information, designed to support the active participation of clients, families, and service providers.

Our Web site has been maintained with up-to-date information on services, resources, training opportunities, online booklets and videos, our online library catalog, links to DDS and other national, state and local resources, and much more.

The HRC Resource Center Library was visited by an average of 175 users/month including clients, parents and family members, and professionals, who have checked out approximately 200 resource items per month from our collection of:

- 6000 books, videos, DVDs, CDs and other media
- 75 developmental toys

HRC's Computer Lab serves approximately 40 adults per week during Open Lab time, 8 to 10 adults per week attend computer classes, and 8 to 10 children attend after school computer class each week. The Computer Lab offers six different computer classes for adults during the year.

The Assistive Technology lab provides eight evaluations/consultations per month and provides a monthly AAC users group for 10 adults per month. The AT Lab includes an AT equipment lending library with 25 pieces of equipment available for clients to use during a try-out period.

The Resource Center coordinates five family support groups and the Sibling Club which consists of 10 to 11 sibling support groups.

A Resource Center Branch is available at the Long Beach site. It is stocked with over 200 books, videos and toys. Patrons may request that items from the Torrance Center be brought to the Long Beach branch for them.

HRC offered more than 90 training opportunities per semester for clients, families, and service providers. ■

# Client focus

## LORNA MURAKAMI – Taking Pride in Her Accomplishments



*Lorna beams with pride along with supported living worker Veronica Gomez.*

she has succeeded. Lorna's early years weren't always easy. She came to this country from Korea when she was just two years old to live with adoptive parents, but was later sent to live in a foster home. Today Lorna lives independently with support, together with a roommate in a nice, cozy house, and takes great pride in her many accomplishments.

Whether it is through the classes that she takes or the volunteer work that she does, Lorna wants to be productive and active. She takes computer and reading classes at Long Beach Community College, participates in and coaches several sports through Special Olympics, budgets her money with very little assistance, and pays her bills on time!

Lorna also has a lengthy and successful work history of 15 years, but took time off to recuperate from back problems. Fortunately for Lorna, a friend referred her to the Veteran's Administration in Long Beach, where she could work as a volunteer, providing much-needed

Lorna is an energetic woman who is always looking for opportunities to improve herself and her life. Due to her hard work and determination, and with the help of supported living services from Harbor Regional Center,

services but not overly taxing her health. Lorna's dedication to her volunteer work has not gone unnoticed – she was honored with an award for her hours of volunteer service at the VA.

One of Lorna's favorite activities is swimming, which she does twice a week, and is great exercise for her back. She has been involved in several sports throughout the years starting with bowling when she was in high school. Since then, Lorna has participated in track, volleyball, softball, bocce, ice skating, floor hockey, skiing and snowboarding, all through Special Olympics. She has won over 100 medals and been interviewed for the local Long Beach cable television station while attending various competitions. With her good friend Chris, she helps to coach other athletes. Veronica Gomez, Lorna's supported living worker with AIM Services, has seen how Lorna motivates other athletes, and how she is a dynamic and positive mentor for them. Lorna looks forward to the day when she can once again participate in all of her favorite sports.

Veronica has been working with Lorna for seven years, and has seen Lorna make significant improvements in all aspects of her life throughout that time. She noted that Lorna has developed many useful computer skills, as well as reading and comprehension skills, since she has been taking classes at Long Beach Community College. Lorna has the desire and initiative to enrich her life and with ongoing encouragement from supportive people like Veronica, her HRC Counselor Winfred Narh, and her best friend Chris, Lorna will undoubtedly continue to flourish and grow. ■

## REGIONAL CENTER CLIENTS TAKE TO THE SKY!

Challenge Air For Kids and Friends is a Texas-based nonprofit organization that provides free plane rides to kids with disabilities along with their families and friends. It was started by Navy fighter pilot Rick Amber in 1993. Amber lost the use of his legs in 1971 when he was returning from his 109th combat mission and his jet crashed during landing on the aircraft carrier USS Hancock. Amber continued his love of flying through teaching ground school and becoming a Certified Flight Instructor. Amber eventually bought his own plane that was equipped with large doors, fixed gears and an overhead pull to assist him in transferring from his wheelchair into the plane. His vision for Challenge Air began.

Fourteen years later, Amber's vision continues to enhance the lives of thousands of children and adults across the country. On a bright and sunny morning, the Whiteman Airport in Pacoima became the hub of activity when 135 regional center clients and their families attended the Challenge Air "Fly Day" event. This was the first time that the Texas-based Challenge Air For Kids and Friends hosted an event in the Los Angeles area.

Everyone that signed up to go on a plane ride was required to attend the brief educational ground school provided at the event by Challenge Air. The participants were given basic information on the instrument panel, what to do when taking the controls if it would be appropriate for the pilot to let them experience that, and what else to expect on their 30-minute flight!

As people were eagerly (and anxiously) awaiting their flight time, there was a variety of fun activities to keep them busy. They could take a turn sitting in the stationary cockpit of a jet plane and check out all the controls, get their face painted, make some crafts, enjoy free

nachos and snow cones, listen to and even dance to the great tunes that the D.J. played. Tasty lunches were served compliments of In-N-Out Burger.

Along with Challenge Air staff, more than 20 local pilots volunteered their planes and their time to help make this event a huge success. When the flights started, the action was non-stop on the runway, in the control tower and in the sky. It was a beautiful day for flying and fairly smooth skies until the Santa Ana winds picked up in the early afternoon, which made for some very bumpy rides! While HRC client Kelly Navarro was flying high, she was also given a lesson on the plane's equipment by the pilot. Seventeen-year-old Kelly said that her first experience in a small plane was "out of this world!"

To see the looks of excitement and appreciation on the faces of everyone there, it was obvious that Rick Amber's mission had once again been successfully accomplished. His belief in the benefits of his organization was summed up when he once said, "*The human spirit prevails over any physical or mental obstacle. After a day with Challenge Air, no height seems unreachable...all it takes is desire and truly, the sky is the limit!*" ■



*Shown above with their pilots; Kelly Navarro (top), Jason Martinez and Sean Tamer (bottom) enjoyed a high-flying experience over L.A.*

## JUDITH CERVANTES: Riding Happily Into The Future

*By Pat Hevessey, RN, HRC Nurse*

We first met Judith when she was in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), where she had spent the first three months of her life. She had been born at only 26 weeks gestation and weighed well under 2 lbs. She had many very serious respiratory problems, including recurrent collapsing of her lungs. A tracheostomy tube placed into her neck allowed Judith to be weaned from the ventilator, and her parents took their little girl home with a suction machine, oxygen, apnea monitor, and multiple medications. Over the next

year they would face more hospitalizations, and Judith would need to use a ventilator and many hours of nursing care each day, but she was able to come home with her family.

If Judith had been

born in earlier times, if she had survived, she would not have been so lucky. She would have had no alternative but to live in a hospital. It wasn't so long ago that there were no home ventilators, and no programs to support children and families with such serious health needs. Her developmental needs would have been neglected.



Now hospitals have home ventilator programs, and home ventilators the size of a laptop computer can be put in the back of a stroller. HRC Counselors and Nurses have assisted many families like Judith's to access in-home nursing through private insurance, Medi-Cal, and for those who are not financially eligible for Medi-Cal, through special programs referred to as waivers and institutional deeming.

Judith was always a very alert, social, and curious child, and with the help of her in-home nursing care and early childhood developmental services, she never let her dependence on a ventilator get in her way. She met all of her developmental milestones at appropriate times, and sometimes sooner. By the end of 2005, Judith only needed the ventilator at night, and since the summer of 2006, has been off the ventilator completely.

By the time she reached her 3rd birthday, she was ready to leave Harbor Regional Center. But we were very happy to have the opportunity recently to check in and see how she was doing.

Today, at the age of 4, Judith attends an inclusive preschool class of children with and without special needs at Catskill School, accompanied by a nurse. She continues to be eligible for speech and language services through her school district. She wears a tracheostomy plug during the day, is bubbly and outgoing, and a regular chatterbox who will explain what her trach is to anyone who asks. She is learning how to read and spell words, and has been computer savvy for two years. Her artwork adorns her walls at home, and she is proud to demonstrate how well she can ride her bike.

Judith will be evaluated this spring to see if her tracheostomy can safely be removed. We join her family in their hopes for Judith – to have the trach removed, to be healthy and happy – and in their pride in Judith's many successes. ■

# Shop Till You Drop

## at Macy's Community Shopping Day And Support the Harbor Help Fund!



Harbor Regional Center will once again be participating in Macy's Community Shopping Day on Saturday, June 21, 2008. Along with the terrific discounts of 10-20% that you'll receive on merchandise when you purchase your \$10.00 ticket, you will also be given the opportunity to pre-shop one week prior to the event and pick up your purchases up to five days after the event, all while receiving the discounts advertised on your ticket! Included on this year's ticket is a \$10.00 off certificate that can be used on a purchase of \$25.00 or more.

Best of all, all of the money from the ticket sales will go directly to the Harbor Help Fund! The Harbor Help Fund provides emergency support for our clients of all ages with developmental disabilities. The money is also used to help support our Holidays Are For Sharing program that directly benefits our clients and their families. For more information about Harbor Regional Center, look us up on the Web at: [www.harborrc.org](http://www.harborrc.org)

You can order your ticket(s) by using the mail-in form below. For more information, please call Kerry Ryerson at (310) 543-0686.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- Enclosed is my check payable to Harbor Help Fund.
- Please charge to my Visa or MasterCard.

My name as it appears on my credit card is \_\_\_\_\_

My credit card number and expiration date are \_\_\_\_\_

Mail orders for tickets must be received by Friday, June 6, 2008, or call to arrange pick-up of tickets:

Kerry Ryerson  
Office of Information and Development  
21231 Hawthorne Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90503  
Phone: (310) 543-0686  
FAX: (310) 540-9538 or  
e-mail to: [Kerry.Ryerson@harborrc.org](mailto:Kerry.Ryerson@harborrc.org)

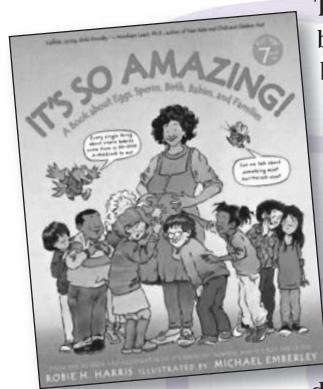
# resource center

## WHAT'S NEW AT THE RESOURCE CENTER?

*By Dominique Deborba*

Everyone has to do it – and nobody wants to talk about it. Personally, I don't know a single parent who's comfortable with it. What am I talking about? The dreaded talk...the facts of life! Most adults don't know quite how to talk to kids about puberty and sex. Parents usually teach their children based on how they themselves were taught, but if parents weren't taught these subjects by their own parents, they have no model to draw from when teaching their children. The subject gets even trickier when you're trying to teach this subject to kids with developmental disabilities. That's where the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center can help! Recently we received several new items on this topic that should provide more than enough support for parents looking for help in discussing sexuality with their kids. Here's a small preview:

**It's So Amazing!** By Robbie H. Harris –

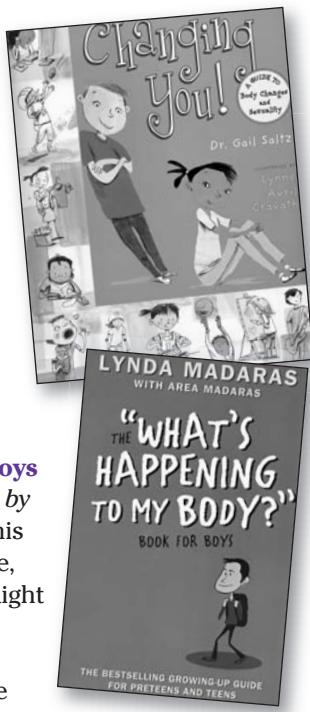


This illustrated book uses bird and bee cartoon characters to present straightforward explanations of topics related to sexual development, love, reproduction, adoption, sexually transmitted diseases, and more.

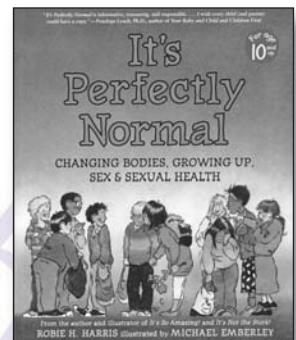
**Changing You! A guide to body changes and sexuality** by Dr. Gail Saltz – In this illustrated book the author navigates

curious youngsters through anatomy, body changes for boys and girls, sexual intercourse, reproduction, and emerging sexuality.

The “**What's Happening to my Body?**” Book for Boys and Book for Girls by Lynda Madaras – This book gives sensitive, nonjudgmental straight talk on the body's changing size and shape, reproductive organs, etc. Included are sections on eating right, exercise, and important information about AIDS & STDs.

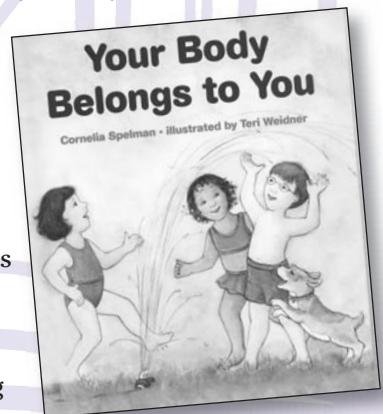


**It's Perfectly Normal** by Robbie H. Harris – This book provides accurate, unbiased answers to nearly every conceivable question, from conception and puberty to birth control and AIDS. It also offers young people the real information they need to make responsible decisions and to stay healthy.



**Your Body Belongs to You and Who Is a Stranger and What Should I Do?**

Both of these items can be especially helpful for both children and adult clients for learning about safety and prevention of exploitation.



## SPOTLIGHT ON PARENT MENTORS!

*By Dominique DeBorba  
HRC Resource and Assistive  
Technology Center*

### Do You Need Parent to Parent Support?

Parents have always served as mentors to one another. I can remember when my daughter was a baby, being in a playgroup, swapping stories and advice with the other moms. What a great place it was to be if you had a typically developing child! I also remember feeling alone and isolated as her development began to lag behind the other kids. The other moms' stories and advice no longer applied to me. I needed to talk to someone who had walked in similar shoes. I was referred to a parent mentor by my daughter's HRC Counselor. Suddenly I had someone who understood my concerns – who knew what I was talking about.

Fast forward 18 years and now I'm coordinating the Parent Mentor program here at Harbor! This program matches HRC parents with trained parent mentors to provide peer support. We have many dedicated mentors who are available on an on-call basis for all of our Harbor Regional Center families. HRC mentor Mike Magdaleno, who has a 16-year-old son with autism, first heard about the mentoring program in a newsletter similar to this one. "It was a no-brainer for me," he said. "I thought on how lost I felt when I first found out my son was autistic. So alone, scared, not sure who to turn to, dreams and hopes dashed in a single diagnosis. I also thought how great it would be to have someone to talk to. The chance to be that person is something I treasure. I truly have the feeling that I am giving back to the community I know and love, parents of autistic children. The highs have been the times when men felt comfortable

opening up and talking about how they are doing getting services for their children. I understand that at times men have a hard time asking for help. Maybe that is why men never ask for directions!"

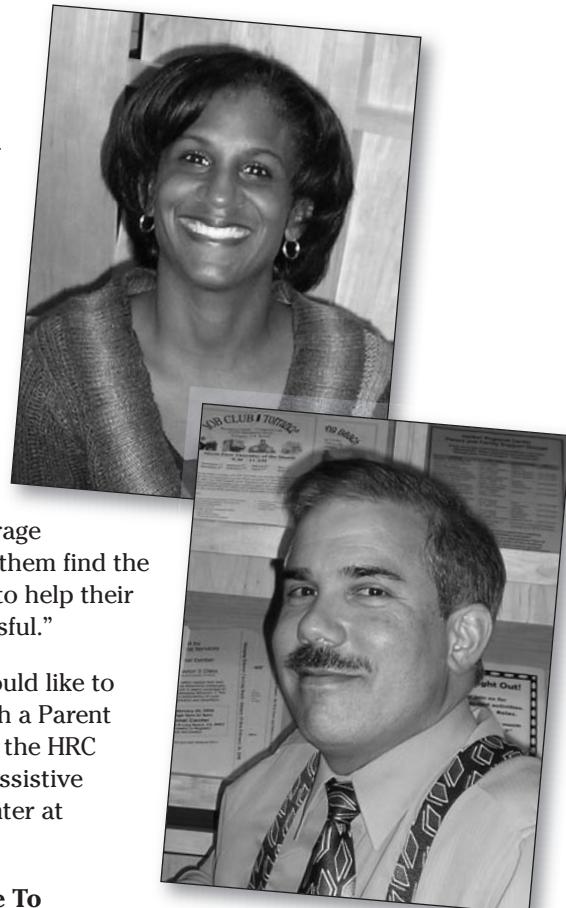
Another one of our mentors, Jayna Davis, said "I am so honored to be a Parent Mentor. It is a privilege for me to help someone who has a child that has just gotten a diagnosis of autism. I know when my child was first diagnosed I felt alone and needed someone to talk to. There was no one to call. Parents do not have to be alone anymore! We are here for them, ready to share our stories with them, to encourage them, and help them find the best resources to help their child be successful."

Parents who would like to be matched with a Parent Mentor can call the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center at (310) 543-0691.

#### Would You Like To Become a Trained Parent Mentor?

Just call the number above for information or to register!

**Parent to Parent Mentor Training**  
**Saturday, April 26, 2008**  
**10:00 am to 2:00 pm**  
**Harbor Regional Center**  
**21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance**  
**Conference Room A1**



*Parent Mentors  
Jayna Davis and  
Mike Magdaleno  
are eager to share  
valuable insight and  
support with fellow  
parents.*

## MEET OUR BOARD

### Rhiannon Acree



Rhiannon Acree is now in her third year as a member of HRC's Board of Trustees, and her fourth year as chairperson of the Service Provider Advisory Committee, but she has been an important partner for Harbor Regional Center for many more years.

As President and Administrator for Cambrian Homecare, Rhiannon has helped to provide leadership in the service provider community since 1996. Cambrian has grown from a tiny office in a hospital to now providing excellent respite services for hundreds of regional center clients and their families.

Rhiannon was born and raised in Wales and England. During her early education as a nurse, Rhiannon observed how her patients thrived when in the home and community, with support for the maximum degree of independence possible. The word Cambrian describes a period in

history, and is all about growth and evolution; Cambrian has certainly grown and evolved with the times, in partnership with HRC. Rhiannon reflects that together we have "gone through good times and bad times. We've laughed together and cried together," witnessing more than one state budget crisis. During one such budget crisis, when HRC was required to find ways, in partnership with our community, to reduce expenditures, Cambrian donated \$100,000 in services to HRC families.

When HRC developed a comprehensive training curriculum for respite caregivers to continuously improve the quality of services and help families feel more confident in utilizing in-home care services for their family, Rhiannon and her staff thoroughly embraced the new program. Today, Cambrian remains a model, as the agency has continued to evolve and improve the quality of the services they offer. Indeed, HRC often hears from parents about the high caliber of Cambrian staff, noting that many are "like family."

As a Board member and Chairperson of the Service Provider Advisory Committee, Rhiannon observes, "I found a very dedicated group of people. It is like representing a group of champions, all in their own way. My job is to allow for a platform for creative ideas and opinions, and to represent these on the Board." More recently, she joined us to share the experiences of our clients, families and service providers when we paid visits to our legislators in Sacramento.

Rhiannon also helped HRC to develop our Business Advisory Committee. As an employer of seven individuals with developmental disabilities, both in the Cambrian office, and as caregivers providing homemaking services for seniors, she has provided an inspirational example for other employers.

We are proud to have Rhiannon Acree as a service provider and Board Member for Harbor Regional Center, and we look forward to many more years of partnership and evolution. ■

## SEARCHING THE INTERNET HELPS SUPPORT THE HARBOR HELP FUND

What if you knew that every time you used a search engine to search the Internet, a small donation would be made to the Harbor Help Fund? That is the concept behind GoodSearch.

Use it in place of other major search engines. It is powered by Yahoo, so you get the same results. Each time you search, proceeds raised from Yahoo advertisers through your use of GoodSearch will go to the Harbor Help Fund – without your spending a dime!

Here's how you can start supporting the Harbor Help Fund as you search.

- You can go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and download the GoodSearch link to your toolbar for everyday use. OR,

- The Harbor Regional Center Web site has a link on our Home Page to the GoodSearch Internet site.

When you go to the GoodSearch site, you will see the question, "Who Do You GoodSearch for?" Simply enter Harbor Regional Center's name in the box, and click to "Verify."

Your support for the Harbor Help Fund, whether by using GoodSearch or by making a monetary contribution at any time, helps us to provide extra assistance for our clients and families in need. The Harbor Help Fund provides such things as emergency rent payments, clothing, food, shelter and other necessities, as well as our annual holiday giving program.

We hope you will use GoodSearch to help us to do more good for our clients and families! ■



### 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 considerately, 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: Office of Information and Development, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 or by e-mail at [cheryl.perez@harborrc.org](mailto:cheryl.perez@harborrc.org)

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: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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



*Sean Tamer is interviewed by HRC Counselor Niima Radford.*

## HRC CONDUCTING A PILOT STUDY OF INTERNATIONALLY-KNOWN PLANNING TOOL

Have you heard about the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)? SIS is a comprehensive tool developed by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). It was developed by experts in the field who are committed to expanding and enhancing the participation of individuals with intellectual disability in society.

It is currently being used in 11 states (such as Florida, Washington and Pennsylvania), two Canadian provinces, and several countries such as Spain, Japan, the Netherlands, Italy and Taiwan.

What is unique about the Supports Intensity Scale? The Supports Intensity Scale measures what type, intensity and frequency of supports an adult needs with everyday life tasks and activities.

The SIS objectively measures an individual's support needs in 57 life activities. Areas such as home living, community living, lifelong learning, employment, health & safety and protection/advocacy are examined as well as support needs in 28 behavioral and medical areas. The assessment is completed in an interview with the client and with those individuals who know the client well.

At HRC, a team of 20 interviewers, including selected counselors, program managers and supported living service providers successfully completed rigorous training to become competent SIS interviewers. They are currently working to complete over 200 interviews. During April, HRC will be evaluating the data collected and hearing the experiences of interviewers and clients to make recommendations about the use of the Supports Intensity Scale for the future. ■

## A NIGHT AT THE ORPHEUM HOPE's Spring Fundraiser

HOPE will hold its annual fundraiser this year at the Orpheum Theatre in the Broadway district of downtown Los Angeles on Saturday, May 10, 2008 from 6:00-10:00 p.m. The Orpheum Theatre is an 80-year-old venue with a history of hosting entertainers such as Judy Garland, Jack Benny, the Marx Brothers, Count Basie and "Sir Duke" Ellington, Lena Horne, early rock 'n roll acts such as Little Richard and, in recent years, American Idol. The 1928 pipe organ will be played throughout the evening. A Live and Silent Auction are part of the evening program. Individual tickets are \$150.00. If you have an auction item you might like to donate, or

would like to purchase individual tickets, please contact Jennifer Byram, HOPE Fund Raising Staff at: (310) 543-0635.

HOPE is having the Hawaiian Vacation Opportunity Drawing for two. The winner will receive a \$2,500 gift certificate from Pleasant Hawaiian Holidays they can apply to a trip to Oahu, Maui, Kauai, or the Big Island. Tickets are \$5.00 each, 5 for \$20.00, and 10 for \$30.00. The trip was made possible through a gift from Heinrich and Merci Gonzales, Del Sol Homes, Inc. The drawing will take place at "A Night at the Orpheum" on May 10. ■



## DID YOU KNOW?

**People with disabilities are eligible for economic stimulus payments, if their 2007 income was \$3,000 or more, (not including SSI).**

People with disabilities, as well as retirees and low-wage workers, who usually are exempt from filing a tax return may file a 1040A Tax Form this year in order to receive a stimulus payment. These taxpayers will be eligible to receive a payment of \$300 (\$600 on a joint return) if they had at least \$3,000 of qualifying income.

According to the IRS Web site: To receive a payment, taxpayers must have a valid Social Security number, at least \$3,000 of income and file a 2007 federal tax return. It's not taxable, and it won't reduce your 2007 or 2008 refund or increase the amount you owe when you file your 2008 return. Qualifying income includes any combination of earned income and certain benefits from Social Security, Veterans Affairs or Railroad Retirement.

For more information, an online calculator, tax forms, etc., go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). File as soon as possible, but no later than October 15, 2008.

## CONSEJOS PARA LA PRIMERA INFANCIA

### Serie de Capacitación sobre Desarrollo Infantil

### Para las familias con infantes y niños pequeños

Si su hijo es un infante o un niño pequeño, venga a participar con nosotros en estas capacitaciones mensuales concentradas en el desarrollo de su hijo. Inmediatamente después de las capacitaciones, el Centro de Recursos y de Tecnología de Apoyo Auxiliar del centro regional HRC les ofrecerá una visita guiada especial. Para obtener más información y para inscribirse en estas capacitaciones, favor de comunicarse con Vel Roman al (310) 792-4569. Si necesitara cuidado de niños para asistir a estas sesiones, por favor llame a Rosa Olea al (310) 543-0651 al menos tres días antes de la fecha de la sesión. Estas clases se llevarán a cabo en las siguientes localidades.

#### **CENTRO REGIONAL HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER, TORRANCE**

**Primer jueves del mes**

**9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.**

**Salón de reuniones A2, Edificio A,  
Primer piso**

#### **1 de Mayo y 4 de Diciembre, 2008 Cómo Establecer las Rutinas**

Rebecca Asdel, Gerente, Servicios de la Conducta para las Familias  
Aprenda a establecer el horario para las comidas, para jugar, bañarse e ir a dormir que ayudarán a que su niño aprenda aptitudes para la vida diaria, y que harán que su vida se desarrolle sin problemas. Reciba consejos que usará en su hogar para programar las rutinas familiares.

#### **5 de Junio & 6 de Noviembre, 2008**

#### **Desarrollo Infantil: ¿Qué Etapa Vendrá Despues? Pam Hellmann, MA, OTR/L**

Aprenda sobre las etapas de la primera infancia, y reciba un juguete que llevará a su hogar, y le ayudará a estimular el desarrollo de su niño.

#### **3 de Julio, 2008**

#### **Alimento para el Pensamiento. Pat Hevessey, R.N.**

Aprenda sobre la nutrición para los niños pequeños, y reciba un paquete con refrigerios para los niños y folletos con información nutricional que se podrá llevar a su hogar, para que le ayuden a promover el desarrollo de su niño.

#### **7 de Agosto, 2008**

#### **Aprender a Hablar.**

**Maureen Fondevilla-Perez,  
M.S., CCC-SLP**

Los participantes aprenderán actividades para practicar con sus hijos, y recibirán un juguete que llevará a su hogar, y que ayudará a estimular el desarrollo del lenguaje de su niño.

#### **4 de Septiembre, 2008**

#### **Aprenda a Jugar con su Niño Vel Roman, Consejero Inicial de la Primera Infancia**

Aprenda a usar los juguetes, y reciba un folleto sobre los juguetes para promover el desarrollo, que se llevará a su hogar y le ayudará a estimular el desarrollo de su niño.

#### **2 de Octubre, 2008**

#### **Lectura Compartida. Barbara del Monico, Gerente del Centro de Recursos de HRC**

Aprenda los beneficios de la lectura compartida, y reciba un libro de cuentos para llevar a su hogar y apoyar el desarrollo de las habilidades de su niño en lenguaje.

*Consejos Para La Primera  
(continúa en la pagina 19)*

**CENTRO DE CAPACITACIÓN  
DE HRC EN LONG BEACH**  
**9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.**  
**1155 E. San Antonio Drive**  
**Long Beach, CA 90807**

**6 de Mayo y 4 de Noviembre, 2008**

**Aprender a Hablar. Maureen  
Fondevilla-Perez, MS, CCC-SLP**

Los participantes aprenderán actividades que podrán hacer con sus hijos, y recibirán un juguete que se podrá llevar a su hogar, para promover el desarrollo del lenguaje de su niño.

**8 de Julio, 2008**

**Cómo Llevar Buenos Expedientes  
Sobre Mi Niño. Barbara Guzman,  
Gerente del Programa**

Aprenda de los consejos para organizar los expedientes médicos, escolares, etc. Cada participante recibirá una carpeta familiar del centro HRC para organizar los expedientes importantes de su niño.

**9 de Septiembre, 2008**

**Aprender a Jugar con su Hijos –  
Vel Roman, Consejero Inicial  
de la Primera Infancia**

Aprenda a Jugar con su Niño  
Vel Roman, Consejero Inicial

Aprenda a usar los juguetes, y reciba un folleto sobre los juguetes para promover el desarrollo, que se llevará a su hogar y le ayudará a estimular el desarrollo de su niño. ■

## **LA GAMA DE SERVICIOS CON RESPETO AL AUTISMO**

**6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

**El 28 de Mayo de 2008**

**Presentado por Unidad Y Fuerza  
Miller Children's Hospital, Long Beach**

Esta presentación resumirá brevemente los diferentes tipos de servicios de Intervención del Comportamiento Intensivos disponibles en su comunidad. Recibirá una visión general de las teorías y metodologías que se usan en cada tipo de intervención.

Abierto a todos los padres interesados, sin importar si usted es un miembro del grupo de apoyo. Presentado por Lindsay Hoffman, M.S. Favor de registrarse para esta sesión llamando al Centro de Recursos de HRC al (310) 543-0691. El cuidado de niños está disponible solo si usted reserva de antemano llamando a Rosa Olea al (310) 543-0651 por lo menos 3 días antes de la junta. El espacio para el cuidado de niños es limitado. ■

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## BOARD MEETINGS

May 20, 2008, 8:00 a.m.  
No Meeting in June  
July 15, 2008, 6:30 p.m.

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

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 & A2 at Harbor Regional Center. ■

**Join the HRC E-mail Network!** Receive e-mail bulletins from HRC. Simply send an e-mail to [Nancy.Spiegel@harborrc.org](mailto:Nancy.Spiegel@harborrc.org), provide us with your name and your e-mail address, and ask to be added to our electronic mailing list.

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

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Diana Janas

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[www.harborrc.org](http://www.harborrc.org)

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