



HARBOR HAPPENINGS

A PUBLICATION OF HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER

WINTER 2007-08

CONTINUED HEALTH CARE COVERAGE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law a bill authored by Assemblymember Betty Karnette (D-Long Beach) that will help parents of disabled children maintain their child's health care coverage into adulthood.



Governor Schwarzenegger, (shown here with Izamaya Nuñez, who has Down syndrome), signed the health care coverage bill into law.



Assemblymember Betty Karnette (Long Beach) authored legislation inspired by her experiences as a parent of a daughter with a developmental disability.

Although existing law already allowed parents to continue their health care insurance coverage for their adult disabled child beyond the age when typical children would no longer be covered, most parents do not know this option was available to them.

Parents who have been unaware that this continued coverage was avail-

able have missed the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage for their adult disabled children.

This bill enhances the existing law, by requiring health plans to notify parents, at least 90 days before their child "ages out" of their health plan, so that they may be able to provide proof of disability, and continue coverage.

This bill also requires all health plans and providers to continue coverage of a disabled dependent child if the parent changes health care providers, and the child has been deemed eligible by the previous provider. This is designed to ensure that a parent who gets a new job with different health coverage, won't be faced with the prospect that the new plan won't allow his or her disabled child to be covered.

"As a parent of a developmentally-disabled daughter, I can tell you that parents of children with substantial physical or mental needs are often so busy that they miss the little things," said Karnette. "Most people are unaware of their current option to maintain their disabled child's health care coverage after aging out. I am hopeful that creating this notification process will allow more parents in this situation to keep their child's health care coverage intact." ■

MEET HRC'S SPECIAL EDUCATION LEGAL CONSULTANT Benjamin Kim

by Steven Roberts, HRC Manager of Rights Assurance



HRC families and staff find Attorney Benjamin Kim to be friendly, insightful, and accessible as he shares his legal expertise.

Harbor Regional Center seeks to provide meaningful consultation services for our families, and to that end we have had the pleasure of offering special education consultation sessions of a local attorney, Mr. Ben Kim, during the past year.

Mr. Kim has dedicated much of his practice to securing the rights of individuals with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and related California civil rights laws.

As an attorney with over 20 years of experience, Mr. Kim has an extensive background in disability rights laws. He has served as a former litigation director of a disability rights public interest law firm, an adjunct professor of law at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, special educa-

tion counsel for school districts, and currently has a private practice representing individuals with disabilities.

During the past year, Mr. Kim has met with families to address concerns relating to general special education rights and responsibilities, school and classroom placement (including the right to be educated in the least restrictive environment with supplementary aids and services), as well as related service issues and due process procedures, including document drafting assistance.

Consultation sessions are attended by families, clients and their Counselor. In addition to providing valuable knowledge to families and clients, HRC Counselors can use the knowledge gained during the consultation in their advocacy efforts at IEP team meetings. Families may schedule follow-up meetings with Mr. Kim to discuss issues that may have developed since the initial consultation.

For families seeking to meet with Mr. Kim, he is available for consultation sessions every Monday and Tuesday. You may schedule a consultation with Mr. Kim by calling your Counselor. It is helpful to bring the most recent school documents to your scheduled meeting. ■

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

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.

MEET OUR BOARD: Gary Galosic

In our continuing series of articles acquainting you with members of Harbor Regional Center's Board of Trustees, we'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to Board Member Gary Galosic.

Gary has been a valued member of the HRC Board since 2004. He also receives services from Harbor Regional Center, due to a genetic disorder known as Pelizaeus-Mertzbacher disease.

He has always lived in Southern California, and graduated from high school in 1989 in San Diego. He obtained an Associate of Arts degree in Liberal Studies from Los Angeles Harbor College. He went on to attend California State University Northridge, where he majored in Office Systems. There he had his first experience living on his own in a college dorm.

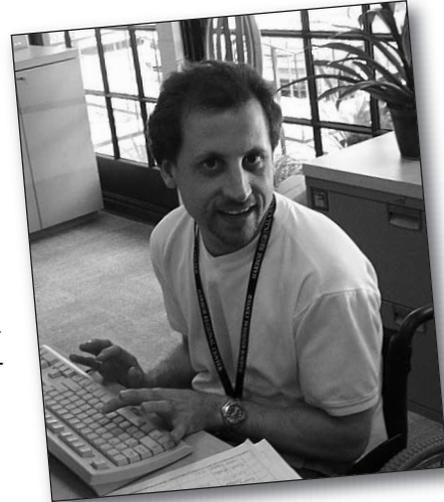
His long-term goals include working full-time with computers, and living on his own, or with a roommate. Currently, he shares a comfortable townhouse with his mother in Rancho Palos Verdes, and enjoys volunteer work at the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center.

At the resource center, Gary assists the patrons and staff in any way he can. He is quite adept at checking books in and out for patrons, cataloguing books into the library database, and keeping other records up to date for the center.

Currently, you can find him greeting visitors to the Resource Center Tuesdays through Fridays. He enjoys this opportunity to be out in the community and to gain work experience in such a friendly work environment.

As a member of the Board he appreciates that "it gives me an overall picture of what's going on at Harbor Regional Center." He added that, "Mostly I listen, but I can give my input, too."

All of the members of the HRC board and staff truly enjoy having Gary on the team, and we're sure that the visitors to the Resource Center especially appreciate his helpful presence. Thanks, Gary! ■



Gary Galosic is a valuable contributor and a friendly presence at Board meetings and the Resource Center.

HRC HITS THE AIRWAVES ON RADIO DISNEY TO PROMOTE AWARENESS

When Justine Mendoza, age 9, and Alyssa Metcalf, 15, who has autism, lent their voice talents at Radio Disney, they helped HRC to promote awareness of developmental disabilities. The radio spot, heard by Radio Disney's huge audience of children and families throughout Southern California, reminded listeners that children with developmental disabilities want to be included in activities with their peers, and encouraged typical children to reach out with their friendship. After a quick tour of the Radio Disney studio, Justine and Alyssa both hurried home to tune in and hear their very worthwhile message play over the airwaves.

Adult HRC client Pha Prum also joined staff members Nancy Spiegel and Kerry Ryerson to be interviewed for Radio Disney's Community Playground program. Pha explained how he has been supported by HRC over the years, leading to his current successes working in the HRC Resource & Assistive Technology Center, living in his own apartment, chairing the Client Advisory Committee, and serving on the HOPE Board. ■



After only one practice take, Justine and Alyssa recorded their Radio Disney spot just like pros!

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER PERFORMANCE PLAN 2008

Harbor Regional Center has developed a new Performance Plan for 2008. This plan has been developed to address desired policy outcomes identified for all regional centers by the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS). HRC currently meets the DDS criteria for success in all desired outcomes, either by having improved our performance over the prior year, or by having exceeded the statewide average for a given outcome. Following a period of public input, Harbor Regional Center has identified the actions or planned activities we will take in 2008 to maintain and further enhance our performance.

Public Policy Outcomes

Public Policy Measures	Statewide Average	HRC Baseline	Planned Activities 2008
Percent of clients in State Developmental Centers (lower is better)	6/06 1.4%	6/06 1.5% 138 clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement the 2007-2008 Community Placement Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to assist developmental center residents to move into the community. - Continue development of new homes in HRC area to serve individuals with intensive health and behavioral needs. - Continue development of 5 more homes in greater region by 2008, in collaboration with So. California Regional Centers. - Continued coordination with HOPE for the development of affordable housing options.
	6/07 1.27%	6/07 1.38% 128 clients	
Percent of minors living with families (includes own family, foster family, and guardian). (higher is better)	6/06 97.73%	6/06 98.53% 4774 children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to provide family support such as respite, consultation in behavior management, toilet training, social & adaptive skill development, etc. ■ Continue to identify and promote best practices in assessment and treatment of autism, to include research funded by Wellness Grant. ■ Continue to provide coordination and technical assistance for the ongoing operation of support groups for parents, siblings, and other family members.
	6/07 97.95%	6/07 98.89% 4906 children	
Percent of adults living in home settings (independent & supported living and with parent) (higher is better)	6/06 70.42%	6/06 72.87% 2971 adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to coordinate with HOPE program for the development of affordable housing options. ■ Continue to provide training for supported living service providers to promote client health and safety. ■ Continue to develop innovative day activity programs, to provide increased options for daytime support. ■ Continue to provide training for parents of adults and young adults in transition regarding service and support options.
	6/07 71.02%	6/07 72.68% 3027 adults	
Percent of minors living in licensed homes serving greater than 6 (lower is better)	6/06 0.20%	6/06 0.00% no children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to encourage development of homes for four or fewer children, including children with special health needs. ■ Continue to provide training and information for families of minors regarding available living options.
	6/07 0.17%	6/07 0.02% 1 child in nursing care	
Percent of adults living in licensed homes serving greater than 6 (lower is better)	6/06 5.53%	6/06 3.97% 162 adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to encourage development of homes for four or fewer adults, including adults with special health or behavioral needs. ■ Assess adults living in settings serving greater than 6, and identify less restrictive living options whenever possible. ■ Continue to provide training and information for adults and their families regarding available living options.
	6/07 5.22%	6/07 3.99% 166 adults	

Local Policy Outcomes

Local Policy Measures	Planned Activities
<p>Assist Clients, Families and Service Providers to be well-informed, active and successful participants in client/family-centered services.</p> <p>Baseline</p> <p>In addition to ongoing publication of our newsletter, Web site, and training calendar, HRC developed in 2006/07:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updated overview of regional center services (booklet & DVD) • guide to learning in natural environments • early childhood services guide & organizer notebook • a client cookbook • updated parent guide to assessments • historical overview of service system • guide to family support at HRC • Regional Center referral brochure for adolescent (transition) students • updated guide for new applicants <p>The Resource Center is visited by an average of 150 users/month, and now offers a library of 5828 books, videos, DVDs, CDs and other media, and 40 developmental toys for loan. More than 200 items/month are checked out by clients, families and community service providers.</p> <p>The Computer Lab serves 20 adults and 10 children per month.</p> <p>The A.T. Lab provides 8 evaluations per month and provides a monthly users group for 14 adults.</p> <p>HRC offered 90 training opportunities for clients, families, and service providers per semester (July-December 06).</p> <p>The Resource Center also coordinates 10 family support groups at this time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to develop HRC Web site, newsletter, booklets and videos as source of comprehensive, user-friendly information regarding resources, challenges, and examples of client, family & service successes in our community. ■ Continue to operate a comprehensive, multi-media Resource Center, including a library, assistive technology lab, adaptive computer lab, lap-reading and developmental toy programs. ■ Offer an array of training opportunities for clients, families and service providers throughout the year.

Public Policy Outcomes for which Statewide Measurement Methodology is Under Development

Measures	Statewide Measures	Planned Activities
Number and percent of adults with earned income and average wage (aggregate)	Statewide data collection methodology under development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurement methodology is under development.
Number and percent of adults in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supported employment competitive employment 	Statewide data collection methodology under development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue coordination with supported employment service providers and Department of Rehabilitation to promote development of supported and competitive employment opportunities. Continue coordination with school districts and families, to promote student participation in work experience programs such as Workability, and successful transition to inclusive adult service options. Work with newly-established Business Advisory Council to promote employment opportunities. Continue to provide training for parents of young adults in transition to adulthood, regarding service and support options.
Access to medical and dental services	Statewide data collection methodology under development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to assist clients and families to access medical support resources such as Medi-Cal, PRUCOL, Institutional Deeming, etc. Continue to provide individual assessments of clients' health, mental health, and dental needs, provide referral to local health providers, and coordinate follow-up as needed. Distribute health and nutrition materials developed through Get Fit! Wellness grant, to adults, their families, and their service providers. Continue to provide training and information for clients, families, and service providers to promote client health, wellness, and access to health resources in the community.
Number of consumers per 1,000 who are victims of abuse	Statewide data collection methodology under development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer training for clients and families to increase awareness, promote safety, and prevent exploitation and abuse of clients. Continue to provide information for service providers to increase awareness, promote safety, and prevent exploitation and abuse of clients.

Compliance Measures

Compliance Measures	Statewide Measures	HRC Baseline	Planned Activities
Unqualified independent audit with no material findings	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue generally accepted accounting principles. Maintain good business practices.
Substantial compliance with DDS fiscal audit	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue generally accepted accounting principles. Maintain good business practices.
Accuracy percent of POS fiscal projections (based upon February SOAR)	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain accuracy of POS fiscal projections based upon history and ongoing utilization review.
Operates within OPS budget	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Operations budget planning, ongoing utilization review, and periodic adjustments as needed.
Certified to participate in Waiver	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain compliance with Medicaid Waiver requirements.
Compliance with Vendor Audit per contract Article III Section 10	Yes/No	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain compliance with contract.
Individuals with Current CDER or ESR(Client Development Evaluation Report or Early Start Report)	6/06 95.53% 6/07 95.88%	6/06 94.78% 8,456 6/07 94.74% 8,646	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor timely completion of CDER/ESR.
Intake/assessment and IFSP timelines (0-3)	Statewide data collection methodology under development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide timely completion of intake/assessment for clients under 3 years of age.
Intake/assessment and IFSP timelines, 3 and above, 142 days or less	6/06 95.05% 6/07 95.35%	6/06 99.61% 257 applicants 6/07 100% 235 applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide timely completion of intake/assessment for clients 3 years of age and above.
143-240 days	6/06 4.03% 6/07 3.66%	6/06 0.39% (1) 6/07 0.00%	
Over 240 days	6/06 1.77% 6/07 .99%	6/06 0.00% 6/07 0.00%	
IPP Development (Welfare and Institutions Code requirements)	Not available	6/06 99.06% 6/07 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to comply with all requirements of the Welfare and Institutions Code for timely completion of Individual/Family Service Plans for clients receiving services under the Lanterman Act.
IFSP Development (Title 17 requirements)	Not available	As of last Early Start Audit '05 87.50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to comply with all requirements of Title 17 for timely completion of Individual/Family Service Plans for children receiving early intervention services.

DODGERS FIELD A DREAM FOR HRC CLIENTS

The crack of the bat, the smell of freshly-cut grass – for a kid, there’s nothing quite like a summer day spent on a ball field, rounding the bases and heading into home. And what greater thrill than to spend a summer day with a real-life Dodger? Thanks to the LA Dodger Dream Foundation, Bank of America and the El Segundo Little League, 25 young people with developmental disabilities experienced such a thrill!

Three Dodgers came to the South Bay to offer a few baseball tips to a group of young ball players – members of the El Segundo and Manhattan Beach Challenger Little League teams, a division made up of kids with special needs.

There were 25 Challenger players on the field ranging in age from 5 to 28 years.

Dodgers Bobby Castillo (top) and Dave Jauss (bottom) prepare the next star players.



These players may have autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy or spina bifida, and some are wheelchair users. Each player was paired up with a buddy from area Little League teams. These buddies assisted the players if needed to navigate through the three stations set up by the Dodgers to provide instruction on hitting, pitching and outfield fundamentals.

One buddy, 12-year-old Evan Sharp of El Segundo said, “It’s pretty fun helping out. I can’t really explain it. I want them to feel the same way we do when we win or do a great play.”

Each player was given a Play Ball LA t-shirt and a Dodgers cap. After the morning welcome and several group pictures, the Dodgers went to their stations and the real fun began. Dave Jauss, Dodger bench coach, was stationed near home plate where he gave instruction on hitting. Just past 1st base, Bobby Castillo, former pitcher who played for the Dodgers for six years, was instructing the players on their pitching skills. In the outfield, Andre Eithier, Dodger right fielder, helped the participants work on their throwing techniques with energizing enthusiasm!

The Challenger players and their buddies rotated a few times through each station. Bobby Castillo commented on the players’ abilities saying, “We’ve got a lot of little Fernandos out there!” (referring to Dodger pitching great Fernando Valenzuela). “They’re doing awesome!” Dodger Dave Jauss said. “This is what giving is all about and I wish I’d have more to give to these young people.” He also said that he wanted to share something he loves with others. “Any time you get on a field of grass, it’s a blast!”

Jauss was right; the day was a blast for everyone. The Dodgers wrapped up the day by autographing baseballs for all of the participants and after enjoying a hearty lunch, the happy but tired ball players retired from the field.

Adapted with permission from Josh Grossberg of the Daily Breeze ■

FAMILY *matters*

SUPPORTING EARLY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT Activities for Caregivers and Young Children

Washington Learning Systems is offering a free series of materials on the Internet that encourage early language and literacy development in young children, for use in everyday environments and activities. The development of these materials was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. These materials are appropriate for children with disabilities as well as children who are developing typically. We are pleased to include one of these learning modules for you at right. To obtain more of these materials, in English and Spanish, go to <http://www.wlearning.com/>, and click on the purple button that says "Free Parent Education Handouts."

Ask Your Child Questions About Food:

- What color is it?
- How does that taste?
- How does it smell?
- What do you like the best?

To help your child succeed, you can:

- Talk about how food tastes, smells and feels.
- Ask your child simple questions about his/her food (Does your cookie taste sweet?).
- Do this activity when you and your child are cooking in the kitchen.

To make this activity more challenging, you can:

- Encourage your child to describe food with more than one word (orange, juicy and sour).
- Have your child practice counting raisins and nuts and comparing sizes (big, little) and quantities (more, less).
- Ask your child harder questions about food (Is an apple a fruit or a vegetable? What else tastes sweet?).
- Talk about where foods come from and how they are made. ■

DO YOU NEED PARENT TO PARENT SUPPORT?

The Parent-To-Parent Support program is coordinated by the Harbor Regional Center Resource and Assistive Technology Center and pairs HRC parents with parent mentors to provide peer support.

HRC parent mentors have walked in your shoes. Perhaps their journey has been a little different from yours, but their reflections on their experiences will assist you as they listen and provide one-to-one contact and support. They have access to information and they are well-informed. Our parent mentors are culturally competent and very positive.

Call Dominique DeBorba at the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center at (310) 543-0691 if you would like to be matched with a parent mentor. ■

HRC SIBLINGS AND THEIR FAMILIES GATHER FOR NIGHT OF FUN

Joycelyn Smart, HRC Counselor



(top) Jordan Rappa shows off his artwork to his HRC Counselor, Valerie Hernandez.

HRC Counselor Nancy Godoy keeps the fun coming for the kids while their parents listen to speakers.

How does it feel to grow up as a sibling who has a developmental disability? What would happen to your sibling if your parents could no longer provide care for them? What significant role or responsibility would you assume in your sibling's life? These were among the many questions posed at the 4th Annual Sibling Club Parent Open House. This eagerly anticipated event celebrated another year of fun, new experiences, and most importantly, sharing and learning new information for the Sibling Club participants.

Inaugurated in 2004, the Sibling Club has served many siblings of Harbor Regional Center clients in providing them an avenue to gain emotional support and discuss their experiences

of growing up as a sibling of a child with a developmental disability. Additionally, participants receive the opportunity to share these experiences with others like them in a small peer group setting. Parents and children alike were eager to learn about the tools and information they could expect to gain from the Sibling Club.

The evening was an opportunity for parents and sibling club participants to meet, get acquainted with the dedicated HRC staff facilitators, and learn how to create a collaborative relationship for a successful and rewarding experience. Those in attendance also took the opportunity to review and explore books, videos and other resources dedicated to the topic of siblings, available at the Harbor Regional Center Resource & Assistive Technology Center.

While the younger set were treated to a night of fun and arts and crafts, parents heard from an adult sibling support group panel. Although the experiences of each panel member varied, all had one commonality: the unique and seemingly daunting task of assuming and accepting the role of caretaker for their disabled sibling. They also shared a common goal to provide their siblings with fulfilling and meaningful life experiences that any typical person would have.

The panel covered issues of aging parents, coping with feelings of resentment in having to assume the caretaker role, and balancing their time between caring for their own families and their disabled sibling. Parents were grateful for the opportunity to obtain insight into issues

affecting their children as siblings of persons with developmental disabilities. Harbor Regional Center and the staff are pleased that we can offer a safe and supportive space for these family members to come together and be acknowledged. ■

"Participation in the group has given me preparation for providing long-term care for my sister."

Adult Sibling Group Member

Client *focus*

CLIENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOSTS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE!

The annual Harbor Regional Center Self-Advocacy Conference was again hosted by the Client Advisory Committee (CAC), a committee of the Board of Trustees. Over 80 clients and family members enthusiastically engaged in active discussions on the topic of “Your Individual/Family Service Plan (IFSP).” This was the first year that the CAC opened its yearly conference to include family members and it met with great success.

Comments generated from participants about the topics and speakers included: “Good information, great attitude.” “Kept everyone involved and active!” “I learned polite ways to speak up about my issues with other people.” “Excellent presentation and rapport with attendees.”

Upon arrival, participants enjoyed a Continental breakfast and goodie bags, distributed compliments of HRC Dental Coordinator Marcey Brabender. This was followed by a presentation by guest speaker Katie Hornberger of Protection and Advocacy, Office of Client Rights. Each person received an information packet to refer to during the presentation.

All the information presented was planned by the Client Advisory Committee members to benefit the clients and their families when preparing for future IFSP meetings. Discussion points included: Who can be invited to an IFSP? How do I prepare for the meeting? Where can the planning meeting be

held? What can we do if we don’t agree about the services and supports needed?

Audience members were also actively involved when two volunteers role-played a planning meeting between a Regional Center Client and Counselor. HRC Client Danielle Schorr played the role of an HRC Counselor, and impressed everyone with her knowledge and ability to expertly assist her “Client” in the IFSP scenarios that were presented to them.

To obtain more information about services, supports and information related to the IFSP, please visit our HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center.

The CAC hopes to see you at future trainings! ■



(above) Participants role-play active communication skills.

(below) Conference participants gained skills for individualized, person-centered service planning.



HOLIDAYS ARE FOR SHARING 2007

The holiday season is a time to spend enjoying family and counting our blessings. Many children and adults with developmental disabilities face the holidays without that special dinner or a new toy. For more than 30 years, Harbor Regional Center has given our most needy families a little extra support during the holiday season. We could not do this if it weren't for the generosity of individuals, businesses and foundations in the community.

Contributors assisted our neediest clients this holiday season in several ways:

- Individuals, organizations, corporations and employee groups made tax-deductible cash donations to the Harbor Help Fund. This made it possible to provide over 600 disadvantaged clients and their families with food and/or gift certificates to purchase a holiday dinner, a new toy or clothing item.
- Local schools, clubs, and employee groups provided 50 Thanksgiving Food Baskets, or conducted toy drives.
- Many generous individuals and groups were matched with approximately 100 individuals and families (and counting, at the time we go to press) to provide food and gifts through our Adopt-A-Family program.
- A lively group of HRC staff, client, family and service provider volunteers treated 50 children and their families who participate in HRC sibling and parent support groups to a morning of crafts, caroling, stories and lots more fun.

It is not too late for you to help out.

Contributions received through the new year can be applied to cover the costs of holiday gift cards. You can send your tax-deductible donation, payable to the Harbor Help Fund, to Holidays Are For Sharing, Office of Information and Development, Harbor Regional Center, 21231 Hawthorne Blvd, Torrance, CA 90503.

On behalf of the Board, staff, clients and families of Harbor Regional Center, we sincerely thank you all for your generosity. ■





Cristina Sanz marched in the Belmont Shore Christmas Parade with her Lakewood High School Drill Teammates.



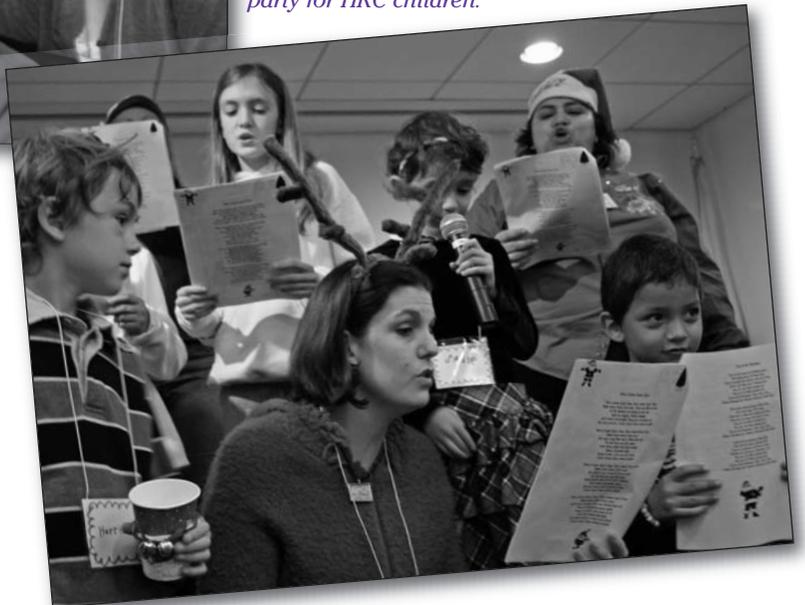
Jacqui Assadi and Lauren Perelmutter of Art To Grow On Inc. donated a gingerbread house.



Adult clients Warren Webb and Ronnie Vanderberg, left, were among the volunteers who helped put on a party for HRC children.



HRC staff Heather Clark-Shepherd and Meri Gyetvay captivate their audience.



BELIEVING IN HIS TRUE POTENTIAL: Phillip Manriquez

Phillip Manriquez had a vocabulary of more than 50 words before the age of two, before he lost his language and was diagnosed with autism. Over the years Phillip's family worked with his teachers and therapists, and continued to seek out educational methods and tools that would benefit him. At the same time, innovative techniques and technology have continued to be identified to assist in the development of communication skills.



*Phillip loves riding
in the family's dune buggy.*

Phillip used the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) at school and at home as he developed basic interpersonal communication skills. Then in the summer of 2004, they tried a new assistive technology tool. Phillip was seven years old when he started responding to his teachers and family by typing on his Personal Pocket Computer. Three years later, Phillip continues to astound his family and teachers with the depth of his knowledge and his ability to communicate, as he meticulously types away, and has given his family more insight into who he is, what he knows and how he thinks.

Kathy, Phillip's mom, always knew there had to be a way for Phillip to communicate. "Typing has brought Phillip into this world," she explains, and it has bridged the gaps that were there before.

Because of her never-ending efforts, Phillip typed this message to his mom: "Mom, your belief in me allowed me to believe in my true potential."

The benefits the Manriquez's have experienced are far-reaching. Kathy is now assisting other teachers and classes to explore the use of this approach for other non-verbal students.

Phillip's family has found many of the resources that have been offered through Harbor Regional Center, such as support and social groups, to be very beneficial. Through the family's church, Phillip attended catechism classes and participated in his First Holy Communion.

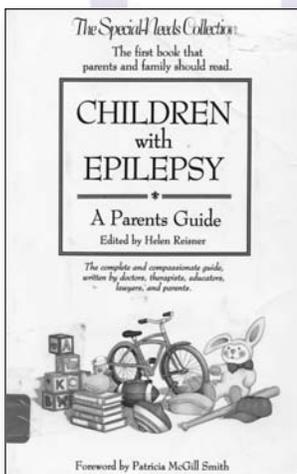
As serious and intellectual as Phillip can be, he also loves the thrill and excitement of riding in the family's dune buggy! When asked where he wanted his picture to be taken, he responded (by typing, of course) "dune buggy!!" With the help of technology, we look forward to seeing Phillip continue to develop his true potential. ■

FEATURED MATERIALS IN THE RESOURCE CENTER: EPILEPSY

Approximately 1150 individuals, or 12%, of the people served by Harbor Regional Center have a diagnosis of epilepsy. In this issue, we would like to feature some of our many materials related to this condition.

Considering one in 10 adults will have a seizure sometime during their life, this disorder is much more prevalent than it sometimes appears. The term epilepsy applies to a number of disorders of the nervous system centered in the brain and is characterized by recurrent seizures. Epilepsy is the most common neurological condition in children and the third most common in adults after Alzheimer's and stroke. Despite therapeutic resources, about one million people continue to experience seizures or significant side effects from treatment.

Here in the HRC Resource and Assistive Technology Center we have many materials providing information on epilepsy and its different treatments.



Children With Epilepsy – This parent's guide provides vital information while instilling parents with a "can-do" attitude. This book helps educate parents and their families to cope with this disorder. It is a complete and compassionate guide written by

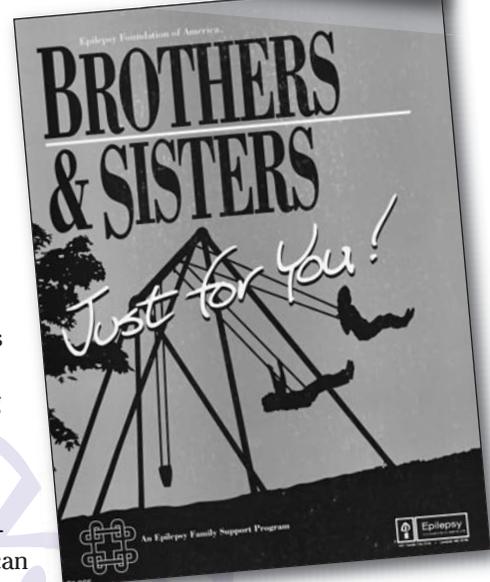
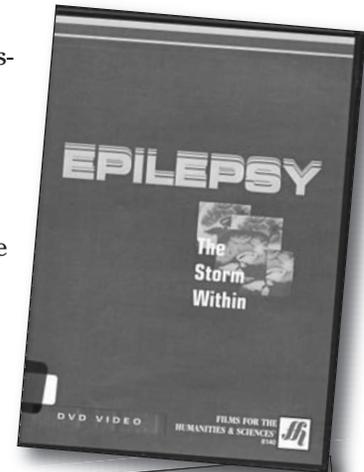
doctors, therapists, educators, lawyers and parents.

Epilepsy: The Storm Within – This program examines the causes of epilepsy, what happens in the brain during a seizure, and what should and should not be done to help someone having a seizure. It provides up-to-date information on how to recognize the needs and capabilities of people with epilepsy.

Brothers & Sisters: A Guide for Families of Children with Epilepsy – This book is divided into two sides.

One side is written for parents concerned that epilepsy of one child may be affecting their other children. This guide takes a look at how sisters and brothers are affected when a child in the family has epilepsy, and provides some tools for understanding and assisting siblings. The second side is written for the siblings to read, and divided into three sections which children can progress through as they grow and develop.

Epilepsy – This DVD from *The Doctor Is In* explores the range of epileptic seizures from mild staring episodes to major convulsions. It looks at new surgical techniques that can help patients who, in the past, would have had to live with crippling seizures. ■



DON'T LET THE SUGAR BUGS GET YOU

*By Marcey Brabender, RDH, MA,
Dental Coordinator*

With every special occasion throughout the year, we come face to face with all those luscious and sugary foods and desserts we all love to eat so much. As your dental coordinator, I've compiled a few techniques one can use to combat exposure to sugar and starch. Don't let the sugar bug win after all your hard work the rest of the year!

Brush – Place the toothbrush bristles at the gum line at a 45-degree angle and press gently back and forth in a short circular motion with little pressure. Be sure to brush all the surfaces of the teeth to include the cheek side, the tongue side and the top or chewing surfaces. Gently brush the tongue to remove bacteria and to freshen breath. Remember to brush twice a day, once after breakfast and once before going to sleep. Using an electric toothbrush can be a highly effective method of plaque removal.

Floss – Break off about 18 inches of dental floss, approximately as long as your arm, and wind the floss around the middle fingers of your hand using the thumbs and forefingers. Now slide the floss between the teeth gently curving the floss around the tooth in a C shape at the gum line. Make sure to slide the floss gently up and down between the tooth and the gum going beneath the gum line making sure to remove all the plaque.

Rinse – If you are somewhere and unable to brush and floss after eating, just be sure to rinse out with water to try and remove bacteria from your mouth.

Sugarless Gum – Carry sugarless chewing gum with you when you are unable to brush and floss as it helps remove the plaque on your teeth and gums, helping to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.

The sugar bug is out there lurking and waiting to get at your beautiful teeth. But with these cleaning approaches, coupled with visits to your dentist and hygienist two times per year, the sugar bug won't ruin all your efforts to keep your teeth and gums healthy. Your teeth are like your best friends...if you take good care of them now, you'll keep them all your life.

PARENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

Come and enjoy informative presentations and lively discussions. Share resources and information. Enlarge your circle of support. **Come join us!!**

Autism, South Bay – for parents who are raising a child with autism
2nd Tuesday, 6:30-8:30
A2, HRC Torrance
Devan Brothers, (310) 543-0648;
Maria Garibay, (310) 792-4586

Down Syndrome – for parents who are raising a child with Down syndrome
2nd Thursday, 6:30-8:30
A2, HRC Torrance
Kerry Ryerson, (310) 543-0686;
Niima Radford, (310) 792-4588

Unidad y Fuerza – meetings are held in Spanish with topics focusing on developmental disabilities
4th Wednesday, 6:30-8:30
Miller Children's Hospital Resource Center
William Martinez, (310) 543-0627;
Pablo Ibanez, (310) 792-4725

Adult Siblings – for siblings who are caregivers of a disabled person
4th Thursday, 6:30-8:30
A1, HRC Torrance
Kent Yamashiro, (310) 543-0687;
Audrey Clurfeld, (310) 543-0616

Sibling Club – for siblings, ages 6-16, of HRC clients. Varies by age of participant. For more information please contact your HRC Counselor.

Parent to Parent – pairing parents with parent mentors to provide peer support. Call to be matched with a trained parent mentor. Dominique DeBorba, (310) 543-0691

For more information about a particular meeting please contact the facilitator indicated.

Limited childcare is available by calling Rosa Olea at (310) 543-0651 at least three days prior to the meeting.

For information about other area support groups please contact the HRC Resource Center at (310) 543-0691.

APOYANDO LA ALFABETIZACIÓN A ETAPA TEMPRANA EN AMBIENTES NATURALES

Actividades para las familias y los menores

¿Cuáles son estas actividades?

Estas actividades son para que las familias ayuden a sus niñas/os a desarrollar habilidades de pre-alfabetización.

Estas actividades enseñan tres habilidades primarias las cuales incluyen el conocimiento fonológico, el conocimiento de escritura y el uso del lenguaje.

Las familias pueden usar las actividades durante el juego y las rutinas diarias.

Para más actividades gratis:
<http://www.wlearning.com>

Hablando acerca de los alimentos.

Haga preguntas a su hijo acerca de los alimentos:

- ¿De qué color es?
- ¿A qué sabe esto?

- ¿A qué huele?
- ¿Qué es lo que más le gusta?

Para ayudarle a su hijo a tener éxito, Usted puede:

- Hablar acerca de cómo sabe, huele y se siente la comida.
- Hacer a su niña preguntas sencillas con respuestas de sí/no acerca de su alimento (¿Tu galleta sabe dulce?).
- Hacer esta actividad cuando Usted y su niña/o estén cocinando en la cocina.

Para que esta actividad sea de más provecho, Usted puede:

- Animar a su niña/o a describir la comida con más de una palabra (naranja, jugosa y agria).
- Hacer que su niña/o practique contando pasas y nueces y comparar los tamaños (grande, pequeño) y cantidades (más, menos).
- Hacer preguntas más amplias a su niña/o (¿La manzana es una fruta o una verdura? ¿Qué otra cosa sabe dulce?).
- Hablar acerca de dónde proviene la comida y cómo son hechas.

PREPARACIÓN PARA EMERGENCIAS: Cómo tomar responsabilidad por su seguridad.

Sugerencias para personas discapacitadas y con limitaciones para realizar actividades

Establezca un equipo de apoyo

Reúna un equipo de apoyo formado por las personas que le ayudarán en una emergencia en caso necesario. Estas deben ser personas que regularmente están en la misma área que usted. Las personas que primero ayudan en una emergencia son generalmente los vecinos, amigos y compañeros de trabajo. Estas personas, y no los primeros respondedores profesionales, son las que realizan el 70% de los rescates en los desastres mayores.

La filosofía del equipo de apoyo se basa en la idea de que si todos están entrenados, todos pueden ayudar. Cuando usted entrena a muchas personas puede crear un equipo universal.

Cree equipos de apoyo integrados por muchas personas en cada lugar en el que pasa una gran parte del día: el trabajo, la casa, la escuela o un sitio de voluntarios. Esto es especial-

mente importante cuando es difícil predecir quién estará en un momento dado en donde usted esté.

Practique con distintas personas para determinar quiénes podrán ayudarle mejor. Lo que debe buscar es personas que sean:

- Fuertes
- Calmadas
- Que sepan escuchar
- Que se comuniquen claramente
- Que puedan guiarlo sin peligro
- Que presten atención a detalles importantes

Trabaje con personas en las que pueda confiar y en cuya capacidad física y emocional para ayudarle pueda depender.

Para obtener más información visite www.lacare.org, o <http://lacoa.org/espub.htm#Spec> ■

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BOARD MEETINGS

January 15, 2008 6:30 p.m.
No meeting in February
March 18, 2008, 8:00 a.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! Send an e-mail to Nancy.Spiegel@harborrc.org to sign up for information updates.

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EditorsNancy Spiegel
Kerry Ryerson

Photography.....Kerry Ryerson
Diana Janas
Nancy Spiegel
Lyle Walter

Production DesignJanas Communications



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