

SRN

Family Centers

New Bedford * Fall River * Taunton * Attleboro

Volume 2

Issue 6

May 2011

Celebrating Ten Years at Harbour House

On April 8, 2011, Harbour House Family Center celebrated its 10th year providing emergency shelter services to homeless families. When we were awarded a state contract 10 years ago, there were no family shelter services in this area.

Initially, Harbour House was located at 100 North Front Street in a former mill building.

In 2006, the opportunity to purchase a property, a former nursing home, in a residential neighborhood presented itself. The building was renovated and has been Harbour House's home ever since.

Shelly Correia, has been with Harbour House since its inception, first as a case manager, and then as its program director since 2005.

In 2009, SRN expanded its family center services regionally, opening the Fall River Family Center and then in September 2010, the Taunton Family Center. Today, we have 41 units, including scattered sites in Fall River, Attleboro, and Taunton.

Our focus is not only on providing basic shelter and meeting families' needs but also as-

sisting them in becoming rapidly re-housed.

As you will see in a story on page 5, under Shelly's leadership, Harbour House continues to think creatively in meeting the many multifaceted needs of families.

Sincerely,

Stephen R. Montembault
VP & COO Residential & Shelter Services



Mercy (Mom) stopped by NorthStar Learning Center's new home at 725 Shawmut Avenue to check on her daughter during her first week of childcare.

It's Christmas in July!

Amy Ruggiero, program director of the Taunton Family Center, is busy putting the finishing touches on the Center's first fund-raising venture: a "Christmas in July" calendar, which will sell for \$10.00.

A prize (from donations collected by staff) will be given every day in July. Some of the prizes

include two-day passes to Water Wizz in Wareham, a wine basket, a 30" fire pit, a three-piece Weber stainless steel grill set, a \$50 Lowe's gift card, and a \$25 Dunkin Donuts gift card.

If you are interested in purchasing a calendar, please e-mail lori.tavares@hptc.org, or call 508-738-5142.

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In the Name of Advocacy, Fall River Staff Travel to State House

Fall River Family Center (FRFC) staff including Program Director Maggie Smith, Debbie Furtado, Jamie Ledoux, and Christine Bollin traveled to Boston February 15 for “Cookie Day.”

Homes For Families, a statewide grassroots coalition dedicated to working with homeless families and homeless providers to end homelessness, organized the effort. Legislators, homeless families, and providers like the Fall River Family Center gathered at the State House to share their stories.

The aim was to call atten-

tion to the need for affordable housing and more housing vouchers (Mass. Rental Voucher Program— MRVP). The voucher program pays a portion of rent on a long-term basis to low-income households. Doing so helps these families often avoid homelessness.

Speakers included a mother who became homeless when she lost her full-time job; a working mother of two who is a current voucher recipient, in addition to supportive legislators like Representatives Gloria Fox, George Ross, and Mike Brady.

After the rally, house-

shaped cookies were then passed out to the legislators along with information about the voucher program. Participants spread out to connect with legislators and ask for their support for voucher funding. FRFC staff visited the office of local Representatives Michael Rodrigues and Kevin Aguiar to advocate for more MRVP housing.

This represents the fourth year that the FRFC staff participated in the legislative advocacy day. According to Program Director Maggie Smith, “Staff enjoyed the event, letting their voices be heard and taking action to ‘make a difference.’”



SHARING HER KNOWLEDGE... is
Amanda Speir-Raymond of
UMass-Dartmouth

FRFC Benefits From Clinical Study

Fall River Family Center has been fortunate to be included in part of a clinical work study program that Amanda Speir-Raymond, a nursing student from UMass Dartmouth, is involved in.

Amanda started coming in and making presentations on March 31. This will continue weekly for 6 weeks. She will deliver short talks to residents on subjects like basic hygiene, antibiotic management, and communicable diseases.

Calling for Your Cell Phones

If you're thinking of upgrading your cell phone, don't throw it in the trash!

Believe it or not, an old cell phone, whether it works or not can still do some good. All three of our family centers accept cell phone donations.

We do not need the chargers or any of the miscellaneous attachments—just the cell phone.

You see, we ship them to a company on behalf of our domestic violence program, which is then rewarded with a check. Call 774-628-1007 for more information.

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Breakfast & Baskets for FRFC



BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS... was served on April 23.

“The Community supporter of the Fall River Outreach Group” of Christ Family Center. Six families (six adults and eight children) sat down to a home-cooked breakfast. The church has been a long-time

return trip to the Fall River Family Center on Saturday, April 23. The group made breakfast and brought the children Easter baskets. They did something similar during Christmastime. The church has been a long-time

supporter of the Fall River Family Center. Six families (six adults and eight children) sat down to a home-cooked breakfast.

Program Director Maggie Smith says of the group, “They are not the types who are looking for their names and pictures in the spotlight. Their modesty is quite touching!”

Shelly Correia Honored by Y as a “Woman of Distinction”

Harbour House Program Director Shelly Correia is one of five area women being honored on May 11 at the

Wamsutta Club by New Bedford’s YWCA.

The awardees were selected for their

work on bringing attention to issues affecting girls, women and people of color. Joining Shelly are U-Mass Dartmouth

Chancellor Jean MacCormack, Arlene McNamee, Rita Ribeiro, and Mardee Xifaras, Esquire.

Taunton Family Center Wish List

Most of us are living with the reality of making our dollars stretch as far as humanly possible. It’s a bit of a challenge some weeks more than others.

month, the Taunton Family Center is looking for the following items. If you can help, please e-mail lori.tavares@hptc.org.

Our family centers are no different. Many of our families arrive with few possessions. To help them feel more at home, we provide toiletries and other items. As such, a ‘wish list’ of sorts is created. This

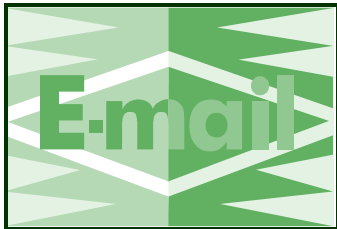
The center is putting a call out specifically for Trucchi’s, Shaw’s, and Market Basket gift cards; toiletries, non-perishable food items, new twin sheets and bedding; new towels and face cloths.



April showers bring more than just flowers at Harbour House Family Center. Three babies were expected in April. So, on March 20, a triple baby shower complete with games, food, and gifts was hosted by Mo Anderson, long-time supporter of Harbour House.



PUT YOUR BEST DRESS ON— Harbour House's Shelly Correia participated in the YWCA Southeastern MA's "Red Dress Fashion Show & Silent Auction on February 16 at the Century House. The event called attention to heart disease in women.



Help us save postage and the environment by having our quarterly newsletter e-mailed. Send your e-mail address to marion.oliveira@hptc.org.

If you know someone who would appreciate being added to our mailing list, if you are moving, or no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please also let us know.

Easter Bunny Hops to Taunton

The Easter Bunny made a surprise early trip to the Taunton Family Center on April 16 when he hopped over.

He had heard staff was planning an Easter hunt and thought he'd help. Four children participated, and the Easter Bunny left baskets for the children who couldn't make it. Program Director Amy Ruggiero said, "We could not have asked for a better day... the sun was shining finally, and the children had a wonderful time."



THE ELUSIVE EASTER BUNNY hid colored Easter eggs at the Taunton Family Center on Saturday, April 16. Here, little Mya can't wait to dig into her treats.

Positive Reinforcement Reigns in Fall River With Random Acts of Kindness

Most of us are familiar with the expression "random acts of kindness," and let's face it, you feel good when you do something nice for someone, even a stranger.

The Fall River Family Center practices this philosophy. One of the staff had originally come up with the idea when the family center was situated at its old location.

Calling it "Do-A-Good-Deed, Get a Ticket," Program Director Maggie Smith reports that they are excited about reintroducing the concept to families. Numbers are drawn, and small prizes are given to the winners weekly.

Staff determines who deserves a ticket. Basically, individuals are rewarded for doing unsolicited good deeds. This could range from doing something nice for another person or for the center as a whole. Examples include sharing food or other belongings, providing moral support, cooking, or doing a chore for another resident who is ill... essentially performing any "random act of kindness."

Maggie is hoping to see another benefit from practicing random acts of kindness and that is the promotion of positivity, which can sometimes be challenging given the families' circumstances.

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Celebrating NorthStar's Open House at Harbour House April 25

The idea for a childcare facility originated with Shelly Correia, Program Director of Harbour House.



Mayor Scott Lang



Shelly Correia
Harbour House



Attendees were invited to walk through the childcare facility following the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



Rep. Barney Frank & Ivannie
Photo by Jaimie Randall



Marlene Barros
NorthStar Learning Centers

NorthStar Learning Centers' staff as well as Harbour House staff had their proverbial hands full on Monday, April 25. But they weren't complaining.

They were getting ready for their open house of NorthStar's newest childcare facility, which is adjacent to Harbour House. Working in conjunction with NorthStar Learning Centers

of New Bedford, Southeast Regional Network applied for and received stimulus funds to underwrite the childcare facility's construction. Harbour House residents, in addition to neighborhood families, can enroll their children there.

Congressman Barney Frank, Mayor Scott Lang, and Patrick Sullivan, Director of

New Bedford's Office of Housing and Community Development, were among those who attended the open house in addition to SRN's Board of Directors. "We are pleased to support NorthStar's efforts to serve the needs of families at Harbour House Family Center and in the community," said Southeast Regional Network President and CEO Daniel Mumbauer.