



The Lookout

Austin Child Guidance Center's E-Newsletter
Spring 2005

Greetings!

May is Mental Health Month! Thanks for your interest in Austin Child Guidance Center, one of the leading mental health agencies in the Austin/Travis County area. Since 1951, we have been helping children and their families build the emotional skills for meeting life's challenges. I am pleased to share with you our latest news and welcome ideas you have in regards to our email newsletter. Once again, thank you for all that you do for our children and families!

Executive Director Donald J. Zappone, Dr.P.H.
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Celebrating May is Mental Health Month

Teaching Kids to SIT



Raquel participated in a Friendship Group at her elementary school. She was referred to the group by her teacher because she displayed intense anger in the classroom. Led by two Austin Child Guidance Center therapists, the group was an opportunity for Raquel to better manage her anger and develop coping skills for challenging situations. The SIT technique, which teaches children to Stop, Identify your feelings, and Take



Central Texas kicked off **May is Mental Health Month** with Children's Mental Health Summit Day on the steps of the Texas Capitol on Wednesday, May 4th. State Representative Elliott Naishtat joined Austin Mayor Will Wynn (pictured above in foreground), mental health experts, community leaders, educators, program administrators, social workers, and families to speak about the importance of investing in prevention and early intervention efforts for children with mental health needs.

Executive Director of Austin Child Guidance Center Donald Zappone (pictured above in background), was one of the featured speakers for the event. Dr. Zappone rallied the crowd with his words, "A child's mental illness is not due to some character weakness or flaw. It is not something that can be corrected or fixed or treated by a parent or someone in authority or even a friend by saying 'Snap out of it' or 'If you only tried harder.' We would not even think of telling [such things] to our children or anyone else who had pneumonia or the flu."

During the event, "Frequently Asked Questions About Children's Mental Health" was released. Austin Child Guidance Center's own Dr. Zappone chaired the committee that created this document, which provides current statistics on mental health issues. Notably, an estimated 42,450 children and adolescents in Travis County are at-risk for or are currently suffering from a mental health disorder. With your continued support, ACGC will be here to serve the needs of those youth and their families.

[To view Children's Mental Health FAQ...](#)

Tour Austin's Oldest Outpatient Mental Health Agency

action to remedy the situation, has helped Raquel communicate her frustrations and express her feelings to others.

She was able to practice the SIT technique in group recently when another child took Raquel's toy. She began to get frustrated, but with encouragement of the group leaders, she said to her classmate, "I am angry because you took my toy. Please give it back." The classmate responded well to her direct communication and the situation was remedied without hurt feelings.

This is just one example of how the group has helped Raquel. She is now able to talk about what bothers her rather than letting the anger build into an explosive outburst. Consequently, her teacher reports that she is responding less aggressively in the classroom.

The Friendship Group offers students like Raquel the chance to practice new behaviors with peers in a safe, supportive, and natural environment. It is one component of Austin Child Guidance

Austin Child Guidance Center opens its doors for the community to learn more about the children we serve and the work we do. No RSVP is needed. Open houses are on Wednesdays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on May 25, June 8 and 22, July 13 and 27, August 10 and 24. The Center is located on the northeast corner of 45th and Lamar at 810 W. 45th Street.

[For directions to ACGC...](#)

Surfing the Center's New Website

Austin Child Guidance Center recently redesigned a more user-friendly website. The site includes helpful information on our services, ways to promote positive mental health in children, and how to make a secure online donation.

[Visit www.austinchildguidance.org...](http://www.austinchildguidance.org)

Celebrating Success, Creating Hope

Celebration Recovery is a free, community event recognizing the tremendous gains that can be made towards mental illness recovery. This life changing family event celebrates successes and creates hope for others that recovery can and does happen. Celebration Recovery will feature live music with headliner Ruthie Foster, games, food, prizes, art, and dancing.



The 4th Annual Celebration Recovery event takes place on Sunday, June 19 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Austin Convention Center with over 30 participating organizations, including Austin Child Guidance Center. Everyone in the community is invited to attend.

[For more information...](#)

Center Receives \$20,000 from Statesman Junior 'Dillo Run

Center's offsite community outreach services. The groups are offered in collaboration with LifeWorks in a program called Next Step at several local schools.

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The Austin American-Statesman 7th Annual Junior 'Dillo Kids Run raised \$20,000 and Austin Child Guidance Center was selected as the beneficiary. The run took place on Saturday, April 2 and was in junction with the Capitol 10,000.

Sponsors of the Junior 'Dillo included Guaranty Financial Services, Covert Chevrolet, and Run Tex.

What Will Your Legacy Be?

Will you help us help children navigate life? You can help by remembering Austin Child Guidance Center in your Will. Please contact Lisa Bell, Director of Development, at 512-451-4424 or lbell@austinchildguidance.org for the legal wording needed for your Will. Naming Austin Child Guidance Center as a beneficiary or contingent beneficiary of your life insurance policy or Individual Retirement Account is also a wonderful way for you to help us continue to serve the mental health needs of the children in our community, to train the future mental health professionals, and to assure that the most current modalities of treatment are used.

What will your legacy be?

[To make a secure online donation...](#)

email: jkluth@austinchildguidance.org

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