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Mission Statement

Providing families and individuals substance abuse prevention, education, and treatment services they need for positive change for themselves and the community.



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear FBRC Friends,

Spring is already upon us and it seems as though there is an extra bit of renewal and excitement around. As the school year comes to a close for the summer, it is inspiring to see the progress our counselors have made in the lives of countless at-risk children. Preparations are already underway for Summer Explosion Youth Leadership Camp that will reach a record number of kids. I am thankful to our staff for the love and devotion they show to the children and clients we serve. I want to also extend my gratitude to our Board of Directors, who for many years, have selflessly guided and grown this agency to meet the needs of Fort Bend County.

The 5th Annual Fort Bend Corporate Challenge bowling tournament, benefiting Summer Explosion and other youth programs, will soon be here, on May 2nd. We are proud to once again have Union Pacific Railroad Company as the event's title sponsor. I want to thank the many organizations and individuals who are sponsoring and participating in the tournament. We still have a few open lanes, so please consider being a sponsor and joining us for this wonderful afternoon.

I hope that you will enjoy reading our newsletter. Please take a moment to look at the Success Story listed on the back page. It is just a small example of the miracles that happen here every day. The Council is always in motion; seeking opportunities to help, serving those in need, and building a healthier community.

Many Blessings,
Lisa

2009 Fort Bend Corporate Challenge

The 2009 Fort Bend Corporate Challenge bowling tournament will be held on May 2nd. This event raises needed funds to support FBRC's youth programs. In honor of our presenting sponsor, Union Pacific Railroad Company, the theme is "Get on the Right Track" and all things trains. So pack your bags; your adventure is just around the next bend.

"We are thrilled to host this year's Fort Bend Corporate Challenge and the *Get on the Right Track* theme," said Lisa Poynor, Executive Director of FBRC. "The Challenge gives us a wonderful opportunity to honor those companies that have supported us through the years while raising funds to help youth in our community!"

The tournament will be held at AMF Stafford Lanes located at 4919 South Main from 12 to 3 p.m.

See **Challenge**, page 2



David Young and Linda Schoonmaker prepare to *Get on the Right Track* for the 2009 tournament.

2008 Donors

\$5,000 to \$10,000

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FBRC Prevention Programs

by Sharon Brannen

Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse (FBRC)... What does it mean to you? What do you think when you hear it? Often



the first thing that comes to mind is individuals dealing with addiction. However, addiction treatment and counseling is only one part of many programs that take place at the Council. More than 30 years ago, FBRC created a Prevention Department to focus efforts on keeping children healthy and drug free.

The Prevention Department at FBRC is a very busy place. The prevention team, made up of 10 counselors, currently serve students in LCISD, FBISD and SMSD. Prevention counselors provide presentations, education, group and individual counseling and other support services to thousands of students each year. Counselors are trained in the latest prevention techniques and many of them have been with the agency for many years. They have become a part of the schools, and students recognize and trust them.

Preventing substance abuse is about teaching students how to make positive, healthy choices. We not only teach kids not to use drugs, but how to avoid other negative and/or dangerous behaviors. Young people are very impressionable. If they do not receive information from responsible adults, they often will take and act on the information garnered from peers. Our goal is to provide them with

the necessary tools, so that informed decisions can be made.

Elementary school counselors facilitate in the classroom, 8 week curriculum that focuses on self esteem, decision making, communication skills, social skills and assertiveness. In seventh through twelfth grades, counselors work with students in many additional capacities. Education on adolescent development, family and peer issues, coping with stress and drugs and alcohol is led by FBRC counselors during student's health classes. Counselors also work with students on an individual basis and in small group settings.

During the summer, counselors facilitate Summer Explosion, an opportunity for students going from sixth to seventh grade to prepare for the transition through a fun, week long leadership camp.



Counselors also assist with the summer school programs on many campuses.

The more successful a student is throughout his/her school years, the greater the chance that they will go on to become a successful, caring and responsible adult. FBRC counselors are an important part of creating those adults every day. We believe in students and in turn they come to believe in themselves.

2009 Fort Bend Corporate Challenge (continued)

Individual Sponsorships start at \$500, which includes two games for a four-member team and lunch. Corporate sponsorship levels start at \$1000. Don't want to bowl? Come and cheer your favorite team to victory for a \$25 admission fee and support a great cause.

During the event, guests will experience life on the railroad while enjoying a two game tournament and a barbeque lunch. Corporate and Individual Sponsors are encouraged to sign up and build their bowling team to compete for the coveted Crystal Cup and the 2009 Corporate Challenge Title. Last year, Schlumberger took the title and will return this

year in an effort to recapture it.

So, whether you have bowled all your life or just want to sit back and watch, this is a very fun event for a very important cause. Proceeds from the Challenge support FBRC's youth prevention programs, such as Summer Explosion Youth Leadership Camp and Red Ribbon Week, a week long drug-free campaign.

For more information about registration or FBRC, call 281-207-2400 or visit us at www.fortbendcouncil.org.

Program Director's Corner

Recovery is About Relationships - by John Robson

As a counselor, I work with people who come from many different backgrounds. Each individual has their own circumstances and problems that led them through my office door. Regardless of how they ended up here, almost all say, "I don't need to worry about relationships right now; I am going to do this on my own, besides no one even knows I have this addiction." Sadly, nothing could be farther from the truth.

An individual who sets out to attain sobriety is most successful when he or she is committed to developing new relationships. Getting connected to a new peer group is one of the most important factors for successful recovery. Most people minimize the impact their drug and alcohol use has had on their relationships with others. Yet, the obsession with instant gratification has pushed them away from friends and family. The belief that chemicals and material things are what build happiness becomes ingrained.

In the midst of addiction, people will do most anything to avoid loneliness, often involving unhealthy and self destructive relationships. They seek out relationships based on what others could do for them. As sobriety lengthens and the reality of past actions and

pain caused to others becomes evident, it is a difficult road to face alone. Relationships with people who have overcome similar situations become priceless. For many the importance of attending support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, is as much a social "check and balance" as it is therapeutic. Recovery is among other things, learning to serve and respect others.

Here are some useful tips on building healthy relationships in early recovery:

- Attend support groups and work with a sponsor
- Visit churches, bible studies and small groups
- Volunteer with AA, a church or synagogue, or a local non-profit agency
- If you are married or in a serious relationship, seek couples counseling

A pastor once told me, "It doesn't matter how good my sermons are, if a visitor does not develop relationships with church members within a couple of months, they will move on." I think the same is true in recovery. Newcomers must find a social connection with a peer group or they will move on. I encourage everyone I work with to take a risk, reach out to people and develop new relationships.

FBRC Employee Receives Mayo Clinic Certification



O'Neak Henigan, who leads FBRC's Tobacco Prevention and Cessation department, recently returned from Rochester, Minnesota's Mayo Clinic, where she earned their Certification for Tobacco Treatment Specialist.

O'Neak has worked in the field of public health for many years, and has been assisting Fort Bend County residents kick the tobacco habit for the past three. Following a rigorous selection process, she was selected to attend the Mayo Clinic program. The program's goal is to certify specialists in tools and techniques that can be utilized to treat individuals addicted to nicotine. She was joined at the Clinic's campus by international contingencies from South East Asia, Europe, and South America. Ms. Henigan is the first person from

the Houston area to be invited into the program.

"As studies continue to show a growing number of health problems related to tobacco use, it is now more important than ever that people in Fort Bend County have a resource to help them quit" says Ms. Henigan. "FBRC is a great place to find resources, tools and assistance for individuals looking to give up tobacco."

Through her work, Ms. Henigan consults with physicians and employers to encourage the implementation of tobacco cessation programs for patients and employees. She also works with area school districts and community groups to expand prevention programs that reduce the number of young people who begin using tobacco products.

Ms. Henigan will now utilize her certification to bring the latest techniques in tobacco cessation to residents of Fort Bend County and continue to encourage health within the community.

2008 Donors (cont.)

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Thank you

We would like to thank all of our generous donors for their 2008 contributions. Your gifts provided opportunities for children to attend FBRC's summer camps, supported counselors who work with students in area schools, and gave families struggling with substance dependence hope. Your support is building a safe, healthy, and drug-free Fort Bend County.

Three Sisters

A struggling family finds help from FBRC Youth Counselor

One morning, in between counseling groups, a school social worker approached me with concerns regarding three sisters in the third, fourth and fifth grades. She shared that they came from a family with four elementary school aged siblings including a younger (first-grade) brother. The family had experienced extreme transience throughout the school district and had just returned to the current campus for the third time. Their mother spent time in and out of jail, and their father was struggling to raise the children alone in a small apartment.

The sisters had frequent disciplinary problems, and the family situation was cause for concern. At the time, all three girls had lice and had been seen by neighbors picking them from each other's hair on their porch. The school was working to teach them and their father how to treat this health concern. All of the girls were in special education classes and had little or no supervision after school. They were often into mischief in their neighborhood and an ongoing concern for their landlord and their neighbors.

As a counselor for FBRC, we are often faced

with similar situations, but are able to counsel, mentor and teach these children as coordination takes place to address their many needs. I was able to meet with the girls in a small family group several times before the end of the school year. We discussed self-esteem, decision-making, goal setting, hygiene, basic housekeeping and safety rules. FBRC created a small school based "mini summer day camp program" for these girls and a few other students from the school who could benefit from the activities. The school social worker and I met with this group repeatedly over the summer and did arts and crafts, reading, watched movies and gave these children the attention they craved while teaching pro-social behaviors.

Following another series of moves, the family is now settled into a home very near the school. I have continued meeting and working with these children on a regular basis. They have shown great improvement in school and with each other. It has been a joy to watch them learn, grow and overcome.

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