

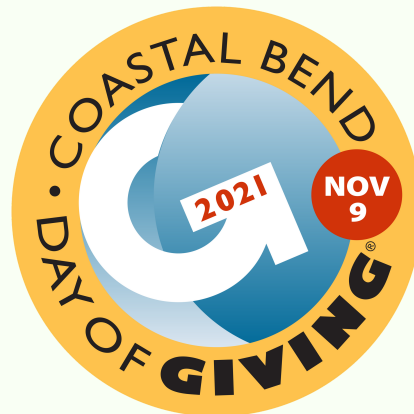


DONATIONS CRITICAL FOR NOV. 9TH 'DAY OF GIVING' TO EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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In our 27 year history as the CAC for the entire Coastal Bend, we have never had a satellite office operating in our underserved communities; however, that is about to change.

And, with a little help from the Coastal Bend Day of Giving set for Nov. 9, 2021, we will aim to increase access to mental

health services in rural areas.

"This is not only an overall need for the CACCB, but this has been a goal of mine that I've wanted to accomplish for a long time," said Executive Director Clarissa Mora. "Now, it's finally happening!"

Plans are underway for the CACCB to expand therapy services by adding satellite offices in San Patricio county, Beeville and Alice, and hiring more therapists for those locations.

The Children's Advocacy Center of the Coastal Bend (CACCB) is one of more than 50 participating charities who will each receive a match of up to \$21,800 during the Day of Giving, a 24-hour online matching event.

Thankfully, the 2020 Day of Giving was a record year for us and helped raise

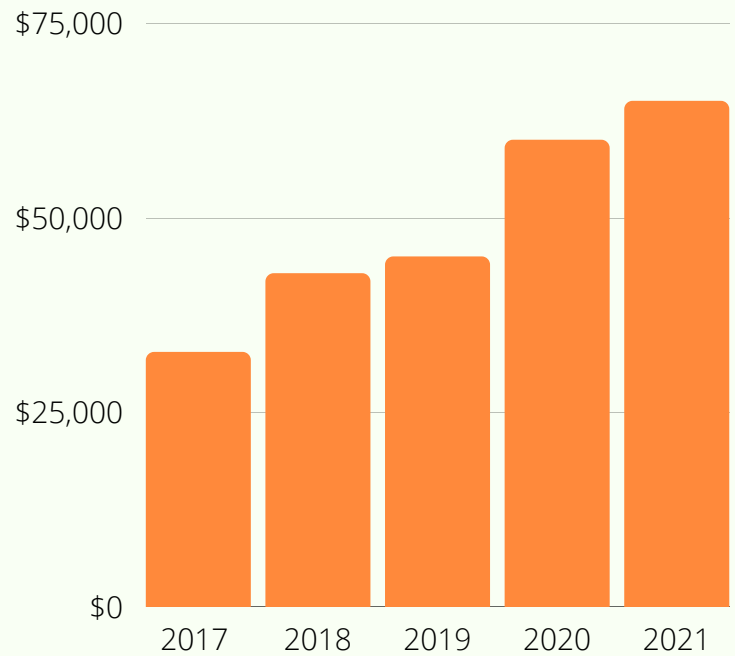
'DAY OF GIVING' CON'T

more than \$60,000 for the Center. This was more than a \$13,000 increase from 2019, and we saw many more first-time donors to the Center.

Now, is the right time to shift our focus to mental health. Over the last quarter (April - June 2021), the number of kids who received free mental health services at the CACCB jumped by more than 35% (88 children, 424 sessions) compared to the same time in 2020 (58 children, 293 sessions). Non-offending family members also receive these services.

Our hope is that we will have many returning donors, as well as new supporters. Again, this is the only time of year where all gifts will be matched and doubled. You can also choose to donate through Early Giving (Nov. 1-8) with donations processed that same day. Stay tuned to our social media for more details.

"Last year's Day of Giving was truly an exceptional outpouring of support not only for the CACCB, but for all participating non-profits," said Mora. "Last year will be a tough act to follow, but we're counting on all of you to consider giving and to believe in our future growth in this community."



In the last five years, our matched donations for the Coastal Bend Day of Giving have nearly doubled from \$32,728 to more than \$60,000 in 2020. As we begin adding satellite offices to rural communities to provide mental health services, we are striving for a 2021 goal of \$65,000.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER: BACK TO BUSINESS AS USUAL TO MEET THE NEEDS OF GROWING CASE NUMBERS

by Clarissa Mora

On July 6th, we welcomed back our partner agencies to the Center after 14 months of working remotely. To show our appreciation, each partner received a goodie bag and is now working face-to-face with forensic interviewers, family advocates and therapists.

All of us are so happy to see everyone return to the Center. We sincerely appreciate the cooperation of all our partners during this dynamic situation and for following our guidelines to help keep everyone safe.

While the mask mandate may have been lifted, partnering agencies and families are encouraged to wear a mask if they feel more comfortable; or if they are not vaccinated. One thing remains the same - our dedication to our standard of excellence, to ensure our families in crisis receive the victim-centered and multi-disciplinary services they need.

Over the last quarter, we have seen record numbers of children as compared to pre-pandemic cases. From April to June 2021, we forensically-interviewed 440 children, as compared to 398 during that time in



2019. As restrictions ease, children who may have been in isolated situations where abuse has occurred, are coming forward and/or returning to school; therefore, contributing to significant increases in the number of cases seen.

It is reassuring to know that we have a dedicated team of staff and more than 70 partnering agencies ready and working to provide the best services. As abuse cases continue to rise, we have plans to expand in the coming years to better serve more children and families who need us.

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER: ESMER RUIZ



role as a Forensic Interviewer is difficult, it is extremely rewarding witnessing children have a voice and being heard.”

Ruiz, who completed a year with the CACCB in June, attributes the dedication from her incredible team for helping to bring out her own enthusiasm. She says that by working together, they really do make a difference in children’s lives.

Co-workers have praised Ruiz for her positivity, bright smile and “going with the flow,” even on challenging days.

“I do my job the best way I know how and give it 100%,” Ruiz said. “No matter what I’m going through outside of work. I make sure that when I’m here, my full attention is on these kiddos.”

From her commendable work on after-hours on-call cases to happily assisting MEP staff with their tasks when short-handed, Forensic Interview Esmer Ruiz feels fortunate to work with others who are equally as passionate about their job as she is.

“I truly love my job,” said Ruiz, who previously worked as a DFPS investigator assessing child safety and working with multi-disciplinary teams. “Although, my

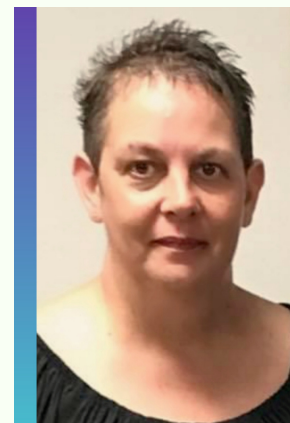
PARTNER PROFILE: CRYSTAL KRUEGER

For nearly five years, Crystal Krueger has been invested in the lives of children as an investigator with Child Protective Services.

“I love being a voice for a child who doesn’t understand,” said Krueger, a CPI Investigator III. “I love being able to help give these vulnerable children a second chance at a better life.”

Part of that process involves working not only with children and families and other partner agencies, but collaborating with the skilled and knowledgeable CACCB staff, many who have CPS backgrounds and understand how to discuss these difficult issues with children.

It is also important that those individuals share the same goal to protect children in whatever capacity possible.



Krueger describes the CACCB as a comforting environment designed to help children who are enduring traumatic experiences in their lives.

“I love working with the CACCB,” said Krueger. “We are like one big family, and we come together to help these children who are in crisis.”

CACCB HOOKS FUNDRAISER BRINGS IN OVER \$900



Thank you to everyone who came out to our CACCB Night at Whataburger Field on July 14th. It was great to see staff, board of directors, families and friends rally to support the Center!

A special thanks goes out to Gabi Cerise with the Corpus Christi Hooks for setting up this event and providing us the opportunity to discuss our free services with Hooks fans in attendance.

This fundraiser raised \$513 from ticket sales to help support the Center. In addition, we also received \$430 in private donations connected to the fundraiser. Every single donation adds up. We hope to see everyone again next year! GO HOOKS!

