

THE PINWHEEL



CAC to Host Inaugural 'Garden of Hope' Gala with San Antonio Spurs Legend Sean Elliott on Sept. 15

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH RAMPS UP, MAY MENTAL HEALTH TIPS - 2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER, GARDEN OF HOPE GALA CON'T, EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER - 3

CAC HOOKS FUNDRAISER, KUDOS, APRIL EVENTS CON'T, UPCOMING EVENTS - 4



For our inaugural "Garden of Hope" Gala, we knew we had to set our sights on some ambitious goals.

That's why we have decided to "step up our game" for our "Garden of Hope" Gala set for Thursday, Sept. 15, at the Solomon Ortiz Center.

Since this is our first in-person, upscale fundraiser since 2019, it is critical that we bring in triple the funds. Our 2022 Fundraising Chair Claudia Mostaghasi is fearlessly leading the committee to do just that.

She has secured San Antonio Spurs Legend Sean Elliott as our Guest of Honor, as well as VIP

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH EVENTS RAMP UP

CLINICAL DIRECTOR SHARES MENTAL HEALTH TIPS FOR MAY



Pictured clockwise: Students at San Pedro Elementary participate in a Pinwheel Planting held by Robstown ISD in partnership with CACCB, the City of Corpus Christi Proclamation of Child Abuse Prevention & Awareness Month with Mayor Paulette M. Guajardo, and Cassandra Hinojosa and Emma Sais at Kenedy Community-Wide County Health Fair.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. It is estimated that one in five Americans lives with a mental health condition. Children, too, can experience mental health conditions that include anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder - to name a few.

Our CAC Clinical Director Laura Alaniz, LMSW, suggests that now's the perfect time to have that one-on-one talk with your child about their physical, emotional and mental well-being! Below, she offers some helpful parent tips for Mental Health Awareness Month.



April was a busy month filled with many spring children's events, proclamations, candlelight vigils and lots of community support for child abuse prevention and awareness. The CAC was able to participate in events spanning several Coastal Bend counties and even team up with Robstown ISD for a Pinwheel Planting event. Schools, local businesses, DFPS and the Nueces County DAs office were among those who proudly wore their new "I Stand Up for Children" T-shirts on Fridays during April.

APRIL COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- 1,352** Total number of individuals
- 737** Number of adults
- 615** Number of children
- 15** Number of events
- 6** Number of counties



- 1. Listen and empathize, as opposed to problem solving.** Sometimes kids just want to be heard. *Example: Child shares a dilemma with friends, parent: "Wow, that sounds really hard. I am here if you want to talk more about it."*
- 2. Allow your child to feel their feelings, even if, as an adult, you feel it is a minor issue.** *Example: "It is OK to be upset."*
- 3. Do not shy away from conversations about Mental Health.** Normalize conversations about feelings, self harm, and suicide.
- 4. Your children are learning from you, so model healthy coping skills.** Practice self care. You don't have to be perfect. It is more important for your child to see your effort to remain mentally healthy.
- 5. There is no shame in reaching out for professional help.** Therapy resources can be found on the 211 website. For the crisis hotline, call or text 1-800-989-6884.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Clarissa Mora

Fundraising initiatives are not only back on the table for 2022 but remain the Center's greatest priority for the near future.

Earlier this spring, we successfully raised \$6,600 from our T-shirt fundraiser. Thank you to all our friends and partners who purchased our "I Stand Up for Children" T-shirts. Moving forward, we hope you will join us for our family-friendly Hooks fundraiser on July 14, and on September 15, we will have our inaugural "Garden of Hope" Gala – our first large annual fundraiser since 2019. This event promises to be an upscale affair featuring San Antonio Spurs Legend Sean Elliott and a notable live auction.

Also, a date has already been set for the Coastal Bend Day of Giving on November 8, and we are fortunate to have been chosen again for this once-a-year-opportunity to have our donations matched and doubled.

While we are proud of our progress over the last 28 years, I cannot emphasize how important it is to have the community fully on board with supporting these upcoming fundraisers so the Center can be well prepared to enter its next phase. Additional staff and a new location could be on the horizon to better suit our growing needs. But we cannot do it without you. Please help support your local CAC!

INAUGURAL GARDEN OF HOPE GALA CON'T

WHAT: Inaugural Garden of Hope Gala

WHEN: Thursday, Sept. 15, at 6 p.m.

WHERE: Solomon Ortiz Center, 402 Harbor Dr, Corpus Christi, TX 78401

COST: Table sponsorships available from \$1,500 to \$10,000. Individual tickets \$250. VIP tickets also available.

INFO: (361) 855-9058

opportunities with Elliott, who is a Spurs Broadcaster and Former Spurs forward from 1989 to 1993.

Table sponsorship levels range from \$1,500 (bronze) to \$10,000 (platinum). Individual tickets and VIP tickets are also available. The event will also include both live and silent auctions with some fabulous items awarded to the highest bidder.

Executive Director Clarissa Mora says this year's goal is to raise \$100,000 to help secure future free services, including therapy, for the region's only fast-growing CAC.

"We are counting on the support of our partners and our community members to help bring in these much needed funds to move us forward as we continue to expand," said Mora. "It was important to choose a Guest of Honor who would have a large fan base and generate a lot of enthusiasm for this new event."

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER: CLARISSA CANALES



Forensic Interviewer Clarissa Canales feels fortunate to be surrounded by like-minded people at the CAC.

"Everyone here is so passionate about the work we do," said Canales, who celebrates her one-year anniversary in July. "I love that I have a hand in helping kids feel like they're safe, and they've got a whole community of advocates in their corner."

Canales found her sense of purpose while working as a CPS family based safety services caseworker and an investigator. Although she carries a vital role, the former "Class Clown" is known at the office for her humor and keeping things light.

"I grew up in a house full of laughter," she said. "I've always felt that if you can make someone laugh, or just bring a smile to their face, it opens the door to an honest and sincere connection."

Canales is also praised for her schedule flexibility and going "over and beyond." "The time I spend talking to a child is just that – their time," she said. "No matter how long it may take, or how many interviews I have that day, it is their time and place to share their truth and experiences. I want everyone I talk with to know I am 100% present, and not any less."

