



FAMILY PROMISE
BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION

Hospitality

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Family Promise currently has 9 host churches and St. Luke's Methodist church is in the process of joining our network
- 90 homeless students identified by CSISD this year
- BISD identified 230 homeless students this year so far

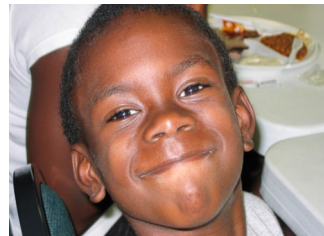
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Reflections on Host Week, by Laura Gonzalez

Thoughts racing through my mind on Sunday before the arrival of our guests...Are we ready? Do we have everything we need? What have I forgotten? Call Bari. Check over the list of supplies and food again. Oops. I missed Bari's call. Do we have enough volunteers? What about games and activities? Is the building ready? Have I forgotten anything? Call Bari back. Do we have enough snacks and drinks? What about personal items? What about the baby? Does he need diapers? Are we ready? I hear Pastor Sam reading the Parable of

the Talents, and I know. Yes. We are ready. We are so blessed. We have an abundance, and we



are ready.

And then, they arrived. Bustling teenagers, hardly stopping their cacophony long enough to hear where the restroom was located, or where they would sleep. Little boys

hungry for attention, love and acceptance, running through the fellowship hall. But, the chaos of the first evening was quickly quieted by the joy and peace of the next. Yes, boundaries were tested, but God's love shown through the volunteers of our church reigned supreme. Never before did I have the honor of serving in such a personal manner. From the training, I kept remembering one volunteer who said that it was she who was impacted the most, not the guests.

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How Can I help Family Promise?

- Volunteer at the Day Center—We need help covering weekends and holidays particularly!
- Lead an Activity—plan an activity for your church's host week or for another church's host week. Think creatively! Gazing at stars with telescopes, visiting with pets from a church pet ministry and baking pies, have all been successful!
- Monetary donations are needed for guest needs such as legal documents, school supplies, special uniform needs, debt payment, beauty supplies, interview clothes.
- Provide a service for free or reduced price such as haircuts, car maintenance, massages, etc...
- Help us find more host churches!
- Be a member of our Board—we are actively seeking new members.

From Aimee's Desk



Aimee Myers,
Network Director

And I thought September was busy! Boy, did things change when we began hosting families! After having been through a full rotation and starting the 2nd one, we feel like old pros,; but I know we will continue to improve and to grow.

The name of the game the past few months has been flexibility and creativity! We have found ways to move beds without having our own trailer and van, how to keep 10 kids busy at the same time in small and large spaces, how to deal with leaking showers, buses not showing up,

you name it! And I'm sure there's more to come.

I am so thankful for all our volunteers who help to operate this ministry. There is no way I could do this myself and I'm reminded of that on a daily basis when 3 volunteers show up at the day center to work with me, when 2 van drivers drive the families to and from the host church, and when I leave the building at 5:15 and feel comforted, knowing that there are 3-4 volunteers feeding our guests a warm meal. When I am tucking my children into bed

at night, I am calm, knowing that an overnight host is ensuring every one of our guests is safe and warm.

I have also been blessed to interact with some amazing leaders. One in particular always reminds me, "There is ALWAYS a way—we just have to find it!". Ann Park, our previous Board President has been the one motivating us to find the way... We will certainly miss her, but her lessons have taught us well. We know we can ALWAYS find a way, we just have to look for it!

From the Heart of a Guest...

Family Promise has been like a second family to us—the love we have been shown, the concern, the compassion... I've also learned something—having a home church is important because that's where love, true love comes from, from God's people...



The Hidden Rules of Poverty

The following information is paraphrased from a book by Dr. Ruby K. Payne, [A Framework for Understanding and Working with Students and Adults from Poverty](#).

Dr. Payne suggests that there are major differences between generational poverty (3rd generation poverty), middle class, and the wealthy, and they have to do with the hidden rules of each class. The key to success for a person to move from poverty to another class is to know the hidden rules of that class. For a person to work successfully with someone from a different socioeconomic class, one must know the hidden rules of the different classes

and must be willing and able to teach those hidden rules.

Money and Relationships—In generational poverty, money is to be used and spent—why? Because it's not reliable, it will slip through one's hands in a second, use it while you have it because it will be gone tomorrow... Another point here—in generational poverty, it is common for extra money such as gifts, bonuses, winning the lottery, to be spent by giving to family and friends. This is because in poverty, relationships are your survival, not money. If you do not give money when you have it to those who ask for it, then when you need

money for your survival (or favors such as rides), you will not receive and you will be discarded from the social circle...

Food—Quantity is more important than quality, as opposed to the middle class rule of quality being most important, and the wealthy class rule that presentation of food is the most important. In poverty, food is equated with love. At the end of the day, all you have is people and how you show people you love them is with food (so they can continue to live).

Entertainment—entertainment is about escape and escape is highly valued in poverty.

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Reflections on host week continued from pg 1



I wondered if I too would have such an experience. By day three, I knew I would. I had the privilege of hearing the life story of one of the guest

moms. She is an amazing woman, struggling through extremely difficult circumstances. As she and I visited, she asked about my family, my life. She asked, "Why I would spend every night up at church with her? Why would so many people that didn't even know her care?" The answer is easy.

Matthew 25:40 "The King

will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" And I know that we all got to "be Jesus" for somebody this week.



THANK YOU!

Businesses and Organizations

- Atmos Energy
- PEO Chapter FZ
- The District
- TAMU Transportation
- Club 274

- Ed's Auto Sales
- Jerry Brewer
- John and Laura Case
- Marilyn Snell
- Dean and Virginia Duncan

- Elaine Smith
- Glinn and Alice Shinn
- Eric, Natalie, and Linda Snyder

- Donna and Warren Heffington
- Debra and Dave Oaks

Individuals

- Bob Palmore

2nd Annual Comfort Food Cook-off!

Family Promise will host its 2nd Annual Comfort Food Cook-off on January 23rd, 2009, from 5:30 PM—8:00 PM, at First United Methodist Church in Bryan. Comfort food, a silent auction, and Blue Grass and South American music are some of the highlights.

Marilyn Snell, who was part of the team that headed up the first annual cook-off said, "Food is such a part of our lives. Food fuels the body and diminishes hunger. We rally around food to celebrate life as well as to remember cherished relatives and friends. Comfort food in particular



2008 Comfort Food Cook-off



conjures memories of Mom's home cookin'. One of last year's attendees confided that 'these chicken and dumplings taste just like my Momma's!'. Marilyn's cooking team won last year's Critic's Choice and is excited to be back to defend its title this year.

Get involved by participating on a cooking team, entering a dessert, or by voting for your favorite cook-off team. Tickets can be purchased at your church office, from your volunteer coordinator, from board members and from the day center. Tickets are \$20.

A word from a Volunteer.... Eric Barton

The local Family Promise organization has gained my support as a volunteer, because I believe in the mission to help homeless families be restored to self sufficiency. I also believe that Jesus Christ has commissioned the local Christian churches to assist families that have lost hope, to help them find it again, in whatever manner of service each individ-

ual of the local church is equipped to provide. My area of service is that I take my knowledge of all the years of being in construction, and apply it to the renovation of the day center. My heart is willing, but my body, after being out of the construction field work for about ten years, is VERY lacking. I would encourage anyone willing to partici-

pate, regardless of your gifts and talents, to join with such a worthy cause. We all can help these families find hope in tomorrow, the promise of a future, and the restoration of their dignity as a family unit. We're all one family of God carrying one another's burdens....that's what life is about...at least the life that Christ has called each of us to live.



Family Promise Bryan-College Station

1806 Wilde Oak Circle
Bryan, Tx
P.O. Box 11232
College Station, Tx 77842-1232
Phone: 979-268-4309
E-mail: familypromisebcs@gmail.com

A community response for Homeless Families

Family Promise of Bryan-College Station is an area-wide, volunteer-based nonprofit organization that supports families by providing shelter, meals, and support services to homeless families. The program is affiliated with the nation-wide Family Promise in Summit, New Jersey. [Www.familypromise.org](http://www.familypromise.org)

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The Hidden Rules continued...

Personality in poverty is for entertainment, so a sense of humor is highly valued—being the loudest, funniest, is the best way to get attention.

Clothing—the value of clothing fits in the value of personality and entertainment. Clothing is viewed as a way of expressing *individual* style and personality. And therefore, emphasis is placed on spending money on clothing, since personality and social interactions are of utmost importance.

Education—education is valued and revered as an abstract, but not as a reality. Those from generational poverty do not see it as a realistic way out poverty. Education does not help families sur-

vive immediately and therefore there is not much action taken regarding education. Not only that, but most parents in generational poverty do not have the



abilities to assist their children with homework and projects because the material surpasses material they achieved in school. They also often don't have the practical tools or resources such as paper, pens and pencils, calcu-

lators, scissors, glue. These are not items that are readily available in the household of the generationally poor. The culture of schools encompasses the hidden rules of the middle class and low-income students may not have the skills to survive simply because of lack of knowledge of the rules. Examples are in discipline—schools and society require eye contact and quiet listening when being reprimanded. In generational poverty, you cannot survive using that tactic. You have to learn to respond with aggression for protection. Therefore, low-income students have to learn both ways to respond and switch from one to the other depending on the context.