

MAKING AN IMPACT
A Newsletter for AISD's IMPACT Teams
January 2002

The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight some of the great things that IMPACT teams are doing across the district, maintain the momentum, share ideas, and keep you updated of trainings, new resources and other developments pertinent to your IMPACT team. Please submit suggestions and ideas for upcoming issues to Laura Payne at 414-0178, lpayne@austin.isd.tenet.edu.

Suicide Prevention Training QPR: Ask a Question, Save a Life

The subject of suicide stirs up fears and strong emotions. We are all aware of different ways that suicide has impacted the AISD community and the broader Austin community. There is now a training available through Austin Travis County MHMR that can be tailored to the needs of your campus. The QPR workshop, Ask A Question, Save A Life, will teach warning signs of suicidal thinking and behavior and three basic intervention skills that can help avert a tragedy.

The presenter, Debra Boyd, is a Registered Nurse with Austin Travis County MHMR Children's Mental Health Division. She is a founding member of the Central Texas Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Ms. Boyd has twenty years experience in Pediatrics and Children's Mental Health and is also a survivor of suicide. The workshop is interactive and provides participants with a number of helpful resources geared towards teachers and other staff who notice signs of depression and suicidal thinking. Contact Debra Boyd at (512) 804-3034 for more information.

Parenting Resources for Spanish-speaking families

Remember... the First Call for Help online database is a good way to locate websites for community resources: www.uway-austin.org

In response to Austin's growing Spanish-speaking population, many

community agencies are providing increasing services in Spanish for monolingual Spanish-speaking families. Here is a selection of a few services that might be helpful for your parents and family members. Family Forward (formally Parents Anonymous) provides support groups and structured parenting classes in Spanish. They also operate a bilingual crisis intervention and information referral telephone service for individuals experiencing parenting stress (1-800-554-2323). Call (512) 459-5490 for more information. Travis County Domestic Relations Office offers a series of classes in Spanish and English on

conflict resolution, communication, positive co-parenting, and other parenting issues for parents who are divorced. Call 473-9696 for additional information. Among other services, El Buen Samaritano offers a support group in Spanish for women who are dealing with depression. Contact Anastasia Barber at 441-7977, x27 for more information. The Family Support Cooperative offers a weekly support group in Spanish for parents and family members of children with disabilities. Call 476-7044 for more information. Connections Resource Center produces a monthly listing of parent groups/classes around the city, including groups in Spanish. Connections also presents an annual parenting fair for parents, educators and other professionals. This year the fair will be Saturday, April 13 at Reagan High School from 12-5 pm. Many of the presentations will be translated into Spanish and several will be conducted in Spanish. Call Connections at 478-5725 for more information on the parenting fair or this month's listing of parent groups.

HOW DO YOUR IMPACT REFERRALS FLOW? BEST PRACTICE:

Pickle Elementary developed a flow chart to explain to teachers how the IMPACT team works and where they fit into the process. They have also created a power point presentation that describes the process and how to refer a child. This presentation was originally designed for the faculty but has also been used successfully to build collaborative relationships with parents and community

agencies. The Pickle IMPACT Team is happy to share the resources they have developed with other schools that are working on similar tools. Contact Leonor Vargas at 841-8412 or at lvargas@austin.isd.tenet.edu for more information.

IMPACT Teams are Making a Difference

82 out of 104 schools responded to our survey regarding services provided by their IMPACT teams over the fall semester. A total of 2,463 students were referred to IMPACT teams. Teachers were the largest source of referrals, initiating 63% of the referrals. Administrators followed with 20% of the referrals. A variety of recommendations were made for the referred students including: home visit/parent contact (38% of the cases), guidance and counseling (32%), and classroom modifications (21%). Of the total students referred, 16% showed an increase in attendance, 21% showed improved grades, and 21% had reduced discipline violations. Since many evaluations will be done in the spring semester, these percentages are likely to be much higher. If you have any suggestions, comments, or best practices to report, please call Linelle Clark at (512) 414-9882.

Youth and Family Assessment and Referral Center

The Travis County Youth and Family Assessment and Referral Center (formally known as the LINK) is a new pilot program that helps families and

Pilot Schools: Johnston High Kealing Junior High Martin Junior High Blackshear Elementary Oak Springs Elementary Zavala Elementary Allison Elementary
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schools address barriers to learning. Seven AISD campuses are currently participating in this pilot project. A Care Coordinator is assigned to each pilot campus to assess the needs of referred families, develop a plan of care, together with the family, facilitate services and coordinate follow-up. Services provided to date include: tutoring, mentoring, basic needs assistance, individual and family

counseling, and other needed services, as identified by the family. For further information on the Assessment Center, contact Jose Del Valle at josedv@theaustinproject.org or 414-8653.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

Next IMPACT Meeting:

February 14 or 15

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

CAC Board Auditorium

Impact Team Coordinators, please plan to attend the upcoming meeting on either February 14 or 15. You will be notified of the date for your team to attend. This meeting will focus on a

dialogue between IMPACT team members from elementary and secondary feeder school patterns. If you have any questions, please call Mariann Hill at 414-3974.