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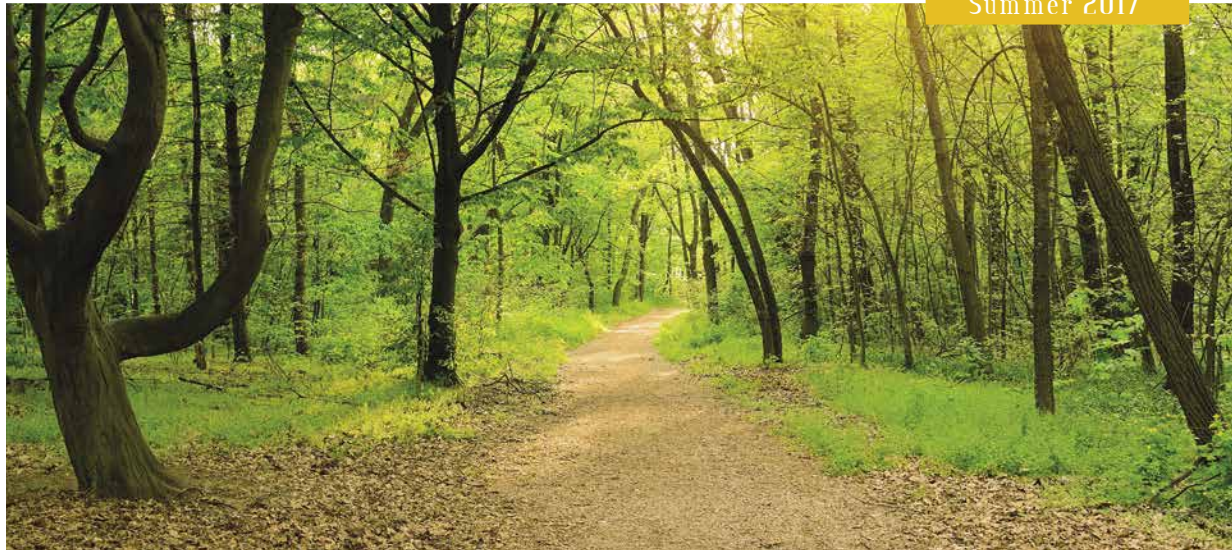
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THE MOMMIES PROGRAM:



Women who are dependent on substances and who are also pregnant face many barriers to accessing help, one of which is the overwhelming stigma they many times face from those around them. An expectant mother may be reluctant then to seek help because she doesn't want to be judged as a bad mother and because she is afraid that the situation could result in having her children removed from her care.

When an expectant mother is dependent on opioids (i.e. heroin, pain pills), there is a particular urgency to helping her access care. Without proper treatment, there is a significant risk of fetal complications including death if the mother experiences withdrawals, as the fetus also goes into withdrawal since opioids are absorbed through the placenta. Because of this, it is not safe for an expectant mother to just stop using the drug or attempt to detox herself. At birth, since the baby is no longer receiving the drug through the mother's bloodstream, the baby may have symptoms of withdrawal, such as shaking and tremors, increased crying, gastrointestinal issues, poor feeding, and sleep problems. This is called Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS).

In Texas, Harris County has one of the highest incidences of NAS births. In addition, drug overdose, particularly overdose from opioids, is one of the leading causes of maternal mortality in Texas. As part of the effort to impact these statistics, Santa Maria's Caring For Two/Pregnant and Postpartum Intervention (PPI) program has adopted the **Mommies Program** component.

Mommies is an integrated healthcare program created to improve outcomes for pregnant and postpartum women and their families who are impacted by the opioid crisis and NAS. **The MOMMIES Program** provides up to a year or more of free services for pregnant women who are currently using opioids/opiates. The program is community-based, meaning the **Mommies** team travels to locations that best meet the needs of the women and families they serve.

Mommies services include: intensive case management; health care education, navigation, and advocacy; counseling; and parenting support, plus individualized referrals to substance use disorder treatment, methadone clinics/medication assisted treatment, and prenatal care. Linkage with medication assisted treatment coupled with additional treatment and supportive services is considered a best practice for caring for a woman who is pregnant and dependent on opioids. Additional **Mommies** support services include on-site pregnancy testing, HIV screening and referral, assistance with health insurance enrollment, transportation to services, and peer recovery support services. Child development education and parent coaching are tailored to the unique needs of the families, including education on what to expect if the baby is admitted to the NICU and strategies for caring for a baby born with NAS. The program focuses on empowering mothers and other caregivers with all the information and tools they need.

In addition, **Mommies** is forming close collaborations with hospitals and healthcare providers to help promote education on best practices for women and infants impacted by opioid use and NAS, and to help reduce the stigma these mothers and families too often face. Together, we can help create a safe space for women to seek help and to find care that will promote the best outcomes for these mothers and their babies.

A MOTHER'S STORY OF ADDICTION AND RECOVERY

Meet Joni Jobeths, 27 years old, a mother of three children who is now in recovery. She tells us how she has greatly benefited from participating in the MOMMIES Pregnant and Postpartum Intervention Program. Joni says she is sharing her story, “not because there is a lot of good in my past, but as a way to help others who can learn from my struggles.”

She came to the MOMMIES Program 8 months ago when she was 18 weeks pregnant and with a heavy heart. She had been feeling scared, guilty, shameful and worried to say the least. She has a history of depression and began self-medicating at an early age, including using opiates. Her battle with addiction to opiates goes back for 10 years.

“Before finding about Santa Maria, I contacted many other different places and nobody would take me because I was pregnant... it was very discouraging but I was determined to get help and get clean,” says Joni.

Joni was linked to a medication assisted treatment (MAT) provider and referred to Santa Maria for concurrent residential treatment, where she successfully completed 120 days of residential services. “Without Santa Maria, the PPI Program, and without this amazing group of people, I could not have been able to accomplish what I have done. I’ve gone to other detox programs in the past but they didn’t work for me” she continued.

Joni’s problems with addiction were lodged deep inside her. The traumas left from her depression, self-mutilation and being bullied at school needed to be addressed. “I didn’t really understand those traumas until I came to Santa Maria. Here, with the help of my counselors, coaches, peers and my sponsor, I was able to take the time to reflect about my self and learn everything I know today... I learned so much about myself, about my addiction. I learned the coping mechanisms; I learned to recognize my triggers and what to do about them. Now I have the knowledge, the tools and I have a team of people that support me, motivate me and inspire me... It means the world to know that I count on them for anything and everything” she beamed.

While feeding her baby, Joni continues, “Thanks to the MOMMIES Program from Santa Maria, I was blessed to have my daughter born in perfect condition, she was full term, she weighted almost 8 pounds. She is 8 weeks old now and is a happy and healthy baby. I’m trying my hardest, I still attend outpatient meetings, I’m working on my 12 steps and on my recovery every single day. It’s not easy but I’m doing the best I can, just taking it one day at a time.”

Joni knows she is one of the lucky ones to have overcome her struggles. Just in the past four months, seven of her friends back home have passed away from overdose. “It is shocking and sad” she mumbles and continues to explain, “So, I want others to know that change is possible. I hope others realize with my story that addiction is a disease, it’s not a choice and with the support of programs like this one, we are able to educate and advocate for recovery. Often people don’t want to get help because they are afraid of what others will think about their addiction.”

Joni’s heart is filled with hope now... She is about to complete her GED and is confident she will continue her education at a community college in the fall. “I want to go to school, I know that will open a door to a big start. I want to make my family proud... Now just telling my story I look back and I realized how far I’ve come, and this actually makes me feel proud of myself, and this is a good feeling!” she exclaimed.



“Now just telling my story I look back and I realized how far I’ve come...” — Joni

ST. MARKS EPISCOPAL - LENTEN CONCERT

Our sincere appreciation goes out to St. Mark’s Episcopal Church for choosing Santa Maria Hostel as one of their charity partners for their March 9th Lenten Concert. Singer-songwriter Kelly Willis performed, and the evening’s offering was donated to Santa Maria.



A big thank you to the more than 150 volunteers from the HOUSTON NORTH STRAKE YOUTH GROUP FROM CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS who came to Bonita House on April 8th and assisted with painting around the facilities, as well as planting a vegetable garden and plants at the outside entrance. Lots of activities were also planned for our children such as musical chairs, twister, jump rope and face painting. Your kind donations of baby supplies and toiletries are greatly appreciated... It was a busy and fun day for sure! We’d like to also thank PLANTS FOR ALL SEASONS who donated plants and seeds for our new children’s veggie garden!

2ND ANNUAL LUNCHEON BENEFITING SANTA MARIA

OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO EACH OF OUR SPONSORS, DONORS, HONOREES, GUESTS, AND VOLUNTEERS FOR HELPING TO MAKE THIS SPECIAL EVENT SUCH A SUCCESS!



Harris County Sheriff, Ed Gonzalez and Santa Maria's CEO, Nadine Scamp



Stan Marek and Ralph Marek



Honorable Denise Bradley, Rev. Matt Russell, Mary Covington



Philander Moore, Nadine Scamp, Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, Kathy Griffin-Grinan

With your support we will continue to change the lives of women who are living with addiction and trauma and provide women and children with the care, support, stability, and healing they need as part of a family in recovery.



Lisa Malosky, Honorable Mary Milloy, Deborah Keyser



Laura Max Rose, Leisa Holland-Nelson, Madeline Ortiz



Byron and Sandy Wake



Kelli Fondren, Tommy Austin, Honorable Alicia Franklin York, Honorable Diane Guariglia



Our long time supporters from **WALMART CENTRAL FILL** visited Santa Maria on Saturday April 15 to donate Easter Baskets and organize an Easter Egg Hunt for our children and families! Thank you very much for a great afternoon!



Our sincere appreciation goes out to the **EPIPHANY OF THE LORD CATHOLIC CHURCH** and Stacy Massi, for organizing an Ice Cream Social for our families on April 22nd. It was wonderful to see everyone engaged in these fun games and activities such as nail painting and canvases for creative art work for our moms and their children!



Santa Maria Hostel is honored to be recognized by **BEL INIZIO** at their Soul to Sole Luncheon on April 20th. They help disadvantaged women commit to, train and complete their first 5K walk as a way to develop pride in accomplishment and give them tools to confront their next challenge. Pictured on the left: Santa Maria's CEO, Nadine Scamp, Bel Inizio's Executive Director, Theresa Strong and Robert Key.



THE GIRL SCOUTS TROOP #11467 visited Santa Maria, Bonita House on Friday April 21st in the afternoon and they hand delivered Girl Scout Cookies to our children and their families. Thank you girls!



**WANT TO RECEIVE
PATHWAYS ELECTRONICALLY?**

Email: msalgado@santamariahospel.org



**CUSTOMS AND BORDER PATROL -
EASTER BASKET DONATIONS**

Lots of smiley faces from the children at Bonita House were seen on April 13th when they received the Easter Egg Baskets donated by Agents from the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. A cash donation was also received by SMH, so we'd like to give our sincere gratitude to Officer Marcia Scott, Officer Connie De Leon, Officer Greg Randle, Officer Edwin Gallardo and Officer Meagon Longoria.



**DONATION OF TOILETRIES FOR
THE VIEWS PROGRAM**

A group of ladies from 'The Golden Penguins', a non-profit charitable organization of retired and former Continental Airlines flight attendants, visited Santa Maria's Jacquelyn House to donate make-up and toiletry items for the women in our VIEWS Veterans Program. Thank you ladies!

WISH LIST 2017

PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING THESE ITEMS SO THAT YOU CAN HELP US MEET OUR CLIENT'S NEEDS.

- Financial Contributions
- Children's books for ages 4-10
- Educational material for ages 4-10
- Coloring books, arts and crafts supplies
- Personal care items for women
- Bath and face towels
- Baby diapers
- Baby wipes
- Baby bottles
- Infant Formula
- Infant and Childrens Clothing
- Infant Bedding, including receiving blankets
- Diaper bags
- Car seats
- Strollers

