



DSSW in the Community thoughtful house

In September, DSSW made a donation to Thoughtful House in memory of Ta'rell Guynes of Ft. Worth, Texas who passed away earlier this year.

Located in Austin, Texas, Thoughtful House was founded by Dr. Andrew Wakefield with the assistance of friends and family as an ideal treatment center for children with developmental disorders.

Their model was to comprise medical care, behavioral analysis, education, and clinical and laboratory research all under one roof. In this quest, Troy and Charlie Ball who wished to create a tribute to their son Marshall aided them. The Balls donated the land in Austin for the creation of Thoughtful House.

This non-profit organization specializes in medical and educational support for children affected by developmental disorders includ-

CEO's Corner the silly season

Well, we have all once more entered what I call the "silly season". The season is every two years and asks us to make changes on who we wish to run Texas or the United States. I am reminded of a friend of mine who was visiting from Mexico. He was an attorney and well educated in economics. He had never seen one of our political conventions. I turned on the TV and he sat there listening and observing the delegates goings and comings, and the bombastic speakers attacking the opposition.

Suddenly, Jose turned to me with a look of horror. He blurted out "My goodness, Larry! These people are choosing a person who may be the most powerful man in the world and they are wearing funny hats!"

Yes, this is the time for our unique system to choose our leaders who can have a profound effect on our lives. Choose wisely!

ing Autism, pervasive developmental disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, ADD, and ADHD. According to their web site, Thoughtful House "brings together world-renowned clinicians and researchers in a data-driven, results-focused environment designed to generate best-practice educational and medical treatment models for affected children. By looking at the comprehensive picture of all interventions (medical, educational, behavioral, and recreational), we can continually assess which treatments work best for each child."

For more information on Thoughtful House, visit its web site at www.thoughtfulhouse.org or call (512) 732-8400.



**Ta'rell Guynes,
1982-2008.**

A special young man who touched many lives and whose life served as a learning opportunity for many a health and educational professional.

For DSSW, these months are a time for reflection on the needs of medicaid waiver programs and the approach we take with our state leaders and legislators to educate them on our clients' needs. In this, we work closely with our association, the Texas Association for Homecare.

Since DSSW is by far the largest Direct Service Agency (by numbers of clients), we play a very active role in working with legislators to inform them of issues and budget impacts. We work to assure that these programs, although a small part of the state budget, receive fair treatment and experience growth. An important economic issue is the appropriations for attendants and therapists pay. With an increased cost of fuel and living, pay increases are essential for quality service. Rest assured that, as we approach this next legislative session, this is our highest priority.

If you have any other suggestions, please write or email me. We need your input and deeply appreciate it.

Client Highlight meet kenny

CARE, TX October 1, 2008

Kenny Archer has a unique story. He was born November 7, 1985 and adopted at birth by Rev. Ken and Helen Archer. When Kenny was three years old he was shot in the right forehead by a daycare worker who had come to school with a loaded gun as part of her Halloween costume. Emergency surgery was performed to remove damaged portions of his right brain and Kenny was in a coma for several days. Following a lengthy stay in the hospital and major forms of therapy, Kenny returned home with his family. The next nineteen years, Kenny experienced major health and educational issues. The worst of all were the seizures. Coupled with large doses of medication, these seizures consumed Kenny's life.

A year ago, the family heard about a procedure that might provide relief from the seizures for Kenny. After many tests,

Rules & Regulations nursing assessment

Every year we receive many complaints about the necessity for the annual nursing assessment. We hear things like "It's a waste of time", "Nothing's changed from last year, why can't we just skip it?"

There are a number of reasons why we do an annual nursing assessment. 1) Because it is a requirement of the CLASS program. 2) Because things do change – maybe not by much, but it is important to have a once a year assessment to document the client's current status.

For example: Are there medication changes? Has a physician been changed or added? Are there changes in the family demographics that may change the needs of the client? Have the client's goals changed? Are there services that need to be added to help meet those goals? Necessary or not, the nurse needs to update the physical status – complete-

including a "Brain Sleep" study where doctors put the right side of his brain to sleep and an "invasive" test where doctors opened his skull and put electrodes on his brain, Kenny was approved for the surgery.

They removed the right temporal lobe, a portion of the parietal lobe, and the right amygdale. Following the surgery, the surgeon walked into the ICU and asked Kenny how he felt. Kenny replied, "I'm free." And he was. Since the surgery (now two months and counting) Kenny has not had one seizure and he is taking one-fourth of the medication that he was taking before the surgery.

If you ask Kenny about it, he will play it cool. But there is a newfound excitement about the future. He even went out and got a job working part-time for Brookshire's Brothers. It is Kenny's positive attitude, "can do" spirit, and rejection of pity that makes him a remarkable young man with a bright future ahead of him.

...the surgeon walked into the ICU and asked Kenny how he felt. He replied, "I'm free."

ly – from skin conditions to sleep patterns. This is why the form is 7 pages long.

The nurse must re-assess the related conditions to make sure that the client's needs meet the requirements for participation in the CLASS program. This includes an assessment of the ability for self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction and the need for assistance to live independently. These are, of course, age appropriate. The ability of a 4 year old for appropriate judgment and decision-making is different than for a 24 year old.

The information obtained from these screening tools feeds into the Level of Care (LOC), which is signed off on by the nurse and the client's physician and then sent to the Department of Aging and Disability Services for approval.

Your cooperation in setting this annual appointment is important. In 2007 rules changed. Client's whose Level of Care is not received a minimum of 30 days prior to the expiration of their Individual Service Plan risk losing Medicaid eligibility. Don't let it happen to you.

DSSW Attendant of the Quarter and the winner is...

Wow, what a turn out! We read through so many heart-warming, stories that we had to hand out tissues before opening each new envelope and email. Thank-you to all.

There were two glitches, however. First, due to technical problems, we did not have the caretx@dsswtx.org address set up until July 16th. If you emailed your nomination on or before July 16th, we did not receive it. We apologize. Please email them again. Second, we received many nominations from our CDS clients. Because CDS attendants work for the client and not DSSW we cannot give them cash and prizes. But, we can give them a plaque commemorating their excellent care. So if you are a CDS client, please send your nominations.

Without further ado we present to you Ms. Galoris Brown, your DSSW Attendant of the Quarter, and Ms. Salima Barrister, your CDS Attendant of the Quarter. Ms. Brown receives a gift of her choice worth \$250. Ms. Barrister receives a commemorative plaque. Enjoy, both of you! Great job!

If you have an attendant you want to nominate please write us at caretx@dsswtx.org or by mail at:

Attendant of the Quarter
6243 IH-10 West, Suite 375
San Antonio, TX 78201



Dear Sir or Ma'am:

[We] feel that our attendant, Ms. Galoris Brown, deserves to be Attendant of the Quarter. Ms. Brown has been instrumental in promoting and stimulating our severely autistic 15 year old son Christian...Since her arrival, our son has learned a myriad of new tasks, from taking care of his household chores to setting the table for dinner and serving himself. She has taken it upon herself to coax Chris to speak more often and intelligibly...he can now tell names, addresses, phone numbers, and relationships of family members...which is critical in case he ever gets lost...She initiated a system of allowing Chris to approach...uniformed personnel and ask for help. Chris is now consistently working with crossword puzzles...he is working on his reading skills and Ms. Brown has even introduced money handling skills in his routine by exposing him to practice money and coins.

[We] have never heard "no" or "It can't be done" from Ms. Brown. She was a welcome breath of fresh air as she has shown us what a real, direct, knowledgeable and in charge caregiver can do. We as parents have nothing but praise for [her] and hope she will be nominated Attendant of the Quarter. If she's not, she already is in our hearts.

Sincerely,
Frank and Annette
San Antonio, TX

Hi,
Our attendant is Salima Barrister, 33 years old, working for her master degree at the same time as working with Noemi [my 13 year old daughter]. Even though she has times when she is sleepy and tired, she does her best and manages with her work to focus on Noemi. She does things with Noemi that as parents we would not, because we are not ready to let go. As example, she goes to the movies and asks for the movie ticket by herself. [Salima] teaches her to be independent...to lift her head up in the air and not let anybody make her feel worth nothing.

I have seen Noemi's love and affection for Salima grow since the first time she met her. They have taught each other something special which will stay in their hearts and memories forever. I hope you consider Salima for the Attendant of the Quarter.

Sincerely,
Margarita and Noemi
Carrollton, TX



DSSW Runners Up:

each receives a \$25 gas card

Maria Angela de Cubas

LuAnn Davi

Olga Rubio

Esther Varela

Comments, questions, or concerns?
email us at caretx@dsswtx.org

Creating & Sticking to a Budget

where does your money go?



CARE, TX October 1, 2008

Whether you prefer to use a pencil and paper or a computer software package, Texas CPAs offer the following five steps for creating and sticking to a budget:

#1 Track Your Spending – For one month, keep receipts and/or write down all purchases so you get an idea of where your money goes. It may surprise you how much you spend on lattes, bottled water, and extras.

#2 Know Your Income – Make a list of all income sources like salary, rental properties, gifts, dividends, etc. After all, the amount of money that comes in determines how much can go out.

#3 Set Saving and Spending Categories – Here's where fixed and variable expenses come into play. Start by listing all your fixed expenses like rent and electricity. This also includes credit card and car payments, insurance and retirement savings. Don't forget to set money aside each month for emergency savings for unforeseen auto repairs and medical needs. Variable expenses are more flexible. They include food, entertainment, clothing expenses and gifts. Assign a dollar amount to each variable expense. Then, add it all up!

#4 Compare Income and Expenses and Make Adjustments if Necessary – This step can be a real eye-opener. If your income exceeds your expenses, you're in good shape. If your expenses are more than your income, you need to make adjustments. The first place to cut is variable expenses. By cooking at home rather than going out to eat or by giving homemade items as gifts, you can trim your expenses. If your situation calls for a more drastic cuts, consider canceling your cable TV, or downgrading your cell phone plan.

#5 Stick to It – To truly get your spending under control, you must stick to your budget week after week, month after month. This doesn't mean you can't have any fun, though. In fact, if you don't build in some money for life's little pleasures, you might not stick with your new budget for long. Reward yourself by getting a cappuccino or a magazine once a week if you've stuck with your spending plan. If you stick with your budget for the whole month, treat yourself to that sweater you've been eyeing in the mall.

Remember, your budget isn't set in stone. As life changes occur, you'll need to alter your spending plan.

Additional personal finance information is available online from the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants at www.ValueYourMoney.org.