



From Our Wesley Nurse . . .

What's Going On...

About a year ago, I had a conversation with Elgin Chief of Police Chris Bratton. Chief Bratton told me a story about a 4 year old boy wandering the streets unsupervised. I started thinking about how to reach families and provide education and support to stop this from happening.

At the *Back to School Health Fair* in August, I met Diana Villalobos, a Family Advocate with the *Elgin Head Start Program*. Diana has a passion for the 58 children and their families who attend the *Head Start Program*. We scheduled a meeting and staff attended from the *Bastrop County Head Start* sites. When I asked what they needed, they responded, parent education and community resources.

In December 2015, Diana referred seven families to me who needed various assistance. Giselle Young and I also helped the Head Start staff to package up Toys for Tots for the families.

On January 15, 2016, Lio Luna, Parenting Program Coordinator with Methodist Healthcare Ministries, gave an excellent presentation to the Head Start staff on the Parents Helping Parents (PHP) program.

PHP is coordinated and implemented in the Rio Texas Conference area of the Methodist Church.

The PHP program addresses ways to prevent critical family issues in rural areas. PHP is a parent support group designed to build stronger, healthier communities by strengthening and encouraging family life. It is volunteer-based and built upon the belief that parents are the first teachers and best advocates for their children. PHP currently offers three programs that consist of Teen Parents, Parents of Children 3 & up, and Parents Raising Teens.

In February 2016, the Health Ministry Team agreed the PHP would be an excellent community outreach program for the church. Elgin First United Methodist Church is in the process of becoming a Sponsoring Agency. The Elgin Head Start will begin the PHP as a pilot program on April 7, 2016. Once the pilot is completed, it has the potential to be implemented in all the other 11 Bastrop County Head Start sites.

On March 21, 2016, Lio Luna provided the 6-hour PHP training to the Head Start Family Advocates, Family Educators, and Supervisors. As the Wesley Nurse, I will be closely involved and assist with the program. The Health Ministry Team (Debbie Sandifer, Debbie Herring, Giselle Young, and Donna Shewmaker), all provided a wonderful breakfast and lunch for the participants. Pastor Blanco came and met with the group during the training.

On March 17, I followed up with Chief Bratton about the PHP program coming to Elgin. He said he was very excited and offered to help in any way he could. Life is circular. I love this quote from Mother Teresa:

Life is an opportunity, benefit from it. Life is beauty, admire it. Life is bliss, taste it. Life is a dream, realize it. Life is a challenge, meet it. Life is a duty, complete it. Life is a game, play it. Life is a promise, fulfill it. Life is sorrow, overcome it. Life is a song, sing it. Life is a struggle, accept it. Life is a tragedy, confront it. Life is an adventure, dare it. Life is luck, make it. Life is too precious, do not destroy it. Life is life, fight for it.

Thank you all for the blessings I receive as the Wesley Nurse in Elgin.