

Family Care helps teens, adults wrestle with their problems_100404

October 1, 2004

Posted: 10/01/04

Family Care helps teens, adults wrestle with their problems

By Miranda Bradley

Texas Baptist Children's Home & Family Services

ROUND ROCK-Every Monday night, First Baptist Church of Round Rock becomes a battleground where adults and teenagers meet to wrestle with problems that torment them.

And workers with Texas Baptist Children's Home Family Care program stand willing to help them fight the good fight.

Four teens congregate upstairs, where they make sand tray dioramas. But hidden meanings lie behind the toys and dolls used to create them.

Susan Lee
(left)
listens to
teenagers
describe
their
everyday
struggles
during a
weekly
counseling
session for
Texas
Baptist
Children's
Home
Family
Care
clients at
First
Baptist
Church of
Round
Rock.

“What's going on in your scene?” Susan Lee, Family Care program supervisor, asks one teenaged girl.

“Well, this family is on a picnic, and this snake is about to come out of the sand and bite them,” she replies.

As the young teens describe their creations, Lee notices three of the four

sand trays depict some type of battle.

“What battles are you all fighting on a daily basis?” she asks.

Then it begins. Soon, the youngsters are talking about everyday struggles that plague them—particularly the temptation of giving in to peer pressure.

Downstairs, single mothers who are involved in the Family Care program or recently graduated from it share their pain.

In “Making Peace with Your Past,” a group of women describe the struggles of raising children with no support, finding and paying for childcare and, mostly, trying to understand the choices they have made.

“When I met (my ex-husband), I knew he was bad,” one participant says. “I wanted to fix him. That was my upbringing. People always cared for us, so I wanted to care for somebody.”

Another woman talks about her painful relationship with her abusive ex-husband.

“I didn't see it until it was too late,” she tells the group. “I wanted to speak my mind, and I got slapped around for it.”

Now, she, like most of the women in Family Care, is learning how to raise her child in a new reality.

The groups act as a healing balm on the wounds of both adult and child. Krista Payne, who has guided at least four Family Care groups, said it is very therapeutic.

“I think the most important thing is group feedback,” she said. “They are in the same situation, so they can give an honest opinion.”

Lee is just thankful they have a place to fight these battles. A year ago, they

were trying to make do in a building not suited for their childcare needs.

“We were bursting at the seams,” she said. “We had babies who needed cribs, and we didn't have any in the facility we had been using.”

Because the mothers work, and classes are Monday nights, childcare is necessary. Family Care needed help, and they got it.

First Baptist Church Administrator Ralph Lee learned about the needs of the program and gave the green light for the use of the church's buildings.

Soon, Family Care was using many of the childcare rooms and various meeting areas in the church facility.

“We're here to serve whatever needs are out there in the community,” he said.

“And this program matched our vision and purpose as a church—to help the single mothers.”

First Baptist Church has been partnering with Texas Baptist Children's Home since the Round Rock home was built in 1950. Louis Henna, who donated the property where the children's home sits, was a member of the church, and the relationship has continued to blossom.

As tissues are passed around the table in the Bridal Room, the women of Family Care begin to dress their battle wounds.

To them, there's no better place for a war to be fought than on such sacred ground.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.