

BGCT childcare services to house children from Louisiana institutions

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By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Child and family services agencies affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas opened their doors and made resources available to people displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency asked the Baptist agencies to place up to 2,000 children from child care institutions in Louisiana and Mississippi who could be relocated to Texas.

Children could be moved to Baptist Child & Family Services' facility in San Antonio, Texas Baptist Children's Home's Round Rock campus and its Miracle Farm facility near Brenham, South Texas Children's Home in Beeville and Buckner Baptist Benevolences facilities in Beaumont.

Buckner also prepared to offer family care for foster families at its East Texas units and at Camp Buckner retreat center near Burnet.

Valley Baptist Academy in Harlingen—which closed as a residential high

school more than two years ago—also was reopening dormitories that could provide 200 beds for family care.

FEMA asked Baptist Child & Family Services to take the lead in providing care for people with special needs ranging from autism and Down's Syndrome to non-ambulatory elderly adults. The agency prepared to receive 600 people with special needs on Sept. 2.

Agency staff prepared to transfer many of its San Antonio emergency shelter and long-term residential care children from its campus near Lackland Air Force Base to its youth ranch in Luling. The institution removed bleachers from the campus gym and pews from the chapel to expand capacity.

Baptist Child & Family Services also sent mobile medical clinics from Laredo and San Antonio to Biloxi, Miss., and Baton Rouge, La., as part of the Texas Baptist disaster relief response. The two mobile units, which cost \$250,000 each, provide state-of-the-art facilities, including two treatment rooms.

Baptist Child & Family Services can receive donations for its hurricane relief efforts at 909 N.E. Loop 410, Suite 800, San Antonio 78209, by credit card at (210) 832-5000 or online at www.bcfs.net. For more information, call toll-free (888) 545-4222.

Buckner Baptist Benevolences is accepting contributions at five sites to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina. Buckner can accept cash donations at all sites, as well as online at www.buckner.org.

Other items needed are shoes, clothing and food staples. Only new clothing and shoes can be accepted. Buckner initially sent 2,500 pair of shoes from its Shoes for Orphan Souls drive to Louisiana through a partnership between Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas and University Baptist Church in Baton Rouge.

Collection sites are:

- Houston - Buckner Children and Family Services. Contact: Maggie Pilgreen, c/o South Main Baptist Church, 4100 S. Main Street Houston, TX 77002. Phone: (281) 630-6610.
- Beaumont - Beaumont Children's Village, 9055 Manion Drive, Beaumont, Texas 77706, Michelle Harris (409) 866-0976; mharris@buckner.org
- Dallas - Buckner Crisis Relief Center, 4828 S. Buckner Blvd. #B, Dallas, TX 75227, Jackie Belt (214) 275-9002; jbelt@buckner.org
- Longview - Buckner Children and Family Services, 110 E. Cotton Street, Longview, TX 75601, Greg Eubanks (903) 757-9383; guebanks@buckner.org
- Lufkin - Buckner Children and Family Services, 3402 Daniel McCall, Suite 21, Lufkin, TX 75901, Judy Morgan (936) 637-3300; jmorgan@buckner.org

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