

Love of reading modeled for children, single moms

December 14, 2006

Posted: 12/15/06

Love of reading modeled for children, single moms

By Miranda Bradley

Children at Heart Foundation

ROUND ROCK—For the 10th consecutive year, Christmas came a bit early for some Round Rock children, as 21 teachers with the Austin chapter of the [Delta Kappa Gamma Society](#) brought cookies, books and the joy of reading to [Texas Baptist Children's Home](#)'s Family Care residents.

"We get to give our time and our books to these kids," chapter President Shirley Shay said. "It makes for a very special experience."

Family Care, a ministry to single mothers and their children through Texas Baptist Children's Home, provides opportunities for women to gain skills in parenting, careers and budgeting. The program currently benefits 53 children and 27 moms in its seven cottages.

A teacher
with Delta
Kappa
Gamma
Society
poses with
a child in
the Texas
Baptist
Children's
Home
Family
Care
program.

Twenty-one
teachers
delivered
100 new
books to
the
children
during a
Bountiful
Book Party,
where they
mentored
reading
skills to the
parents in
the
program.

“Most of the parents are just blown away by the generosity these ladies show every year,” said Marian Marley, Family Care case manager. “I can’t tell you how many comments I got from moms who said it was ‘wonderful’ and ‘amazing.’”

The Bountiful Book Party is designed not only to get books into children’s hands, but also to model for mothers the importance of reading to their children.

“We want to demonstrate reading to these moms who may not have the time or the skills to do it effectively,” Shay said. “It’s important to talk about the book with the children and emphasize the words so they learn as they read.”

Along with their combined years of teaching expertise, the volunteers also brought 100 brand-new books from which each child could select two. The rest were donated to a library where all the children could have access to them.

“This is the highlight of my year,” Marley said. “It’s an important relational experience to me.”

In addition to teaching parents how to read to their children, the project also helps foster deeper relationships between all involved.

“We have two cousins who are in different cottages on campus,” Marley remembered. “By the time it was all over, they were reading books to each other. It’s fantastic to see the bonds this type of event can create in people.”

The teachers, likewise, formed bonds with the children.

“My favorite part of the entire day was reading to two twin boys,” Shay said.

“They were so precious and loved books so much. They both wanted to talk about what they read with me. It was definitely something I will always remember.

“When we leave here, we know the kids have a new appreciation for books. It’s a wonderful experience for all of us, knowing we have given them something that can last a lifetime.”

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.