

# BGCT president: South Texas Children's Home and Children At Heart

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I had the blessing of serving the New Mexico Baptist Children's Home seven years. It was a tremendous ministry and opportunity to care for children who come from some difficult home situations. Texas Baptists have many ministries to serve children. Two of those ministries provide an extraordinary array of services to serve children and families on every level—from the physical necessities, to Christian-based counseling, to healing hurting families. They've been doing it since the early 1950s.



René Maciel In rural Bee County, Laura Boothe Overby had a vision for opening an orphans' home. She donated 640 acres, and Jess Lunsford led the effort. From that beginning in 1952, God birthed **South Texas Children's Home Ministries**, which relies 100 percent on private donations.

The organization is committed to serving children and families of South Texas and the Dominican Republic. Starting as a children's home, the ministry now has an extensive variety of services:

- **Homes for children** outside Beeville provides cottages where children

live with house parents and have access to on-site caseworkers and licensed therapists. They attend school and church activities. The goal is to work with their legal guardians and church to restore relationships and return children to their families when possible.

- **Homes for families** is a safe haven where mothers and their children in crisis live on a ranch in the back roads of Goliad. They are escaping homelessness, domestic violence and substance-dependence issues. They have access to counseling services and skill development as they strive to gain independence.



✘ South Texas Children's Home Ministries chapel • **Family counseling** is provided by professional licensed therapists in Beeville, Corpus Christi, Gonzales, Rockport, San Antonio, Stockdale and Victoria. They have state-of-the-art play therapy areas so children can be observed without adding to their stress.

- **Jobs for Life** in Corpus Christi offers 12-week classes for women to prepare for the workforce, but the program also emphasizes building their self-esteem and developing their relationship with Christ.

- **International ministry** occurs in the Dominican Republic, where South Texas Children's Home Ministries partners with Dominican ministries that need help. They take teams on week-long mission trips throughout the year to provide Bible classes, sewing classes, construction projects and more.

For a detailed look at this ministry, click [here](#).

Another ministry that started as a children's home is **Children At Heart Ministries**. Begun in 1950 as Texas Baptist Children's Home in Round Rock, this ministry also has grown to meet the complex needs of families in Texas. The range of ministries now includes Texas Baptist Children's Home in Round Rock, Gracewood in northwest Houston, Miracle Farm in

Brenham and STARRY, which serves 32 counties across the state.

✘ Children At Heart Ministries chapel Children At Heart Ministries focuses on single moms, children and families, reaching more than 17,000 children and families during the last year. Many have come from hard places in life, and this may be the first time they encounter the love and care offered by the heavenly Father.

At each location, a group of people rallies around them, cheering them on through life's joys and challenges. The staff offers wisdom and direction.

Texas Baptist Children's Home began when Louis and Billie Sue Henna donated 112 acres and five buildings in 1950. Since then, the children's home has grown into a robust family of ministries:

- At **Gracewood**, they concentrate on providing long-term quality of life improvements to single mothers and their children. This can include financial planning, counseling and referral to valuable community resources. The families live on a short-term basis in cottages.
- At **Miracle Farm** in Brenham, teenage boys and their families see their lives changed. Someone who was stealing small items learns bad habits can start with small things and need to stop there. The boys work as ranch hands and move to higher levels as they find the path they want to follow.
- Some enter the **STARRY** emergency shelter, where moms who come from violent situations learn to love and play with their children and move toward their dreams. STARRY also provides support for families during and after deployments, when little children need help adjusting to Daddy being gone or returning with post-traumatic stress disorder.

To learn more or to find out how you can help, click [here](#).

I hope you will keep these ministries in your prayers and make plans to

stop and visit these wonderful places of caring for children.

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14).

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