



HomeSafe

Preventing | Protecting | Preparing



HomeSafe

HAPPENINGS

Volume II, Issue I

HomeSafe Retools, Rebrands

After extensive research and strategic planning, HomeSafe's Foundation retooled and rebranded the entire HomeSafe organization. The goal is to continuously build and sustain a stronger, more visible image and identity.

This effort will educate more people about the extensive scope, and impact, of HomeSafe programs and the ever-growing number of people HomeSafe serves each year — which has swelled to more than fifteen thousand infants, children and families.

Key components of the rebrand include a redesigned logo, new slogan, a fully redesigned Web site, a new Facebook page and updated messaging about HomeSafe overall and its programs. HomeSafe's name was also changed from two words to one.

The Foundation also invested in the industry-leading and most powerful fundraising software, Blackbaud, to enhance efficiencies of its fundraising operation and maximize net revenue to fund HomeSafe's results-based programs.



HomeSafe

Preventing | Protecting | Preparing

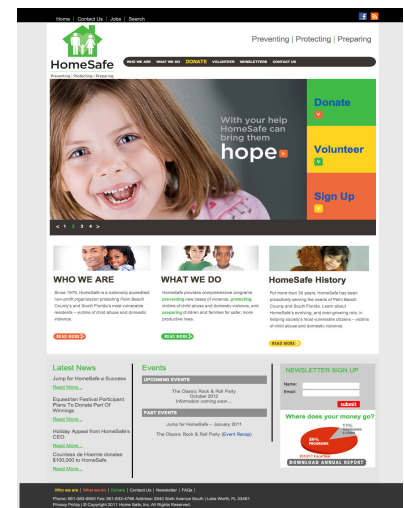
HomeSafe's new official logo and slogan



'Like' HomeSafe's Facebook page at Help HomeSafe

blackbaud

your passion > our purpose
HomeSafe's new fundraising software



HomeSafe's newly redesigned Web site, HelpHomeSafe.org

Foundation

The 2nd annual Jump for HomeSafe was an all-around success, raising more than \$48,000 to double the net profit from last year's event. The family-friendly equestrian event is the creation of HomeSafe Board President, Cherie Copenhaver.

Philanthropist and equestrian competitor, Paige Johnson, served as the first-class chairperson of the event, successfully helping raise awareness and funds for HomeSafe. Ms. Johnson also toured the Sylvester Family Campus to learn more about HomeSafe and personally spend time with the children.



Matthew Ladika, HomeSafe CEO, with Paige Johnson, Event Chair, and Clara Belden, a major event sponsor

Jump for HomeSafe took place ringside at the Palm Beach International Equestrian Center with guests enjoying dinner, open bar, entertainment, silent auction and preferred viewing of the Nespresso *Battle of the Sexes*. Children flocked to the adjoining ring to compete in the Horseless Jump competition.

Major sponsors included Paige Johnson, Clara and Wesley Belden, Patten Family Foundation, Publix, The Nichols Foundation, Steven Bernstein, TD Bank, Sheila Johnson, and Equine Tack & Nutritionals.

Thank You HomeSafe Supporters! Recent Major Gifts and Grants

- Alternative Motorcycle Club of Palm Beach County
- Countess Henrietta de Hoernle
- The Graham Eckes Palm Beach Academy Foundation

- A Little Hope
- J&L Foundation
- Jarden Consumer Services
- Harold Katz Family Foundation
- Libra Foundation

- Sun-Sentinel Children's Fund (a fund of the McCormick Foundation)
- Sylvester Family Foundation
- United Way of Palm Beach
- The Walmart Foundation and Facility #5301

HelpHomeSafe.org

Phone: 561-383-9800

Facebook: Help HomeSafe

SafetyNet

Research indicates that children living in abusive homes are much more likely (than children in non-abusive homes) to display similar behaviors when they become adults.

HomeSafe's SafetyNet program excels at providing victims with the necessary skills to take control of their lives and break the cycle of domestic violence. Breaking the cycle is not easy — taking time, patience and perseverance to overcome horrific trauma inflicted upon mothers and their children.

Education... a Key to Breaking the Cycle

HomeSafe's SafetyNet Supervisor, Brian McCarey, recently nominated several graduates from SafetyNet's Teen Therapeutic Support Group for educational scholarships. The scholarships are awarded to children who, despite being victims of domestic violence, have learned to succeed in life.

The scholarships, provided by the Domestic

Violence Council and the Palm Beach County Coalition for Children, allow for teenagers to pursue their dreams.

A few examples of past scholarship recipients include:

Sandra, who received scholarships from the Domestic Violence Council's Barry Krischer Scholarship Fund and the Palm Beach County Coalition (Turn to the Future Scholarship). As the eldest of five children and a first generation American citizen whose family emigrated from El Salvador, she is the first in her family to attend college. She would like to become a nurse. On her application she wrote, "It doesn't matter where you come from, or what you've been through in your life, but what you make out of it and how far you're willing to take it."

Katongo received a scholarship from the Palm Beach County Coalition for Children (Turn to the Future Scholarship) and began attending Palm Beach State College in Janu-

ary. Katongo and her family are from Zambia, Africa. Her goal is to become a lawyer and ultimately a judge. On her application she wrote, "By furthering my education I believe my goal, as well as dreams, are very possible."

These teens understand it is a long road ahead. However, with the encouragement of their families along with the support of all of the SafetyNet staff, anything can be accomplished. As Brian McCarey, SafetyNet Supervisor, stated, "Being part of a child's growth and success is why we work so hard every day. It gives us tremendous pleasure when we can provide children with the tools and self esteem to follow their dreams and move on from victim to survivor to thriver."



For more information about HomeSafe's SafetyNet program, contact Brian McCarey, SafetyNet Supervisor, at 561-383-9800, ext. 1240 or BrianMcCarey@HelpHomeSafe.org

Healthy Beginnings

HomeSafe's Healthy Beginnings' staff plays an important role in helping young children (newborns through age five) and their parents achieve their fullest potential. One of the countless examples includes Cynthia Sanchez, a Developmental Consultant, who recently received a referral from a young mother requesting her child be assessed for developmental delays.



During the assessment, Cynthia observed the mother demonstrating signs of emotional problems. The mother, however, dismissed Cynthia's concerns that she was under any distress. Thanks to the rapport Cynthia quickly built with the mother, Cynthia received a call from the mother

asking her to pick up her child because she believed she had no choice but to "end it all." Concerned about the child and mother's safety, Cynthia immediately called 911 and went to the mother's home. Police quickly arrived to assist the distraught mother. Upon defusing the situation, Cynthia conducted an assessment on the mother determining high scores for depression and stress. Cynthia referred the mother and child to Parent Child Center, an agency promoting the social-emotional wellbeing of children and their families.

Today the mother and child are doing exceptionally well. The mother is in the process of becoming a dental assistant and she is bonding more with her child. She has a positive outlook in life and is thankful that Cynthia was there in her time of crisis. The mother is very appreciative of Cynthia's quick thinking and caring nature that prevented a potentially tragic incident.



Milestones of 2011

- ⇒ Successfully conducted screening assessments of approximately 97 percent of the estimated 14,621 births in Palm Beach County
- ⇒ Distributed more than 12,200 copies of the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screens to child care centers
- ⇒ Received a total of 4,593 incoming referrals for screenings and assessments
- ⇒ Referred more than 2,800 children to Healthy Beginnings service providers

Outreach



HomeSafe recently coordinated an event, *Project Cradle Care*, with the Bridges and the sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho. The event, which attracted more than 100 people, was held in Belle Glade to inform the community about the importance of parental care and the availability of free valuable services.

Learn more about Healthy Beginnings by contacting Paloma Prata, HomeSafe's Director of Prevention Services, at 561-383-9800, ext. 1702, or PalomaPrata@HelpHomeSafe.org

Selected by the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, HomeSafe is the exclusive entry agency (serving newborns through five-year-olds and their parents) for the Healthy Beginnings program.

Residential Group Care

Child abuse is much more than bruises and broken bones. While physical abuse is usually the most visible sign, it is most often the neglect and emotional abuse that leave the most damaging and lasting scars. The impact of neglect and emotional abuse is powerful and can negatively alter the self esteem and behavior of children for years to come, if not a lifetime.

The following story is about “Kareem,” a young teenager who arrived at HomeSafe after failing in several other programs, including therapeutic foster homes.

Kareem’s father abandoned him at a young age, but not before physically abusing him for several years. His mother physically abused him as well, and neglected to develop a healthy emotional attachment with him. This abuse led him to be removed from his home.

He constantly rebelled and acted out with the goal of being removed from all of the programs in which he was placed. These removals reaffirmed his belief that he was not worth loving. Making matters worse, Kareem’s mother died from a drug overdose.

Upon his arrival at HomeSafe, Kareem’s emotional state was chaotic at best. He was an angry teenager who, during his first few weeks, attempted to cause mass chaos and disrupt the progress of the other children. His defiant behavior made it challenging for HomeSafe staff, but their steadfast commitment to him never wavered. They knew their caring support would eventually help him overcome his serious issues.

Through the guidance of HomeSafe staff, especially Therapist Tauna Clifton, Kareem began the process of learning to trust others

and began working with the program — instead of against it. His attitude changed and when he returned for the next school year the teachers could not believe it was the same young teenager. He went from being suspended almost daily during the previous school year to none for the entire first quarter.

Kareem’s impressive stabilization allowed him to remain at HomeSafe for over one year. During that time he contacted his father to get answers to many nagging questions, including why his dad abandoned him. Unfortunately, his father also passed away while Kareem was living at HomeSafe. With the support of his HomeSafe ‘family,’ Kareem was able to grieve the loss of his father. For the first time ever he was able to fully trust HomeSafe staff and develop meaningful relationships with other residents.

Kareem successfully completed his treatment plan and graduated from the program. He left HomeSafe and lived with a foster family. After just a few months with his new foster family, they began proceedings to formally adopt him. Today Kareem is a healthy, self-confident teenager with a bright future. When asked about his successes, he stated his dramatic positive changes were due to everything he learned at HomeSafe.



Learn more about HomeSafe’s Residential Group Care by contacting Dr. Ricardo Buitrago, Director of Residential Services, at 561-383-9800, ext. 1249 or RicardoBuitrago@HelpHomeSafe.org

LifeSkillsSM

One of the most difficult transitions in a person’s life is transitioning from childhood into a young adult. It is especially challenging when an at-risk youth is expected to become self-sufficient and independent on his or her eighteenth birthday. Given this reality, HomeSafe’s LifeSkillsSM staff helps facilitate this transition by providing a pre- and post-18 support system enabling these young adults a greater likelihood of leading successful lives.

In existence for only a short time, LifeSkills is already having a tremendous impact on HomeSafe clients. Eric Peterman, LifeSkills Coordinator, said, “I am convinced that the strength and success of our youth at HomeSafe’s Sylvester Family Campus has been commensurate with the strengthening and successes of our LifeSkills program.”



Some of the successes include:

- ⇒ More HomeSafe youth accepted into Vita Nova and Crossroads independent living programs
- ⇒ More youth are on track to graduate high school on time than any other time in HomeSafe’s history
- ⇒ An increasing number of youth remaining enrolled in school after aging-out
- ⇒ An increase in the number of youth obtaining GEDs
- ⇒ An increase in college enrollment
- ⇒ More youth participating and attending meetings at Florida Youth Shine, an advocacy youth-run organization dedicated to changing the culture of Florida’s foster care system

The program’s success has led to expanding the curriculum to include an Independent Living Cookbook/Culinary Arts Booklet for each program. Additionally, two positions (LifeSkills Development Supervisor and LifeSkills Transition Specialist) have fortified the LifeSkills program by allowing for a greater focus on the academic excellence for all youth agency-wide.



Learn more about HomeSafe’s LifeSkills program by contacting Dr. Angie Bailey, LifeSkills Development Supervisor at 561-383-9800, ext. 1221 or AngieBailey@HelpHomeSafe.org

Anniversaries [Oct 1 - Dec 31]

16 Years

Margo Bonilla, *Youth Development Professional*

13 Years

Brian McCarey, *SafetyNet Supervisor*

12 Years

Merry Humose, *Youth Development Professional*

10 Years

Gerda Muyen, *SafetyNet Therapist II*

7 Years

Ricardo Buitrago, *Director of Residential Services*

6 Years

Patricia Junior, *Finance Director*

Eric McGirt, *Youth Development Professional*

D'Anna Monroe, *Youth Development Professional*

Edward Robinson, Jr., *Youth Development Professional*

5 Years

Jose Orozco, *Maintenance Mechanic*

3 Years

Tyren Lorick, *Youth Development Professional*

Eric Peterman, *LifeSkills Coordinator*

Deneisha Watson, *Youth Development Professional*

Zakiyyah Williams, *LifeSkills Coordinator*

2 Years

Elissa Malec, *Human Resources Coordinator*

Janeke Simpkins, *Therapist*

Christine Swift, *Youth Development Professional*

1 Year

Michael Boro, *Marketing Coordinator*

Mary Cesar, *Data Support Coordinator*

Nelly Estima, *Program Supervisor*

Tommy Porter, *Youth Development Professional*

Marquitta Roberson, *Youth Development Professional*

Bobby Scott, *Youth Development Professional*

New Employees [Oct 1 - Dec 31]

Stephanie Harris, *Youth Development Professional*

Glenn Mueller, *Grant Writer*

Obadiah Payton, *Youth Development Professional*

Tara Phillips, *Youth Development Professional*

Kehan Rahming, *Program Supervisor*

Tahlia Vera, *Front Desk Coordinator*

Employee of the Quarter

Lorenzo Razz, Shift Leader, Oct-Dec 2011



(l-r) Linda Wyckoff, COO; Lorenzo Razz, Shift Leader; Dr. Rick Buitrago, Director of Residential Services; Christopher Jones, Senior Program Supervisor

Employee of the Year

Elisa Leheny, Therapist



(l-r) Matt Ladika, CEO; Linda Wyckoff, COO; Paloma Prata, Director of Prevention Services; Dr. Rick Buitrago, Director of Residential Services; Billy Van Ee, Director of Human Resources; Lisa Walton, Clinical Supervisor

HomeSafe

Matthew Ladika
Chief Executive Officer

Linda Wyckoff
Chief Operating Officer

Board of Directors

Cherie Copenhaver
President

Alice Nelson
Vice-President

Donna Biase
Treasurer

Debbie Ellman
Secretary

Mike Nichols
Past President

Steven Bernstein
Member At Large

Roberto Vargas
President-Elect

Lawrence M. Abramson

William Berger

Suzi Goldsmith

Lynn Holcomb

Ward Kellogg

Rex B. Kirby

David M. Layman

Gloria D. Pierson

Thomas J. Rooney

Richard E. Timmons

HomeSafe Happenings

Joe Maltese, *Editor*
Michael Boro, *Assistant Editor*

Meet the Board



Cherie Copenhaver
President

Tell us about yourself. My career began as a real estate broker in New York, then I relocated to Colorado working as Sales Manager for Red Creek Ranch Development - a company specializing in purchasing, developing and marketing large ranches in Colorado. As its manager I was responsible for developing and liquidating more than 100,000 acres of land. My current focus is buying, selling and developing properties. A sampling includes

working on the future development of River Meadows in central Florida – with lovely lakes, rolling meadows and 770 parcels of mixed-use land. I'm also involved with a number of exciting real estate opportunities on the west coast of Florida.

My volunteer involvement began as a fundraiser for the Little Red School House in Williamstown, MA, then the M.E.C.E. School, Saint Andrews School, Women in Distress, Hillsboro Women's League and North Focal Point. I'm proud to be a supporter of HomeSafe for 12 years, and honored to serve as a Board Member and its current President.

What was it about HomeSafe that made you want to become involved? A majority of my volunteer efforts involved helping children. I believe there's nothing more important than creating a safe and nurturing environment that allows kids to healthfully develop and thrive.

Unfortunately, there are so many children who slip through the cracks and become vic-

tims of horrible circumstances. I believe it's important to help these innocent, defenseless children who HomeSafe serves.

I was instantly impressed with HomeSafe upon learning about its mission and knew it was an organization I needed to get involved with.

What's most challenging and rewarding about being a HomeSafe board member? I believe it's challenging to make people truly comprehend the sheer number of children being abused and abandoned in our own communities – and how much work it takes to help turn their lives around. There are many rewards serving as a board member, especially personally seeing the growth and development of children overcoming horrific abuse.

What are your hopes and aspirations for the future of HomeSafe? As President of HomeSafe, I'm working to help maintain and grow HomeSafe's impact in South Florida to serve those already abused, as well as prevent future acts of violence.