

Summer 2017



HomeSafe

Preventing | Protecting | Preparing

# HomeSafe Happenings

**Our Mission: Creating safer, more productive lives for infants, children, young adults and families**

## First Lady of the United States Visits HomeSafe



Excitement filled the air at HomeSafe when the First Lady of the United States, Melania Trump, visited the agency on the Friday of Easter weekend. Mrs. Trump came to meet the seven young ladies staying at our girls' foster group home on the Lake Worth campus.

The visit, which was planned with Mrs. Trump's staff and the Secret Service, was quietly done so without any mention to the media or the HomeSafe staff. Mrs. Trump arrived at 10:15 a.m. with beach bags filled with an iPod shuffle, an iTunes card, and toiletries for each of the girls. During her visit, she sat down with the girls to talk and learn more about them, answer any questions they had for her, and strongly encouraged them to work hard, stay in school and reach for their dreams. Each girl took a photo with the First Lady.

After spending about 30 minutes with the girls, Mrs. Trump took another 20 minutes for a short tour of the campus with CEO Matt Ladika who spoke with her about our other programs. As the First Lady was leaving, she personally thanked the HomeSafe staff for their good work. Two hours later, Mrs. Trump posted on Twitter and Facebook about her visit with the girls, which led to widespread media and social media exposure for the agency.

We thank the First Lady for visiting HomeSafe, and hope she will stop by again soon!



## Staff Celebrates Success

On May 25, the entire HomeSafe staff gathered for the agency's annual meeting.



# Family Heals With Support from SafetyNet

HOME  
SAFE

HELPED  
PUT A  
SMILE  
ON MY KID'S  
FACES  
AGAIN



Rebecca is the mother of 14-year-old twin boys, Michael and Ben. She and her family were victims of domestic abuse until the day they were referred to HomeSafe's SafetyNet Program by the State Attorney's Office. Rebecca was assaulted and strangled by her husband, but was able to call 911, have him arrested, and obtain a restraining order. During her program intake with SafetyNet, Rebecca said she was ready to learn the red flags of domestic violence so she could protect her children from any further violence.

The family attended weekly therapeutic support groups at our Lake Worth campus. Rebecca described Michael as anxious, but a strong leader. His brother, Ben, was described as confident, and a critical thinker. Both boys initially appeared timid about attending the program. However, with the help of the teen support group, they slowly opened up and were able to honestly share their feelings about the long-term verbal and physical abuse they had suffered. They learned to separate their feelings for their father from their anger toward his abusive behaviors. The boys brought humor and great insight to the support group, and quickly became positive role models to their peers.

Rebecca was quiet, but attentive in her adult therapy group. She recognized that she had tolerated the abuse for a long period of time, which had an adverse effect on her boys. Rebecca started pursuing her professional career to become financially independent. The family, like many victims of domestic violence, had to make radical changes in their personal lives to ensure safety. The family downsized from a large home where the twins had their own bedrooms, to a small apartment, and learned to live on a limited budget.

After six months, Rebecca, Michael and Ben graduated the SafetyNet Program with the tools they need to continue living their lives free of violence, and with great hope for the future.

## Healthy Beginnings *Local Mom Goes to Capitol Hill*

On May 2, babies and families from all 50 states and Washington, D.C. descended on Capitol Hill to stand up for the youngest children as part of the inaugural *Strolling Thunder* event. The event was created to draw attention to the crucial developmental time of a child's life – birth to three. *Strolling Thunder* is a chance to make a mother's or caregiver's voice heard. The hope is that stories are shared in order to help elected leaders understand that by investing in the early years of development, children are given a better opportunity to succeed in life.

Representing Southeast Florida was a mother and son who are participants in Growing Smart, which is part of the Healthy Beginnings program offered at HomeSafe and funded by Children's Services Council. Brittany, a mother of three, was one of only six representatives chosen per state to attend the event. She has been in the Growing Smart program for six months and has found the experience invaluable.

Brittany had the opportunity to meet with Congresswoman Lois Frankel and members of Senator Bill Nelson's staff to talk about her experiences and thoughts about early childhood development.



Joshua



Pictured (L to R) Brittany and Congresswoman Lois Frankel

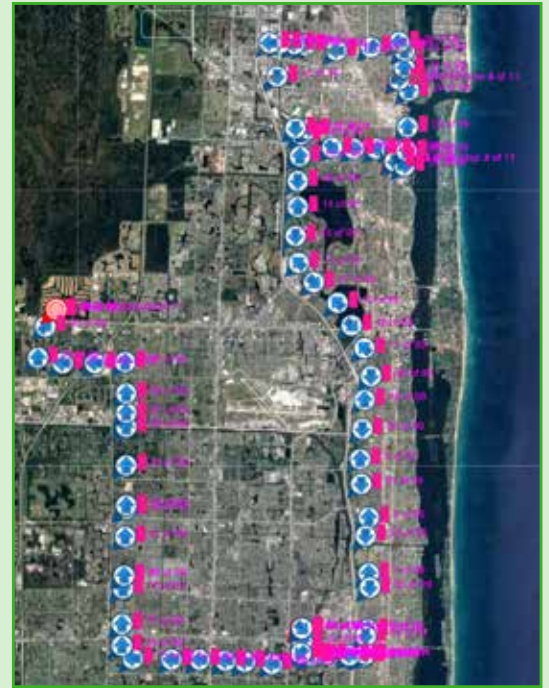


# How's Our Driving?

HomeSafe's residential program provides a total of 48 beds across three campuses – Boca Raton, Lake Worth and West Palm Beach, serving approximately 90-100 children annually. Our kids completely rely on staff for all their individual and group transportation needs, including rides to school, medical appointments, independent-living sessions, shopping excursions, and a variety of social activities.

Utilizing technology that enables us to track not only the locations of these vehicles, but also the manner in which they are driven, ensures that clients will be safe at all times, and that any driver safety concerns can be addressed in a timely manner. For an annual fee of \$7,000, HomeSafe uses NexTraq® for tracking the agency's fleet of 13 cars and passenger vans which log more than 10,000 miles a month. A monthly report shows all the activity of the vehicles and how each driver performed. At any time, the agency can go online and view the location of any of its vehicles. Real-time alerts are emailed to supervisors if an employee is speeding, suddenly stopping or accelerating, turning too quickly, or traveling out of the county. Violators are contacted about their infraction, and if there are repeated violations, the safety policy is reviewed and coaching is conducted. Quarterly, an internal safety committee meets to review the reports, look for trends, and follow up on any issues.

Due to the wear and tear put on our vehicles from all the transporting we do, the agency is always looking for new or "gently used" minivans and passenger vans that hold up to 15 passengers. If you or someone you know has a van they would like to donate, or would like to underwrite the cost of NexTraq®, please give us a call at (561) 383-9842.



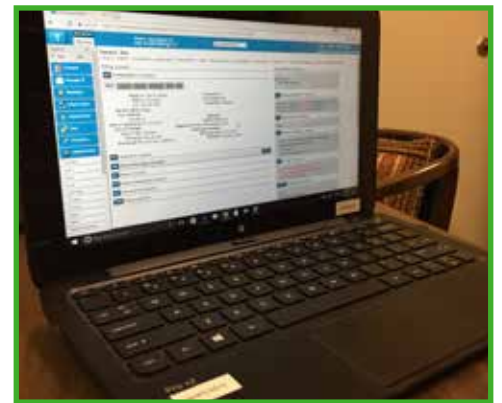
*This map shows a vehicle as it travels north and then returns back south to the group home. The pink marks indicate when and where the GPS pings the vehicle as it is being driven.*

# Electronic Health Records Benefit Both Client and Staff

HomeSafe prides itself on maintaining up-to-date records for clients in both our residential and SafetyNet programs. Every client has a chart, which includes demographics, family information, personal and legal history, and psychological and medical records. Over the years, this has meant many hours of handwritten data and mounds of paper.

In 2015, the agency made the move to electronic health records thanks to generous grants from the Quantum Foundation and the Nichols Family Foundation. It took nearly a year to convert all the files to the new EncounterWorks online system. Secure client charts are now accessible by clinical directors, therapists, the nurse and life skills coordinators, for more efficient and timely input of critical data for each client. Seventeen laptops were also purchased so that staff who work with clients at more than one campus can always have access to needed client information and can record notes immediately after meeting with a client. The ultimate benefit of using electronic health records is that therapists are now able to spend more one-on-one time with clients and less time processing paperwork.

Although the implementation of this system was a significant achievement that modernized HomeSafe's recordkeeping, there are still ongoing costs for its use. The annual subscription for the EncounterWorks health care software is \$12,000. The agency is seeking needed funding so that we can maintain this system and continue to reap the rewards of increased operating efficiency and improved service delivery to our clients.



*Thanks to electronic records, time in the office that used to be spent catching up on notes, can now be used to provide additional therapeutic or case management services that assist each client to work toward successfully completing their treatment plan goals and objectives.*

*- Cindi Grazioso, Clinical Director*



**HomeSafe**

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*For a 4th year, HomeSafe and its Board of Directors  
were excited to be a part of the Great Give!*

*Thank you to everyone who donated and helped  
raise \$13,395 for agency needs.*

*Remember, you can make a lasting impact  
by naming HomeSafe as a beneficiary in  
your will, life insurance or IRA.*



*(L to R) David Layman, Aggie Stoops, Rex Kirby, Val Perez, Steve Bernstein, Larry Gonnello,  
Alice Nelson, Cherie Copenhaver & Diego Rico.*

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