

HARC is a non-profit charitable corporation [501(c)(3)] whose purpose is to provide support to children and youth with mental challenges, as well as their families.

HARC supports children and families through Gethsemane UMC's SMILE program, a nonsectarian Parents Night Out program, with more services and programs for kids and their families still to come.

To find out more about HARC, go to www.harc-hou.org or call us at 713-271-6001 for an appointment. We are located in Southwest Houston at 6856 Bellaire Blvd. on the campus of Gethsemane United Methodist Church.



HOUSTON AREA RESPITE CENTER

6856 Bellaire Blvd. Houston, Texas 77074

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**Gethsemane
United
Methodist
and
Houston Area
Respite Center
Sunday Programs**



**HOUSTON
AREA
RESPITE
CENTER**

Have You Heard About HARC?

HARC is a SMILE partner.

SMILE stands for Special Ministry In a Loving Environment, and is the name of Gethsemane United Methodist Church's Sunday morning worship for children who have mental handicaps. SMILE is also the face of the day every Sunday morning. This is where HARC comes in.

HARC realizes that children can sometimes find it difficult to sit through an adult worship service. Music, liturgy, and sermons that parents find uplifting can be hard for children to understand. When a child has a mentally handicapping condition, the challenge can become unbearable for both the child and their parents.

HARC has partnered with Gethsemane UMC to develop a Sunday morning worship and Sunday School program for the church. In worship with the HARC staff, children sing, hear stories, play games, and make crafts, all around a Biblical theme of the day. Many times, that theme is tied directly to the theme of worship in the adult service at Gethsemane.

What looks like fun and games serves as an opportunity for the kids to

worship in a way that is geared to their needs learn more about church, so that as they mature, they might find their own place in worship.

Along with the Sunday worship, HARC also provides Gethsemane's SMILE ministry with support for a Sunday School program where children can participate in classes with other children. These classes give the child a chance to join other children in regular classes while still giving the individual care they need. Thus, they cannot only be part of the class where they can learn from teachers, but also gain from socializing with other students.

For those children whose condition will not allow participation in a group setting, individual care and teaching will help them to grow in their faith.

Parents will also find a chance to grow as they, too, are given the opportunity to take part in classes of their own, knowing that their children are part of a fun, faith-centered learning experience.

HARC and Gethsemane working together in the SMILE program provides a great opportunity for children and parents alike.

Parents are required to participate in a Gethsemane UMC Sunday morning program. See www.gethsemane-umc.org or call 713-271-6001 for more details.

The HARC Staff

Steven R. Goad is HARC's Executive Director. Steve is a graduate of Texas Wesleyan University, and holds a Master of Divinity degree from Southern Methodist University. He is a musician, who enjoys sharing his musical skills with children. Steve is also the founder of "Special Camp for Special People," giving adults with mentally handicapping conditions a chance to participate in the experience.

Lynne Courtney Tupper is HARC's Program Coordinator. Lynne is a graduate of Rice University, and holds a Master's Degree in Health Service Administration from the University of Texas School of Public Health. Lynne also holds a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy from Texas Woman's University. Along with her work at HARC, Lynne serves as Clinical Director of the Occupational Therapy Center in Houston.

Steve and Lynne, along with the volunteer caregivers and members of our pilot "Mentor" program, are working together to make HARC a great program for parents and children.

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The
Parents'
Night Out
Program
from



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Have You Heard About HARC?

Parents who have children with mentally handicapping conditions can have difficulty finding time away. Between the struggle of the child's needs and the difficulty of finding people who are capable of caring for those needs, getting away even for a few hours can become a near impossibility.

This is where HARC comes in.

On Friday evenings from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., HARC provides "Parents Night Out" programs where the children can have an entertaining evening and the parents can enjoy up to four hours away.

HARC's "Parents Night Out" program gives an enjoyable evening for children.

A typical evening will include games, crafts, music, movies and loads of fun events. The programs are created to offer the participants a great time in a nonsectarian environment.

While HARC plans for inclusion programs with a large variety of group activities, HARC also has 1:1 activities for children who are not ready for group events.

HARC's "Parents Night Out" program gives an enjoyable evening for parents.

While children are enjoying themselves, fathers and mothers can find a refreshing getaway. Parents have reported that the joy of having a "date night," going shopping, or just having a quiet evening at home alone, can be a wonderful respite.

"Parents Night Out" is more than just a fun get away for children with mentally handicapping conditions... it is a break for the whole family.

Fees and Restrictions

A \$25 fee is requested per child. Partial scholarships are available, and second child discounts apply. Since children with handicapping conditions also often relate well with their "typical learning" siblings, special invitation rates are offered for these siblings.

Parents Night Out is restricted to children ages 4-18 years of age.

All allergies, diet restrictions, and other special needs are to be made known in advance.

For more information about HARC's Parents Night Out program, see www.harc-hou.org or call 713-271-6001 for more details.

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