



## Palacios Community Hub

Breaking Down Barriers and Creating Solutions

1519 4<sup>th</sup> Street Palacios, TX 77465

361-972-9990

The Palacios Community Hub's mission is: *To improve the quality of life and strengthen the Palacios community by encouraging self-sufficiency through literacy support for children, workforce preparation, adult education, and health services.* An overview of current programs in our four specific mission areas is given below.

### LITERACY SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN

#### Literacy Clubs and Camps

During the school year, Kids Club hosted monthly at Palacios Housing Authority, Tres Palacios Oaks (a neighborhood outside of town with little to no access to youth activities), and City by the Sea Museum. During Kids Club a book is read, an activity is done in support of the book, and a healthy meal is made together.

Lit Camp is held weekly in the summer at the same three locations for seven weeks for grades K-3rd. The kids read beautiful Scholastic books and take the books home to keep and to read to their siblings. Our continued goal each year is to help stop the summer slide and to maintain the child's reading grade level for the upcoming year.

#### Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers is a nationally recognized and proven method to help parents and caregivers learn to be their child's most important teacher and to prepare the child with the needed skills to be successful when entering Kindergarten. The Hub's PAT educators meet with parents and their child/children biweekly to provide important age-appropriate educational activities, teaching parents to interact with the child to help build developmental skills. Goals are set to reach milestones and the family is cared for overall including mental health, physical, social, etc. Monthly the families meet for a Group Connection that focuses on a particular topic, activity, fellowship, and meal.

### WORKFORCE PREPARATION

#### Job Search/Prep

A dedicated bulletin board at the Hub lists current job postings and on social media, new job postings are available daily. The Hub continually aids with resume and cover letter creation or editing.

#### Workforce Solutions

Through Workforce Solutions the Hub can serve young adults through the SER program allowing 16–24-year-olds to work as paid interns at the Hub or at other Palacios work sites. A



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SER youth counselor meets with and works one on one with the interns in the 16–24-year age range, as well as with young people above age 24 with all the services. Workforce provides. The Hub is also a SEAL workforce site, working with young people with mental or physical challenges. We provide the SEAL participants with the opportunity to learn workforce skills, communication, and time management.

### **Job Fair**

The Hub partners with Palacios Independent School District, Matagorda County Navigation District #1, The Linton Real Estate Group, Palacios Chamber of Commerce, Bay City Chamber of Commerce, and Jackson County Chamber of Commerce to gather businesses and corporations in the area. Attendees include students beginning their careers and adults looking for more challenging or rewarding gainful employment.

## **ADULT EDUCATION**

### **English as a Second Language**

ESL classes are held at the Hub four times a week with morning and evening classes for all who are wanting to learn to communicate better in English. Many also attend ESL Classes to work on gaining U.S. citizenship, including preparing for tests and interviews to complete the citizenship process.

### **GED Classes**

Community members are assisted with enrollment for GED classes through Wharton County Junior College and Workforce Solutions. Several students have utilized one on one tutoring with the Hub's Executive Director who is a certified teacher.

### **Financial Literacy Classes**

The Hub holds financial literacy classes with guest speakers to address financial areas that can be challenging to community members. Guest speakers provide information on the day they present but have offered continued services as well. One on one financial literacy and budget completion is a requirement for community members who have continually needed assistance from the Presbyterian Aid Fund so that the root of the problem can be identified and a plan made to remedy the challenge.



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### **Lecture Series on Agriculture**

Partnering monthly with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, Matagorda County Navigation District #1, and The Linton Real Estate Group, the Palacios Community Hub is proud to bring valuable speakers to our community. These speakers, hailing from various regions of Texas, share their expertise to help all sectors of agriculture flourish. Whether a seasoned farmer, a budding entrepreneur in the agricultural industry, or simply interested in learning more, our monthly speaker series promises to enlighten, educate, and empower. We work together to cultivate growth, improve practices, and ensure a thriving future for agriculture in our community and beyond.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

#### **Wesley Nurse**

A Wesley Nurse is on site at the Hub four days a week to assist community members. The professional practice of the Wesley Nurse is not limited to the physical dimension of medical needs, rather, it includes a mind, body and spirit holistic approach. A key component Wesley Nurses undertake in our Palacios community is providing health education, health promotion and facilitation of resources. They assist individuals and communities in achieving improved health and wellness through self-empowerment and access to healthcare resource information. Our Wesley Nurse is also able to refer community members to a behavioral health counselor, free of charge, who will come meet with the community member at the Hub or a similar safe space in town.

#### **Immunizations**

Texas Department of Health and Human Services sends a team of nurses to administer immunizations in times of need including flu, covid, and childhood immunizations.

#### **Prevent Blindness**

Monthly Prevent Blindness provides free vision screenings at the Hub. The Hub receives applications and community members meet with a Prevent Blindness representative. After the vision screening, if approved, a voucher is sent to the Hub allowing the community member to use voucher for a free formal exam and eyeglasses.

#### **Early Childhood Intervention**

ECI therapists schedule time at the Hub weekly for sessions with families to help with developmental delays and challenges. An ECI community outreach representative attends Hub community events to share information on ECI free services for children under the age of 3.

#### **Health Expo**

The hub cohosts along with MidCoast Health Systems, Texas A&M Agrilife, and Texas Health and Human Services to organize a multiday event that brings information and services to the



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community and specifically to families the weeks prior to school starting for the year. Services include but are not limited to: vision screening, blood pressure checks, physicals, haircuts, gardening demos, and more.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

#### **Benefits Assistance**

Community members that are in need apply for benefits at the Hub such as (but not limited to) SNAP, TANF, healthcare benefits, social security, and unemployment. Hub staff are available to guide members through the process, many times doing it for them, and assist with information needed to complete or update applications.

#### **Bringing the Community Together**

The Palacios Community Hub organizes events, encouraging fellowship and bringing the community together, including the Annual Community Thanksgiving, participation in the City's Seaside Holiday, Harmonie Club Parade, and Cinco de Mayo event. The Hub supports other local organizations in their endeavors such as the Boys and Girls Club and City by the Sea Museum. The Hub continues to assist Palacios ISD in their registration process for new and current students.

#### **Computer Access**

The Hub has over a dozen computers available to the public to access health documents and services and to utilize for work and for school.

**Copies/Print - Fax/Scan - Notary - Translation Services** - Daily, community members come to the Hub for these services.

#### **Palacios Days of Caring in affiliation with Mission by the Sea**

Palacios Days of Caring in affiliation with Mission by the Sea is made up of work teams from local Palacios organizations and middle-school, high school, and college youth from Bethany United Methodist Church, Austin, TX. The Hub takes in the resident applications for work needed to be done in the community and coordinates the teams and materials to perform the tasks. All teams are serving others by doing jobs that make meaningful and positive differences in the lives of other people. Jobs can be big, small, indoors or outdoors, (weather permitting). Examples of jobs done in the past are washing windows, dusting and cleaning fixtures, scrubbing siding, painting one-story houses, repairing porches and some siding, weeding, mowing, cleaning sheds, attics and garages, planting and picking up trash. Chores have been done at churches, homes, and community buildings.



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### **Quilt Club**

The Quilt Club meets at the Hub to put together beautiful quilts that are donated to the police department, Project Santa, veterans, or for auction items for nonprofit fundraisers. The quilting group enjoys the craft of sewing together but also important are the fellowship and mental and physical health benefits provided to its participants.

### **Raising Highly Capable Kids**

The Hub is set up to host this 13-week, multilingual, evidence-based parenting program has brought together communities to help parents raise healthy, caring and responsible children. It's more than a curriculum. It's a powerful community-led program with lasting results. We will meet with parents for one hour a week while their children are engaged in meaningful activities on site. Palacios ISD has requested that we be able to provide this program to parents who are struggling with truancy issues that ultimately mean other challenges are happening in the home. PISD can refer families to the Hub and/or the court can mandate that a parent must attend this program as a parenting class fulfillment.

### **Wellness Council**

The Hub's Executive Director serves as the Chairman for the Wellness Council that meets monthly to work on ways to improve mental health resource access and activities in and around Palacios. The Council invites guest speakers and works collaboratively to meet its goals.

### **Walk and Talk**

Once a week the Hub invites community members to come walk and talk together to encourage physical and mental health wellness.

### **Water Aerobics**

The Hub has provided the funds for lifeguards and equipment to conduct water aerobics for adults from June to October. The average class size five times per week (then reduced to 3 times a week when school started) was 22 participants. The community members that utilized this program reported not only physical health improvements, but mental health as well.

### **Movie by the Bay**

The Hub hosts a movie at the bay each second Saturday of the month. Families enjoy this free, family-appropriate activity each month.

## **COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Crisis Center**

On Thursdays from 1pm-5pm, a Crisis Center Advocate from Bay City is on site to assist abused women and children with resources, shelter, and legal assistance.



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### **Lonestar Legal Aid**

Monthly lawyers are on site to assist community members with free legal services which include eviction, probate, family law, landlord/tenant disputes, veterans' benefits, wills, public benefits, housing issues, guardianship, and consumer issues.

### **Presbyterian Aid Fund**

The First Presbyterian Church of Palacios partners with the Palacios Community Hub to be the access place in our community where community members in need can apply for financial aid from the Aid Fund to help with rent, utilities, medical expenses, etc.. Hub staff receive applications, interview applicants who are applying for assistance, compile the information we gather and send it to the anonymous 7-member aid fund committee for decisions. Hub staff assist in finding answers to any questions the committee has and finally communicates to the applicant what was decided. Hub staff also distributes funds to landlords, utility companies, or healthcare facilities and maintains a database regarding each applicant and decisions made as a valuable future resource.

### **Friends of Elder Citizens-Edna, Texas and Tres Palacios Oaks**

Both of these are sites that the staff of the Hub can travel to, to serve the communities members closer to home with any of our services and programs they may be in need of.