

November 2022

FEATURED NEWS



Santa Returns to The Harris Center

It's that time of year! The Harris Center is proud to offer a fun and safe holiday activity to all clients and their families, and enthusiastic employees. Stop by room 104 of 9401 Southwest Freeway on Dec. 5 from 8 to 3 p.m. to participate in our Photos with Santa celebration. Participants will receive a free picture with Santa, a goody bag and a wonderful time.

Please spread the word! Download the event flyers in English and Spanish and share it on your social media pages.

Flyers to Share



Transforming Lives Luncheon 2022

The inaugural Transforming Lives Luncheon benefiting the Harris Center Foundation was hugely successful! Renowned writer and producer Lisa Malosky Productions led guests through a touching and enjoyable luncheon. Luncheon Chairs Gwen Emmett and Shaukat Zakaria underscored the Harris Foundation's impact on the community through its support of special programs The Harris Center delivers.

Held at the delightful Junior League of Houston, participants enjoyed a touching performance of "I Believe I Can Fly" by The Harris Center's Unique Voices of Harmony Choir. Luncheon Chairs Gwen Emmett and Shaukat Zakaria underscored the impact the Foundation makes in the community through its support of special programs The Harris Center delivers.

Donna Mohlman, the mother of a Harris Center client, shared about her family's journey navigating systems to find support for her son. She described how the pandemic exacerbated the challenges and the relief they experienced upon contacting The Harris Center. Excellent presentations were given by Susan Fordice, executive director of The Harris Center Foundation, and Wayne Young, CEO of The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD.

Former Harris County Judge, The Honorable Ed Emmett, highlighted the importance of the mission of the Foundation and The Harris Center, recounting personal experiences with mental illness in his family. He praised attendees for supporting the work of the Foundation and encouraged them to share its mission.

A special thank you to Gwen O'Brien Emmett & Ed Emmett, Nihala Zakaria & Shaukat Zakaria, and the many others who made this event possible! We would also like to thank those who attended, including The Hackett Center for Mental Health, Mental Health America of Greater Houston, NAMI Greater Houston, Alliance for Multicultural Community Services, Houston-Galveston Area Council, and Ibn Sina Community Medical and Dental Clinic.

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD creates innovative solutions to transform the lives of people with behavioral health and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Join us as we work to tackle some of the most significant mental health and IDD challenges in our community.



Smart Pod: New Access Point for Mental Health Services

Commissioner Adrian Garcia and The Harris Center recently celebrated the opening of the Access2Health Smart Pod in Precinct 2. In partnership with Catholic Charities, the Smart Pod located at the North East community center will be bringing mental health services to the community.

Learn more about how the Smart Pod will help turn around a community with some of the worst health outcomes in all of the county.

[Learn More](#)



Jail Diversion Program recognized by The Texas Association of Counties

The Harris County District Attorney's Office has received the 2022 County Best Practices Award from the Texas Association of Counties for their Mental Health Jail Diversion program. The Harris Center is proud to be a part of this collaborative program that is becoming the blueprint for how counties across America can respond to mental health crises with treatment rather than punishment.



Vaccine Clinics for Clients

We had a great turnout at the vaccine clinics over the past month. Through a partnership with Randalls and the University of Houston College of Medicine, we administered almost 400 vaccines to our clients.

This successful initiative was made possible by teamwork and collaboration among care coordinators, Integrated Care, Mental Health and other agency staff.

Patients were grateful for receiving multiple vaccines at a convenient location.

Video Recap



Northeast Expansion - The Youth and Family Wellness Center

The Harris Center is expanding! The Youth and Family Wellness Center will be our newest location serving District 141, which contains Northeast Houston and Humble. The Youth

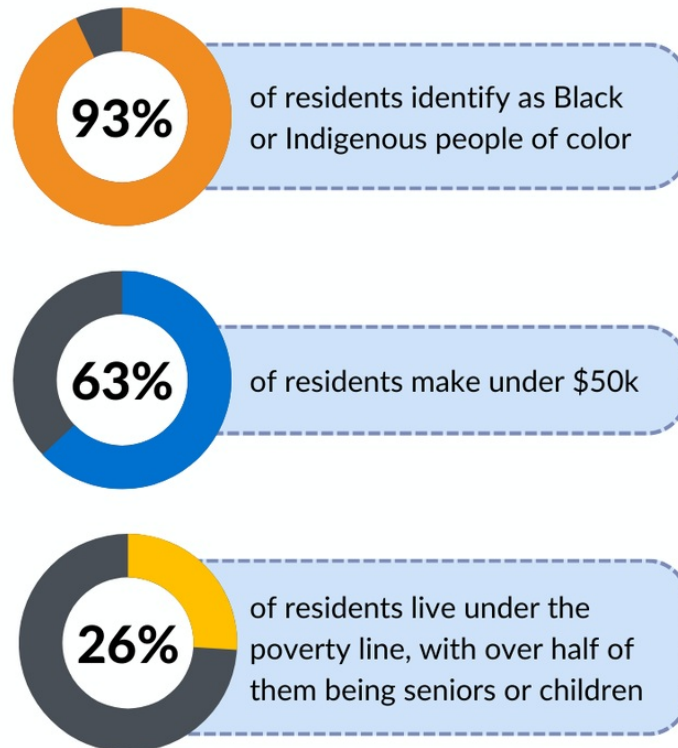
and Family Wellness Center will be a new concept for The Harris Center and will provide community members with comprehensive, holistic care with an expanded array of services. The goal of this expansion is to transform the lives of a historically under-served community by improving clinical outcomes, health literacy, and access to resources. Thanks to \$10 million in ARPA funding from District 141, the Youth and Family Wellness Center will be able to provide residents with everything from integrative primary care services to inclusive yoga classes while serving a diverse range of ages and abilities.

The Youth and Family Wellness Center brings together each of the Strategic Plan's Focus Areas: Quality, People, Integration, Access, Community, and Innovation. Through our expanded services, we will be able to address the systemic and intersectional issues that limit the effectiveness of behavioral and mental health interventions. This is an exciting new direction for The Harris Center, and we hope you will follow the NE Expansion's progress.

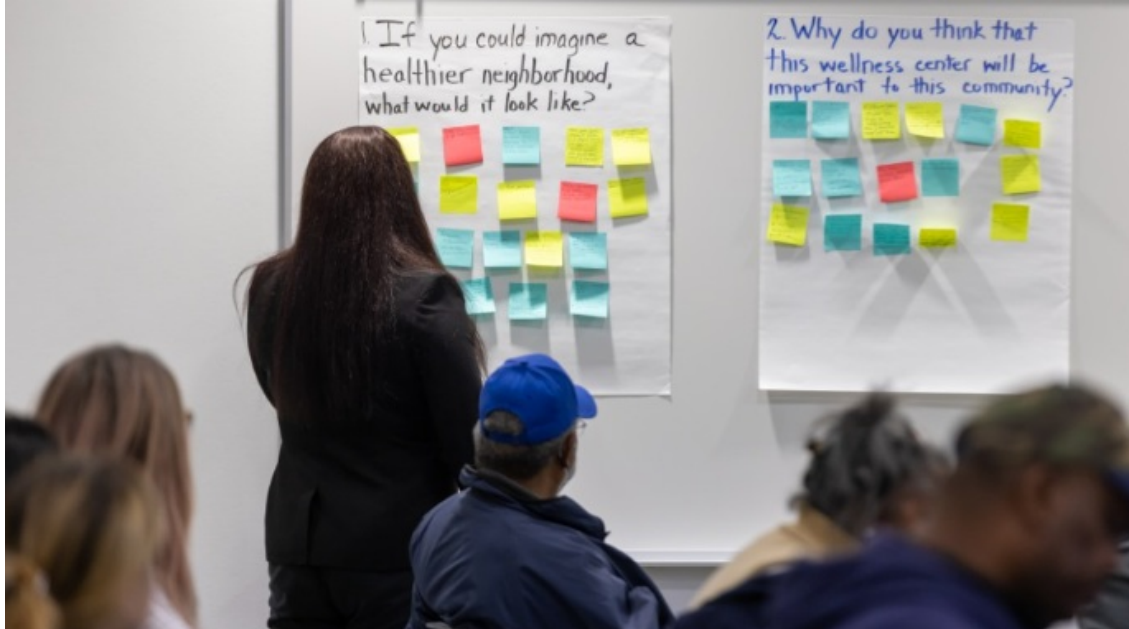
Stay tuned to learn more.

District 141: NE Houston & Humble

Population: 194,000



Source: 2020 Census



Town Hall for the Youth and Family Wellness Center

The first Town Hall meeting for our new Youth and Family Wellness Center was a huge success! Our community showed up to share ideas and provide invaluable feedback on The Harris Center's latest expansion.

Thank you to Gerald Womack, Wayne Young, and State Representative Senfronia Thompson for speaking with the community and sharing our plans for this new expansion.

This is the first of many community-based events we will hold while the Youth and Family Wellness Center starts developing construction and programming plans. This project relies on community feedback to inform and direct us - thank you to all who attended!

What did the people have to say?

Here are some highlights of what community members had to say:

If you could imagine a healthier neighborhood, what would it look like?

- More green spaces
- Accessible sidewalks and spaces to walk/jog
- Affordable gyms and places to work out
- Accessibility to fresh groceries
- Supporting local businesses and knowing your neighbors
- Access to healthcare and other resources that are hard to find

Why do you think this wellness center will be necessary for your community?

- Better access to healthcare
- Destigmatizing mental illness
- Reduce feelings of solitude and dementia rates among seniors
- It will create a healthier and wealthier community
- Cultivate a stronger sense of community

[Video Recap](#)



The Harris Center is Among the Best Places to Work!

We are excited to announce that The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD is ranked #11 in Houston Business Journal's Best Places to Work in 2022! The rankings in the various categories were announced at the awards luncheon.

The Houston Business Journal runs this annual competition to honor companies that create a fun, challenging, and rewarding workplaces.

Congratulations to our incredible team and all the local companies that made the list!

THE HARRIS CENTER IN THE MEDIA



What it's like for a 988 crisis hotline counselor in Houston

Nov. 23, 2022 | Houston Public Media

There's a new resource for those crumbling under the burden of distress this holiday season: the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline. The three-digit numbers launched in July and is a rebrand from the 1-800 suicide prevention number. Since then, the call center has seen a significant increase in calls from the Houston area.

Health Reporter Sara Willa Ernst went to The Harris Center in Southwest Houston, where the call center is housed.



Texas has a high veteran suicide rate. What's being done to help?

Houston Chronicle - Nov. 11, 2022

Local efforts to reduce veteran suicides - Sarah Strang, the director for the Mobile Crisis Outreach Team at the Harris Center, said one of the first things the two agencies did was establish a care coordination agreement to allow them to provide care more efficiently when responding to veteran mental health crises.



Mohlman talks mental health at Harris Center

The Baytown Sun - Nov. 15, 2022

Donna Mohlman said from the first phone call she made to The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD a little more than a year ago, everyone she spoke to not only provided accurate, timely information, but also assured her they would stay by her side.

MORE INFORMATION

Do you want to learn more about The Harris Center?

Visit our website to learn more about our programs and services or view our [FY2022-2024 Strategic Plan](#) to see how we're working to transform lives in Harris County and beyond.

Visit The Harris Center's Website

Questions? Contact Communications@TheHarrisCenter.org.



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