



Hendrick Home for Children Office of Community Relations

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# News Release

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## HENDRICK HOME BREAKS GROUND ON \$6.5M COMPLEX TO AID SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

Abilene, Texas – Hand-painted shovels decorated by children in the Family Care Program will help kick off Hendrick Home for Children's 75th anniversary year during the June 3 groundbreaking ceremony of a \$6.5 million Family Care Complex.

Friends, donors and employees will gather on the grounds of Hendrick Home at 10 a.m. along with Family Care Program participants to reveal the name of the complex that will honor the facility's top donor(s) – long-time Abilene resident(s).

The Family Care Program, was established in 1996 to answer the home's growing number of requests for help from impoverished single parents living with their children in cars, substandard housing or dangerous conditions. The program addresses crisis situations before children have lost both parents. The Basic Care Program, founded in 1939 by Thomas G. and Ida Hendrick, helps children who have no parents or another kinship to turn to for a safe living environment.

Donors were sought for the new complex for multiple reasons. First, the home has a long waiting list to get into the program. The number of applications for admission continues to grow, but the home lacks adequate space to lodge additional families, and the home is not permitted to use any operating funds or the principal of its endowment for capital improvements – or any brick-and-mortar project. Since 1939, the home has operated on 5 percent of the endowment's annual earnings as stipulated by the Hendrick's founding parameters. In years that the earnings waned due to a flagging economy or dwindling investments, the home turned to fundraising, such as when the Hendrick Trust's oil and gas reserves plummeted in the 1980s. Even with this year's sale of the trust's Hendrick River Ranch in February by Trust Department of Fort Worth-based JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., the home is not allowed access to those proceeds except through its annual 5 percent disbursement that may be used only for operating expenses. The ranch was sold only after two independent calculations showed that the original trust would be completely depleted by 2035, apart from the sale of the ranch.

"Family care is a step we can take to prevent the need for adding residents to the Basic Care Program," said K. Lee Hamilton, chair of the home's board of trustees. "The home's goal in family care is to provide temporary lodging, parenting and financial training to help impoverished and struggling parents get back on their feet, so the family doesn't fall apart." The mission of the FCP is to help impoverished single parents and their children achieve healthy independence for the families.

"Hendrick Home does not move into major programs without much careful thought and significant deliberation," said David W. Miller, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer, "and what our board of trustees sees is that millions of children in Texas are living in poverty, neglect, and abuse."

In Texas, 25 percent (1,701,832) of children live in poor families (National: 22 percent), defined as income below 100 percent of the federal poverty level, according the National Center for Children in Poverty. More than half (56 percent) of these hurting children live with a single parent. Most of the time, these parents cannot change the direction of their lives permanently without competent assistance – and that's where Hendrick Home for Children can help.

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National Center for Children in Poverty: [http://www.nccp.org/profiles/TX\\_profile\\_7.html](http://www.nccp.org/profiles/TX_profile_7.html)  
For interviews of board members, employees or FCP participants, please contact Barbara Dahl.