

# Lobbyists

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tive is urging concerned constituents to phone their legislators on Nov. 8 and 9, urging them to support child-care programs, she said.

Dwyer also stressed that every dollar cut means a loss of \$1 to \$4 in matching dollars from state, federal, and private funding sources, which often make up a substantial portion of a child-care program's budget. For example, Dodson remarked that this year the Catholic Family Center's child-care programs received \$600,000 in

matching funds from the United Way.

Dwyer praised the county legislature for going easy on cuts to child-care programs, which face reductions in funding of 5-15 percent across the board. Commenting that the collaborative had anticipated cuts of up to 28 percent in the proposed budget, she expressed relief at the final funding proposals. "If we don't get expansion of services, the least we could do is hold the line," she said.

But "holding the line" means a probable reduction in services for the Baby Love Prenatal program, which is slated for a proposed 15 percent cut in its \$180,000 budget, according to Mardy Sandler, program director.

Administered by Strong Memorial Hospital, Baby Love educates and assists expectant mothers in the city's southeast section, and operates out of four centers, including Corpus Christi's Health Center.

Baby Love provides low-income women with such services as free pregnancy tests, doctor referrals, home visits and information on securing child-care aid, said Sister Barbara Lum, SSI, Baby Love's nurse practitioner.

Sandler said these services are vital to poor, pregnant women, whose infants are often born underweight or even stillborn.

The collaborative cited funding for Baby Love in its list of cuts that should be reinstated. "Since the program was unable to meet the current needs with the 1989 budget, this 15 percent cut would necessitate

diminished nursing care and family support," the group noted in its report entitled *Response to the Proposed 1990 County Budget*.

"When prenatal care is ignored, babies are more prone to needing neonatal intensive care at a cost of \$50,000 per baby," the report stated, noting that with the loss of matching funds, Baby Love stands to lose almost \$28,000 next year.

Despite the collaborative's pleas, the legislature has some hard choices to make, said county Legislator Phil Fedele, D-26th district.

"Obviously, it's important that we do take care of kids and their needs," he said at the St. Mary's breakfast. "(But) this happens to be a time of tight budgets and constraints. I'm not sure if we have the ability to restore what they're asking for."

# Families

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styles, and ways of perceiving the world." Because of this, the manual states, parishes and dioceses should "keep up to date with family changes and trends in the nation, and in their locale, and then examine their policies, programs, ministries, and services in light of this information."

One way in which the regional office is implementing the bishops' vision of family lies in the use of "When Families Marry," a manual that engaged couples began using in pre-Cana sessions throughout the diocese last spring.

The manual stresses the importance of knowing not only one's spouse, but the spouse's family and its traits, before entering marriage. For example, one section in the book contains a list of a series of statements indicative of individual family attitudes towards communication. Prospective

couples answer "yes" if they think the statement reflects their family life, or "no" if it doesn't.

"We don't know about particular parts of (our spouse's) family," Shari remarked, and her husband added that ignorance of certain family traits can create unforeseen problems in a marriage.

To further act on their new vision of families and ministerial direction, the Fischers will spend the coming months traveling throughout the diocese to discuss the possibility of parishes recruiting volunteer "family advocates." These advocates will be charged with researching the needs of parish families.

Eventually, the Fischers hope to establish liaisons, or "routers," between clusters of parish family advocates and the regional office. These liaisons would provide information on how the diocesan office can better meet the needs of parish families, they said.

# Refugees

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In comments made to the Associated Press, U.N. representative Ulrich von Blumenthal accused Going Home delegates of attempting to politicize the repatriation. The organization "has made a series of stupid moves and blocked the relocation of the Salvadorans," he said.

Joseph Piersante was angry about attempts to characterize the Going Home delegates as the source of conflict. "We went down there as church, and when we got there, there was a newspaper article that called us guerrillas. Their interpretation of a guerrilla is anybody who speaks out for the poor," he said.

Salvadoran Interior Secretary Enrique Ortiz Colindres told the AP that 10,800

refugees remaining in Honduran camps will be repatriated to El Salvador within two weeks. Romero said 2,700 are still in Mesa Grande.

Smullen plans to be among the Going Home delegates accompanying those refugees on their return home.

"I don't know when or whether I'm more called to go back to help the people who remain in Mesa Grande or to help the people in the repopulation sites, but I will go back," she said.

The Piersantes' commitment to the campaign also remains strong. "We have continued to be involved in the issue because as church, we feel a responsibility to proclaim the word and to bring help to the poor as Jesus did," Joseph Piersante said.

Contains reporting from the Associated Press.

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