



## **BEAR FACT SHEET**

- ❖ BEAR was formed in 1997 by a group of concerned citizens with a budget of \$7,000. In seven short years, this budget has grown to over \$950,000.
- ❖ The mission of BEAR is to offer help and hope for abused and neglected children in Harris County and to the caseworkers who protect them.
- ❖ BEAR operates three programs: BEAR Necessities, an emergency supply room that provides basic necessities for children in crisis, BEARing Gifts, a Christmas toy drive, and BEAR Back to School, which provides prepackaged school supplies and uniforms to children under the care of Child Protective Services.
- ❖ BEAR is a unique public/private partnership. BEAR does not pay salaries to the three full-time employees. Harris County provides the Director and the Program Coordinator positions. Texas Department of Family and Protective Services provides the Volunteer Services Coordinator position.
- ❖ In 2002, because of the continued need for resources by the caseworkers of Harris County, BEAR opened a second BEAR Necessities room in North Houston.
- ❖ More than 6,000 children were served in 2005 through the BEARing Gifts program.
- ❖ Every year, more than 300 volunteers assist with the BEARing Gifts program.
- ❖ Since 2003, the new BEAR Back to School program has provided new school supplies and new school uniforms to more than 3,000 children. In 2006, over 5,000 children started school with new uniforms and school supplies.
- ❖ In 2003, BEAR began the task of refurbishing more than 20 family visitation rooms located within the six CPS offices. To date, a total of seven rooms have been redesigned from top to bottom.
- ❖ In 2005, BEAR opened the third BEAR room located at the new Youth Services Center. BEAR serves more than 1,000 children each month through the three BEAR rooms

