

FIRST 5 LA AWARDS MAJOR PARTNERSHIP FOR FAMILIES GRANT TO THE HELP GROUP



Elena Brewer and Dr. Susan Berman

The Help Group and San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Centers, Inc. (SFVCMHC) were recently awarded a major grant from First 5 LA as part of its Partnership for Families Initiative. This program is designed to provide a wide range of services to high risk pregnant women and families with children age five and younger. The Help Group's program known as Project SAFE (Support and Advocacy for Family Empowerment), is committed to building partnerships within the San Fernando Valley to help strengthen families and enhance the community's capacity to provide a safe, nurturing environment for children.

"Project SAFE will give at-risk families the opportunity to learn the skills required to provide their children with safe and nurturing homes," says The Help Group Executive Vice President Dr. Susan Berman, who provided the leadership in the development of this program. "The Help Group is excited to join with First 5 LA in this innovative approach to addressing this pressing need."

Elena Brewer, the Director of Program Administration at The Help Group, oversees the grant from First 5 LA. The Help Group and SFVCMHC will serve as co-lead agencies for the program which was implemented July 1, 2006. The Help Group is recognized as a major

center for child abuse prevention and intervention programs designed to assist families acquire the skills and resources they need to function in safe and healthy homes.

The community-based program is designed to expand free services, including food, adequate housing, transportation, financial assistance, clothing medical and dental care and respite care-so families can safely take care of their children. Collaborative partners will be required to provide preventative services in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner to families served by each region. Based on their specific needs, families can receive case management, services for basic family needs, domestic violence, substance abuse, access to child care, and early and linkages to auxiliary community supports.

First 5 LA has also recognized the work of The Help Group by recently having selected the Young Learners Preschool for Autism program as a model of excellence during the first state-wide videoconference, which was broadcast to 12 counties across California. In 2002 First 5 LA awarded The Help Group a major three year grant to establish its Young Learners Preschool for Autism and Stepping Stones Program for at risk preschool children.



Champions For Our Children