

4th Annual

J.C. Montgomery
Child Safety
Awards

AUGUST 22, 2014



Texas Office for Prevention
of Developmental Disabilities

Minding the Minds of Children



Welcome

Welcome!

On behalf of the Texas Office for Prevention of Developmental Disabilities (TOPDD), Executive Committee, staff, and Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, welcome to the 4th Annual J.C. Montgomery Child Safety Awards!

Thank you for joining us in honoring these amazing individuals and organizations. We deeply appreciate that you have made the effort to be with us today in recognizing the importance of child safety and the leaders in this endeavor.



Ashley Givens
Child Safety Award Chair



Event Schedule

August 22nd, 2014

10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

*Lieutenant Governor's Reception Room
Texas State Capitol*

10:00 a.m. Welcome

10:15 a.m. Award Presentations

11:30 a.m. Closing

Brief History of the Award

Child safety is a topic that many people don't give much thought to. However, in a split second a brain injury can cause developmental disabilities that are life changing. Fortunately, Texas has outstanding individuals and organizations, such as those who are being recognized today, that are determined to empower communities, families and individuals to recognize childhood brain injury as the epidemic it is and to promote child safety.

TOPDD developed the J.C. Montgomery Awards program to highlight the importance of child safety in everyday life and recognize outstanding individuals and organizations who are leaders in this work. The award was named in honor of J. C. Montgomery of Texas Scottish Rite Hospital, a tireless champion of child safety and former Chairperson of TOPDD's Executive Committee. Whether one's role specifically involves child safety or not, child safety is everyone's job. We hope that today's event will inspire you in this important endeavor. Together, we can make our state a safer place for every child in Texas.

2014 Award Recipients

Individuals

- *Susan Rodriguez*
- *Carolyn Simpson*
- *Catherine Henry*
- *Dan Leal*

Organizations

- *Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County*
- *Hays County Office of Emergency Management
Standard Response Protocol Task Force*
- *Pflugerville Police Department*
- *Texans Care for Children*

Susan Rodriguez

*HHSC Texas Home Visiting Program
Community Development Specialist*

Susan Rodriguez is a highly respected expert on child safety and has made contributions across the state to promote injury prevention and education on safety. Her eight years of work in Child Fatality Review created a strong foundation across the state to understand causes and incidences of child deaths and develop procedures and recommendations to law, policy, and practice. She met with the many challenges of safety work, and mastered them. She ensured that voluntary local Child Fatality Review Teams (CFRTs) were either active or developing in all but 32 of the 254 Texas counties. The local multidisciplinary teams were trained to collect data, review deaths, address preventability, and actively work on making their communities safer for Texas children. Without CFRTs, we wouldn't have some of the safety campaigns that we have today on safe sleep, drowning, hot vehicles and product recalls. Ms. Rodriguez now works as a Community Development Specialist in the Texas Home Visiting program to promote a coordinated system of care for pregnant women and their families for improved health, reduction in injury and maltreatment, improved school readiness, reduced domestic violence, and increased access to resources and supports for improved early childhood outcomes.

Carolyn Simpson

*South Plains Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention Chair
Leader of GO BLUE for Lubbock's Children*

Carolyn Simpson has worked diligently for multiple decades to improve the safety and overall well-being of Texas children. Her efforts produced unparalleled awareness of child abuse and neglect in the Lubbock region. Ms. Simpson led the areas GO BLUE efforts which evolved into over 140 individual teams, representing over 40,000 individuals in the fight for child safety. She also brought key stakeholders together including law enforcement, prosecutors, prevention specialists, and healthcare providers to collaborate on child safety issues. Ms. Simpson initiated the first Kickoff Breakfast for Child Abuse Awareness Month, which brought area legislators and city and county dignitaries to support her efforts. She also received an official proclamation by the Mayor and City Council designating April as, "GO BLUE for Lubbock's Children Month." These efforts continue with an annual Child Abuse Summit to educate healthcare providers and community-level professionals on the prevalence of child abuse and neglect.

Catherine Henry

Texas School Safety Center

Senior Emergency Management Program Coordinator

Catherine Henry is a champion for child safety and reaches across the state to connect schools with emergency safety planning and education. She has connected over 38 counties with on-site drills and exercises, providing invaluable training to small and rural school districts throughout Texas. Ms. Henry developed a school-based threat assessment training and the “Comprehensive School Safety and Emergency Preparedness Program,” which provide districts with a cohesive strategy to assess school security and emergency preparedness, ensuring that our children are safe. She has also brought district leaders, school personnel, Fire, Police, EMS, and other responders together to identify gaps in the existing safety plans and collaborate on adopting effective emergency management plans. She has improved the safety preparedness of countless schools, preventing harm and keeping children safe in Texas.

Dan Leal

*Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County
Executive Director*

Dan Leal has served as Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Center since 2002. He is a member of the United Ways of Metropolitan Dallas and Denton County and was named Public Health Advocate of the Year by Denton County Health Department. Mr. Leal has invested years leading others to reduce child maltreatment. He not only concerns himself with prevention efforts, but he also pushes for justice to be served for children who have experienced abuse. Mr. Leal invests in the children's well-being and mental health and through the organization's use of family services, therapy, counseling, and prevention education; the children can feel safe again and have caring advocates by their side. Mr. Leal also completed a \$2.5 million capital campaign to construct a 14,000 square-foot facility for the children and families served in Denton County.

Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County

Working alongside 38 partner agencies, the Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County (CACDC) serves over 1,700 children and families per year, providing emotional healing for child victims of abuse and holding offenders accountable for abusing children. In 2013, 810 suspected abused children were interviewed by trained forensic interviewers. Since 1997, over 1,200 adult perpetrators have been brought to justice for molesting children in Denton County. In its 17 years, the agency has conducted 10,000 forensic interviews of children and provided counseling to over 9,000 children and non-offending family members.

In 2009, a former CACDC client, Jenna Quinn, helped pass a law in Texas requiring school districts to have a policy on child sexual abuse education. Jenna's Law was signed by Governor Rick Perry setting in motion the provision of child abuse education classes throughout the state in schools, childcares, and to other mandatory reporters of abuse. CACDC added community education to its mission that year and has since educated over 6,000 adults about how to recognize, report, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

The Children's Advocacy Center for Denton County is one of 68 Centers in Texas that are working to provide justice and healing for abused children.

Hays County Office of Emergency Management Standard Response Protocol Task Force

The Hays County Office of Emergency Management is responsible for planning, responding, mitigating and recovering from catastrophic events affecting the community. The following individuals went an extra mile and came together to create the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) Task Force: Kharley Smith of EMC, Deputy Marshal William Schwall of the City of San Marcos, Lieutenant Jeri Skrocki of the Hays County Sheriff's Office, and Commander Bob Klett of the San Marcos Police Department. The task force dedicates their work to child safety in Texas and provides free injury prevention education to keep our children safe.

This multi-agency collaborative took charge of the safety issue and adopted a national model of emergency preparedness to create comprehensive emergency plans, now accepted by EVERY campus across Hays County. The task force created the School SRP in response to the threat of school shootings and armed threats. They also created the Hays County SRP to address ALL hazards including fires, tornados, bomb threats, and other emergencies. The program administered these trainings in 2013 and in less than one year, more than 64,000 students in grades K-12, teachers, school administrators, law enforcement, Fire, EMS, and emergency management professionals had been trained in all safety plans. In addition, their lock-down drills have been conducted in 57 schools, involving thousands of personnel from schools and public safety working together. In the face of the many challenges of safety work, they have all shown absolute dedication and robust leadership to safeguard the children of Hays County.

The Pflugerville Police Department

The Pflugerville Police Department continues to promote child safety and make a huge impact on preventing child injuries through positive reinforcement, community engagement, and education. The Crime Prevention Unit's summer safety campaign, "Cool Moves," is truly an innovative youth outreach initiative, where officers engage the community and youth to work with them to promote child safety. Pflugerville officers recognize youth by "ticketing" observable safety-conscious behaviors like wearing a helmet correctly, using the crosswalk, obeying traffic laws, and practicing safety when driving. Coupons are redeemable at participating local restaurants. Last year, Pflugerville police officers ticketed over 500 children for their cool moves. Pflugerville PD also adopted an annual Bike Rodeo so that they can connect with local governments, local businesses, non-profits, and the public to address the child safety needs in Texas. Similar programs continue to be replicated across the state to promote bicycle safety and reduce child injury.

Texans Care for Children

Texans Care for Children is the leader in policy advances for Texas children. Since the 1980s, the nonprofit policy advocacy organization has served as the bridge connecting children's advocates to one another and to the state government.

Texans Care keeps legislators and other state officials informed about what's happening with Texas kids and what public policy changes they should pursue to support children. They keep children's advocates and the public updated on what state officials are doing on kids' issues and how Texans can get involved. The organization also keeps children's advocates connected with one another, convening coalitions on a variety of policy issues so stakeholders can work together to improve children's lives through better public policies and programs.

Texans Care is focused on what's best for all Texas kids in five areas of state policy: child protective services; juvenile justice; mental wellness; health and fitness; and early childhood education and opportunities.

You can learn more about the organization and sign up for monthly email updates at txchildren.org. For daily updates, you can follow Texans Care on twitter at [@putkids1st](https://twitter.com/putkids1st).

Special Thanks

Special thanks to:

- State Senator Fraser and his office for sponsoring the Lieutenant Governor's Reception Room for the awards ceremony
- Bryan Sperry for his support in the 2014 J.C. Montgomery Child Safety event
- Volunteer members of the 2014 J.C. Montgomery Child Safety Event Committee
- The extraordinary individuals volunteering their time today to support this event
- Today's award recipients for their inspiring leadership
- To all of the guests joining us to celebrate the amazing child safety work across Texas

About TOPDD

The Texas Office for the Prevention of Developmental Disabilities (TOPDD) was created by the Texas legislature in 1989 to minimize the economic and human losses caused by preventable developmental disabilities. Primarily, the office addresses child injury and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. The disabilities associated with both brain injury and prenatal alcohol exposure are complex and potentially impact every area of life. It is important to give these issues the attention they need and deserve.

TOPDD is unique because it is governed by an executive committee and is volunteer driven. The amazing work being done in child safety can be improved through increased collaboration within and across systems. We invite you to join us in building child safety collaboration across the state. Together we can increase the impact of this work and raise the profile of child safety in our communities.

Please contact us as (512) 206-4544 to learn more about how to become involved, and join our Facebook forum to share with us.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Ashley Givens
Dr. Valerie Kiper
State Representative Elliott Naishat
Joan Roberts-Scott
State Representative Ron Simmons
Dr. Marian Sokol
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