

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Monday, June 30, 2014 4:35:23 PM

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From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2014 3:24 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Monday, June 30, 2014 - 15:23

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

First Name: Lorraine

Last Name: Brown

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with: TEXAS H.O.P.E LITERACY

City: Pensacola

State: Florida

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

Inside a place of forgotten souls, shattered dreams, despair and hopelessness I have seen how education can truly make a tremendous difference in rehabilitating the women of our society. These forgotten souls belong to women that we may have passed on the street, gone to school with, they could be our mothers, sisters, aunts, grandmothers and they could one day be our daughters and granddaughters. These women feel pain, love, and laugh, cry just like the rest of us. They deserve to be loved and to have the opportunity to love .

On the white concrete walls you will see the letters of the alphabet painted in various colors of blue, green and yellow combined along with various mathematical equations.

You look around to see

various pictures of biblical nature. You see words of encouragement and comfort. There are book shelves filled with books ranging from self-help to romance, to mystery to fantasy to science fiction.

There are shelves filled with school books, dictionaries binders, testing materials. Lining these walls are twenty-six sets of metal bunk beds and in the center thirteen iron tables that each seat four. You may think you are inside a local Christian school well your not you are inside the walls of a prison. Prison a place to lock away the bad, a place where you would expect all hope to be lost. Prison is the last place you would expect to see lives renewed and people happy and accepting of their surroundings but that is exactly what you will see because of a very special program A program called H.O.P.E Literacy has come to the rescue of the uneducated forgotten and forlorn women who reside in a local prison. This program also had success in a men's prison but is currently only in place for women. HOPE Literacy is a faith-based education program that provides instructional classes in both English and Grammar to help one obtain a GED.

The program also provides

special help and instruction for those who may have suffered from a learning disability. Imagine discovering at the age of 35 that the reason you couldn't pass a test was because you had Dyslexia (you were not dumb like people

had been telling you). The program also provides additional classes such as Parenting, Spiritual Healing and Addiction counseling. This program allows women to educate themselves in every aspect of their lives, mind, body and soul. Education does not always mean hitting the books, sometimes educating ones self must start from within. You have to understand who you were and why you made the choices you did to prevent making the same bad ones in the future.

Sometimes this is the hardest lesson to do. This is not an easy task for women who have spent their lives either being abused or told they were no good. Through the teachings and a lot of hard work you are taught that you are good and you are worthy of all life has to offer.

Women who are admitted into the HOPE program must express a sincere desire to change, they must be willing to take a look at themselves and admit their shortcomings and their weaknesses.

These women have come to realize that they need help and that they have to help themselves. These women are given the opportunity to attend classes to improve their self-esteem which will enable them to feel good about themselves and make better choices. Imagine that for the first time in your life you are able to look in the mirror and you like the person you see ! Imagine knowing that you have learned the tools necessary to live a life free from drugs after being an addict for over twenty years ! This program provides each and every women with the opportunity to live changed lives . The opportunities are limitless for those who really wish to succeed.

Have you ever looked into the eyes of a mother who couldn't read and listened as she read a letter from her child knowing that you were responsible for helping those women, that for the first time in her life she was understanding? Have you ever seen the look of pure "I get it" in the eyes of a person who has spent their entire lives hooked on drugs? Have you had someone tell you they could never in a million years do algebra and discover a few months later that this same person is now enrolled in community college? It is here inside these walls of that you see these very miracles and so many more happen everyday. These miracles are the direct result of the H.O.P.E Literacy Program.

The dedication, love, compassion, strength and fortitude of one teacher and her desire to make a difference in the lives of others is truly a testament as to how one persons dream can enable the dreams of countless others to be realized.

I have seen the hope of a new life come full circle. I have seen a woman who was once broken, sad and depressed embrace life with both hands. I have seen a woman who was once dull and lifeless shine as bright as a shining star. I have seen that woman they said would never amount to anything. I have seen that woman because I was that woman and now I am a productive member of society, a single mother and a full-time college student. I am living and realizing my dreams. Our stories are different with one common bond we have H.O.P.E .

Education is truly the key to understanding and when you have the key you can unlock any door even those of a prison.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: H.O.P.E has now opened an outreach office to assist those in need outside of perison and I think this needs to be expanded. **THIS IS A WONDERFUL PROGRAM AND TRULY WAS A LIFESAVER FOR ME**

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree