

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CONTACT:

Jessica Grutzmacher
Marketing & Outreach Coordinator
(361) 575-5171, ext. 392

GULF BEND MHMR CENTER HAS A NEW CRISIS HOTLINE

New Hotline will increase access to Crisis Services

VICTORIA – Through the 80th Legislature and Rider 29, \$82 million was appropriated to the State of Texas in an effort to improve and redesign mental health crisis services for the FY 08 and FY 09 biennium. Throughout 2008, Gulf Bend MHMR Center will receive a total of \$245,483.

A portion of the allocated money has already been used to bring the Center's current crisis hotline into compliance with the Crisis Services Redesign Standards. A new number has been designated for the Crisis Hotline. This number can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This line will be answered by a Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP) to ensure callers receive immediate treatment and referral assistance.

The new toll-free number is 877-723-3422 (1-877-SAFE GBC).

In addition, Gulf Bend MHMR is seeking accreditation by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS), which is another requirement in the Crisis Redesign Standards.

Judith Tyler, Manager of Intake and Crisis Services, believes the new crisis hotline will "improve overall efficiency and access to Gulf Bend Center's Crisis Services."

In order to inform the local community of this change, billboards with the new crisis hotline number will be placed throughout the Center's service area which includes Victoria, Calhoun, Jackson, DeWitt, Lavaca, Goliad, and Refugio Counties. The outdoor advertising will begin going up this week.

Gulf Bend MHMR Center is not-for-profit political subdivision or agency of the State of Texas created in the provisions of the Texas Mental Health and Mental Retardation Act of 1965. The mission of the Center is to improve the quality of life of persons and their families who are challenged with problems related to mental illness and mental retardation.

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