

Adoption
Alliance of Community Assistance
Ministries of Greater Houston (ACAM)
Alliance Adolescent & Children's
Services

Arrow Child and Family Ministries
Bering Omega Community Services
Care for Elders

Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of
Galveston-Houston

ChildBuilders

CHILDREN AT RISK

Children's Defense Fund

Coalition for Behavioral Health Services

Coalition for the Homeless of
Houston/Harris Co., Inc.

Collaborative for Children

Communities In Schools

Community Family Centers

Covenant House of Texas

DePelchin Children's Center

Family Services of Greater Houston

Fort Bend Regional Council on
Substance Abuse, Inc.

Gateway to Care

Good Neighbor Healthcare Center

Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition

Harris County Child Abuse Task Force

Harris County Healthcare Alliance

Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston

Houston Area Association for the
Education of Young Children

Houston Area Women's Center

Houston Food Bank

Houston Area Immunization Registry

IntraCare Hospitals

Jewish Family Service

Jewish Federation of Greater Houston

Justice for Children

League of Women Voters Houston

Legacy Community Health
Services, Inc.

Memorial Hermann Healthcare System

Mental Health America
of Greater Houston

NAMI Metropolitan Houston

NAMI West Houston, Inc.

Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Neuhaus Education Center

Northwest Assistance Ministries

Planned Parenthood of Houston
and Southeast Texas, Inc.

Prepared 4 Life

San Jose Clinic

SEARCH

South County Community Clinic,
DBA The Community Clinic

Spaulding for Children

St. Luke's Episcopal Health System

Systems of Hope

Texans Together Education Fund

Texas Children's Hospital

The Arc of Greater Houston

The Methodist Hospital System

The Network of Behavioral
Health Providers

United Way of Greater Houston

Wesley Community Center

YMCA of Greater Houston

YWCA of Greater Houston



Basic Needs: Individual Development Accounts

Position Statement approved by One Voice: November 14, 2008

Issue/Concern: Based on a federal program established in 1998, states have the ability to draw down federal funds to help low-income families establish Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). IDAs are interest-bearing, tax-free, savings accounts allowed under federal law for individuals and families whose income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. The state matches the earned income that a family contributes to an IDA. IDAs can be used for the purchase of a first home, a post-secondary education, and the start or expansion of a small business.

Specific Policy Recommendation(s):

- ★ Establish a grant program within an agency of the State of Texas to assist local communities in setting up IDAs. The bill would provide the administrative infrastructure for the state to award grants to nonprofit organizations to establish IDA programs and provide matching funds to participants.

How does this issue/recommendation relate to prevention and early intervention or maximizing federal funds for health and human services? Enactment of legislation would allow the state to draw down matching funds from the federal Assets for Independence program.

Supporting Facts/Research/Resources:

- ★ At least one-third of all American families own virtually no assets.
- ★ Studies show IDAs provide a strong incentive to save and build long-term assets; increase homeownership; promote economic and community development; and, advance economic mobility.
- ★ IDAs are exempt from the asset limits in major public assistance programs such as TANF, CHIP and Children's Medicaid, thus allowing families to save for the future without exacerbating their short-term needs.
- ★ IDA program participants attend mandatory financial literacy classes, which reinforce money management skills along with long-term financial planning and home purchasing techniques. These classes give participants the tools they need to better control their budgets and make important decisions about their own money.

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One Voice: A Collaborative for Health and Human Services is a network of diverse community organizations that advocates for public policy to meet the health and human service needs in Texas.

www.onevoicehouston.org