



a nonprofit organization that provides foundational education to at-risk children and their parents.

Mission Statement

To unlock America’s potential by strengthening families in at-risk communities through effective parent education and support programs.

Core Values

We believe...

1. People can change and *want* to change
2. Parent-child relationship success begins with strengthening the bond that already exists
3. Preventing problems at an early age (when children are under three) is key to later success
4. Effective training must address the whole family—mother, father, children, and siblings
5. We can rekindle the spirit of hope and motivation by treating participants with dignity and respect
6. Public and private partnership is essential to our success

AVANCE-DALLAS CORE STRATEGIES

Early Childhood Development

Low-income Hispanic children, age 0–3, are equipped to enter school with the development necessary for academic success. As 2000 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences James Heckman argues, the wisest use of available funds is to “invest in the very young.”

Parent Education

Low-income Hispanic parents learn to stimulate their child’s development during the critical early years of growth and to partner in their child’s education from cradle to college. Parents receive 150 hours of parenting instruction, community resource presentations, home visitation, and leadership training.

Parent Alumni as Leaders

Through our parent leadership initiative, parent graduates impact their community through volunteer opportunities that include serving as “promoters” of the AVANCE educational message in the community, leading 25-week Parent-Child Book Clubs at 14 sites, tutoring low-performing kindergarten and first-grade students, and championing children and education in their local schools.

AVANCE-Dallas History

AVANCE-Dallas is a community-based, nonprofit organization that provides family support and education services to at-risk, economically impoverished families. We are one of ten chapters affiliated with our parent agency, **AVANCE, Inc.**, established in San Antonio, Texas in 1973.

In the early 1970s, the M. B. and Edna Zale Foundation funded a three-year seed grant to develop the AVANCE concept in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, a San Antonio teacher, visited the program and initiated the concept in San Antonio where it flourished. AVANCE, Inc. was established in 1973 in San Antonio. For the first fourteen years (1973-1987), AVANCE firmly rooted itself as a local direct service delivery model in San Antonio, offering parent education and early childhood development services.

In 1995, the Texas State Legislature appropriated \$1,000,000 for the expansion and replication of the AVANCE, Inc. Family Support and Education Program to four communities: Dallas, El Paso, Laredo, and Corpus Christi. AVANCE was officially welcomed to Dallas in 1996 by city proclamation.

AVANCE-Dallas officially opened its doors in October 1996, and during our 20-year history, AVANCE-Dallas has furthered the education of more than 26,000 children and parents. We started at two sites in 1996, and have since grown to 33 site cohorts in the Dallas, Garland, and Irving Independent School Districts.

AVANCE-Dallas now advances the lives of children and parents annually through our core Parent-Child Education Program, Workplace English Program, Parent-Child Book Clubs, and Volunteer Impact Program...leading to a 90% of AVANCE graduates staying in school (Texas average is 67%).

Information for Seton Service Days event—Nov. 18, 2017 SSD coordinator—Jeri Phillips 214-695-2214

Seton Work site Coordinator — _____ Volunteers: Check in at Seton Church at 8:00am, to get info about the day & Mass-then head to Rm 130, in Seton Faith Formation Center...finish about Noon.

Things to bring: Wear your Seton Service Days T-shirt (or get one at 8:00am check-in at the church), comfortable “closed toed” shoes, refillable water bottle, snacks (if desired)...and scissors.

Seton Service Days — BEFORE... DURING... AFTER...

FOOD FOR THOUGHT and DISCUSSION with Group or Family

“Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth, but yours. Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world”

(St. Teresa of Avila)

Things to think about before you head to your worksite: Do I know who else is going to this site? Do we know what we are scheduled to do there? Have we exchanged info & planned a route? What things am I most excited about? What things am I a little anxious about?

Questions for Agency Representative: Who is served here? What do you do for people? How are you funded? What is your job? What part does our community play in your agency? What will we be doing today?

Things to think about while at the worksite: How am I different from the people we serve today?...How am I the same? What are some of the reasons that an agency like this is needed? Am I learning something new today?...information?...skill?

Things to talk about after the work is completed: What did we do today? Where did we see Christ today? What did we learn about ourselves today? To which of the 7 themes of Catholic Social Teaching did we make a connection today (*can be more than 1*)? Did what I do today make use of the gifts/strengths I have?...if not, what could I do differently next time? Is there anyway for me and other to help work toward eliminating the need for an agency like this (*advocacy*)? How can I continue to serve others (*direct action*)?... on my own? ... as a family?... as a faith community?... as a civic community?... as a global community?...

7 key themes of Catholic Social Teaching

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and Episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In these brief reflections, we wish to highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition. (This summary should only be a starting point...)

Life and Dignity of the Human Person – The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity for the human person is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and assisted suicide. The value of human life is being threatened by increasing use of the death penalty. We believe that every person is precious, that **people are more important than things**, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Call to Family, Community and Participation – The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society—in economics and politics, in law and policy—directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. **We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society**, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Rights and Responsibilities – The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, **every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities**—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable – A basic moral test of a society, is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers – The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the **right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.**

Solidarity – We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. **We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences.** Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that “loving our neighbor” has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

Care for God's Creation – We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. **We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation.** This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.