



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Councilman Manny Pelaez and Councilwoman Adriana Rocha Garcia
COPIES TO: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk; Andrew Segovia, City Attorney; John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Emily McGinn, Assistant to City Council
SUBJECT: Crisis Nursery Program
DATE: 9/21/2023

Issue Proposed for Consideration

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

The San Antonio Crisis Nursery Program would have as its two primary goals:

1. Keeping children safe at no cost to the parent; and
2. Keeping families together.

The program should be designed to:

1. Provide safe and nurturing temporary shelter(s) for children at risk of abuse or neglect;
2. Empower families to resolve crises and build resiliency through culturally responsive interventions;
3. Empower children and parents to advocate for themselves so that their voices are core to all services offered;
4. Provide equitable access to concrete support, crisis counseling, and parenting education;
5. Offer grassroots community outreach and training to build child abuse prevention awareness;
6. Serve as an advocate for the safety and wellbeing of all children and families in our region;
7. Address the needs of the whole family by offering wrap-around services to parents and other members of the household;
8. Be easy to access by people in geographic areas where the risk of abuse and neglect is more prevalent.
9. Serve as a partner to schools, non-profit organizations, the faith community, healthcare providers, and government agencies that offer services to families and children in need.

Brief Background

A crisis nursery is a respite care program for families facing an unexpected crisis. This cost-free program provides a variety of services, including a safe and temporary shelter for children, family and parenting support, and other culturally responsive services that aim to keep kids safe and families together. These services, in culmination, create a safety net that families can utilize without fear of Child Protective

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Services. Successful examples of programs include Maryville Crisis Nursery in Chicago, Providence House in Cleveland, and the Saint Louis Crisis Nursery.

A crisis nursery is not a children's shelter. A crisis nursery is a critical support system that connects parents to resources before Child Protective Services gets involved. A child may only stay at a crisis nursery for a couple of days as the parents address the crisis in their life.

A crisis can be defined as any stressor with the potential to cause family harm. Sudden hospitalization, fires, domestic violence, homelessness, mental health, and family problems would all qualify an individual to take advantage of a crisis nursery.

One of the critical goals of any crisis nursery is to put a stop to the cycle of family abuse and trauma by relieving families in a time of stress.

Submitted for Council consideration by:

Councilman Manny Pelaez, District 8

Councilwoman Adriana Rocha Garcia, District 4

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (3 only)

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District

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