



P. O. Box 234  
San Marcos, TX 78667-0234  
Phone: 512.396.3404  
Fax: 512.353-2018

# Press Release

Contact: Charles Vestal FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Title: Director of Development and August 17, 2011  
Community Partnerships  
Phone: 512.396.3404 ext. 260

## **Child Predators in Hays County Facing More Guilty Verdicts, Stiffer Sentencing in 2011**

SAN MARCOS, TEXAS: Prosecutions against those who sexually abuse children have seen remarkable success this year, thanks to the efforts of officials affiliated with the Multi-Disciplinary Team at Roxanne’s House which facilitates the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases in Hays County.

According to Marla Johnson, Executive Director of the Hays-Caldwell Women’s Center (HCWC) in San Marcos,

- 7 jury trials have garnered 254 years in prison plus one life sentence.
- 10 cases ended in 94 years of prison sentencing through plea bargains.

What these cases have in common is that a collaboration of law enforcement, the legal system, state agencies and Roxanne’s House staff performed key roles in prosecuting perpetrators and assisting children.

“This team has been hard at work, and child abusers are paying the price,” said Marla Johnson, HCWC executive director for 18 years. “The team meets at Roxanne’s House and they coordinate cases—collecting solid evidence, conducting forensic interviews with abused children, preparing them for court, and prosecuting in the courtroom. And because of it, child predators are absolutely getting nailed in Hays County.”

HCWC provides free counseling and advocacy to victims of child abuse, family violence and sexual assault. Its child abuse services include those offered through the Children’s Advocacy Center known as Roxanne’s House located at 215 North Comanche Street in downtown San Marcos.

(Continued Next Page)

PRESS RELEASE  
HAYS-CALDWELL WOMEN'S CENTER  
PAGE 2 OF 2  
AUGUST 17, 2011

Johnson recently organized a panel discussion of three key members of the Multi-Disciplinary Team in Hays County, the full interview transcript of which is available at [www.hcwc.org](http://www.hcwc.org).

"We learned a lot in sitting down and reflecting on the year's successes in prosecution. Our team has solid tenure, for one thing. They communicate regularly and honestly. And they have the heart for this kind of work. They also know what the best practices are for collecting evidence and for prosecuting in the courtroom. And the bad guys are going to jail because of it," added Johnson.

Marla Johnson and Melissa Rodriguez, Roxanne's House Program Director, are available to meet to discuss the trend of successful prosecutions of child abuse cases. To arrange a discussion, phone HCWC's Charles Vestal, Director of Development and Community Partnerships, at (512) 396-3404, extension 260.

*The Hays-Caldwell Women's Center has entered its 34<sup>th</sup> year of serving local victims of abuse including child abuse, family violence and sexual assault. All HCWC services are free and confidential. For more information please visit [www.hcwc.org](http://www.hcwc.org) or call (512) 396-HELP.*

####