



February 2026

New year, new things!

Caritas Family Assistance Network is happy to announce the launch of the **Family Circle Single Parent Group**. This support group was created to provide support to Caritas families who are single parent families. The invitation for the support group has also been extended to the community. The majority of the families in the Caritas program are single parent families - approximately 94% - who lack social support and struggle to make ends meet.

The kick-off meeting for the Family Circle Single Parent Group was at SSS Bowling Center on January 27, 2026 where parents met in the private event room and kids had fun bowling. Planning committee Heather York, Erika North, Tommi Seidenberger, Dawn Barron, and the two Caritas family liaisons greeted a sweet group of moms who were encouraged by the support of fellow single parents.

The Family Circle Single Parent Group meetings will be the last Tuesday of each month. The February meeting will be at Holy Ghost Fellowship Hall. The meal will be sponsored by Security State Bank and Trust. Tommi Seidenberger will lead a program on parenting.

The new year has also brought an increase in the number of families seeking help. We now serve **134 students (59 families)**. We're also seeing an increased request for academic support. The **Caritas FES Homework Club** now serves 22 students with 16 volunteer tutors. The Gillespie County Retired Teachers Association has been a valuable supporter of the Homework Club.

Hill Country Daily Bread Family Mentoring continues to be at the forefront of our programming. Four local churches are partnered with HCDBM and 3 additional churches have expressed interest in helping. Nineteen families are currently in the mentoring program and are entering relationships with their family mentors. The mentee families receive a food distribution, customized to their families' needs, twice a month. St. Mary's Church has carried their ministry a step farther naming their ministry St. Carlo Acuits Family Mentoring. They currently serve the majority of the families in the program, but with more church partnerships and more family mentors on board, we can help more families in our community.

Lastly, knowing the importance of involving students in extracurricular activities to build friendships and self confidence, we continue to seek scholarships to support students who want to participate in after school activities: Yellow Door art studio, Wellness Center swim club, Methodist Music Academy, and United Soccer to name a few.

Finally, we continue to track 3 measures: attendance, grades, and behavior to observe students' progress with the ultimate goal to see students advance to the next grade level and graduate high school.

I end this newsletter reminded of the Corporal Works of Mercy, charitable actions that address the physical and material needs of others. 1. Feed the hungry. 2. Give drink to the thirsty. 3. Clothe the naked. 4. Shelter the homeless. 5. Visit the sick. 6. Visit the imprisoned. 7 Bury the dead.

May God continue to guide us on this path of serving our community. Submitted by Niki Wienecke