

20TH ANNIVERSARY

Women's homeless shelter celebrates 20 years

Jesus Mary Joseph Home thankful for donor generosity

By JENNA BROGAN

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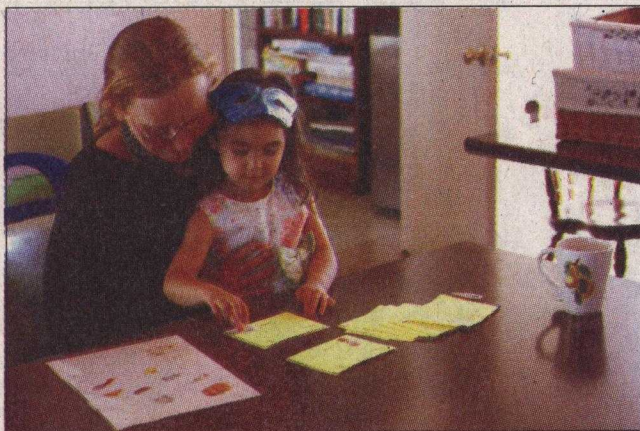
SANTA CRUZ — The Jesus Mary Joseph Home for women, children and the terminally ill is celebrating 20 years of service in Santa Cruz today.

The Catholic-based shelter, which runs on donations, accommodates seven women and their children, age 6 and under, for six months to a year with the expectation that each mother seeks employment and permanent housing for her family during their stay.

In recent years, the home has extended its reach by housing one terminally ill person in need of private daily personal care.

"This is an environment where people know they're loved and cared for, and we owe it all to the generosity of others," said Director Patricia Gorman, who has been at the helm for 14 years.

This evening's festivities at the Lennox Street home will include a Mass with founder Father Peter Carota followed by a dinner prepared by residents



AMANDA OPITZ/SENTINEL

Jesus Mary Joseph Home Director Patricia Gorman helps Makani, a resident's daughter, to put stickers on invitations to the home's 20th anniversary celebration today.

for volunteers, donors and former residents.

Current resident Allison Miller, 28, is grateful for the opportunity to thank donors to the home who have supported her and her 8-month-old son Gavin since February.

"This place has made me a stronger person and a stronger mother," said Miller, who is training to be the house manager and plans to attend Cabrillo College in the fall to study early childhood education.

In exchange for food, clothing and shelter, residents like Miller are responsible for the cleanliness and order of the house, cooking and attending in-house support groups.

It was these services that allowed resident Cindy Razo, her 6-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son to escape life on the street after leaving Mexico.

"I've been working towards putting my life back together," said Razo, who has learned English, completed the immigra-

TO DONATE

JESUS MARY JOSEPH HOME

CONTACT: Patricia Gorman

CALL: 459-8046

DROP OFF GOODS: They take women's and children's clothing, diapers, baby wipes at 132 Lennox St., Santa Cruz

INFO: www.stfrancissoupkitchen.org

tion process and obtained a work permit since moving in a year ago. "This place is not only a home, it's like having a family."

An outreach program of the St. Francis Soup Kitchen in Santa Cruz, the home has provided the women a clean and sober family environment with a backyard organic garden, an on-site chapel and a weekly art group for their children.

"We take people from a needy position and turn things around," said Board of Directors President Wayne Shaffer. "Twenty years is a big deal."