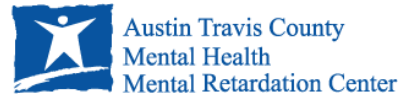


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## **Mayor's Mental Health Task Force Monitoring Committee Marks Anniversary of King, continues to make strides for community**

*Austin – June 11 2009* – Seven years ago, the Austin community mourned the loss of Sophia King, shedding light on several years of community concern over the challenges facing Austin and Travis County residents with severe mental illnesses. As a direct response, Mayor Will Wynn appointed a group of community leaders to the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force. The task force issued a report in January of 2005, and appointed the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force Monitoring Committee (MMHTFMC) to evaluate five focus areas: schools and youth, housing, access, criminal justice and community awareness/faith based activities.

Since then, the MMHTFMC has worked continuously and collaboratively with more than 80 individuals representing 40 organizations to document strengths and gaps in mental health services in the community and make recommendations for future action. Since then, the MMHTFMC has researched and identified a set of Community Behavioral Health Indicators for each of these areas, yielding national attention and local measurable progress. Most recently, the MMHTFMC spearheaded efforts that resulted in the enactment of House Bill 1067 in the 81st Texas Legislature, encouraging communities to implement similar suicide data collection and response systems.



“While her shooting by law enforcement on June 11, 2004 was tragic, Sophia King's life and death brought a new focus to our community about the serious challenges individuals with mental illness face every day,” states Susan Stone J.D., M.D., Executive Coordinator for the MMHTFMC. “The MMHTFMC has been addressing these issues through research, data development and coordination of planning activities.”

This month, the Texas Council for Community MHMR Centers will honor the MMHTFMC with the award for Outstanding Volunteer Services organization at their annual conference in Fort Worth for its extensive work.

The MMHTFMC is a subcommittee of the Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation’s Board of Directors. For more information, visit [mmhtfmc.org](http://mmhtfmc.org).

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