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Rupani Foundation
Empowering Communities



FEATURES

October-December 2024 Newsletter

Programs Updates

Rupani Foundation Expresses Gratitude for ECIF Support at Commissioners Court

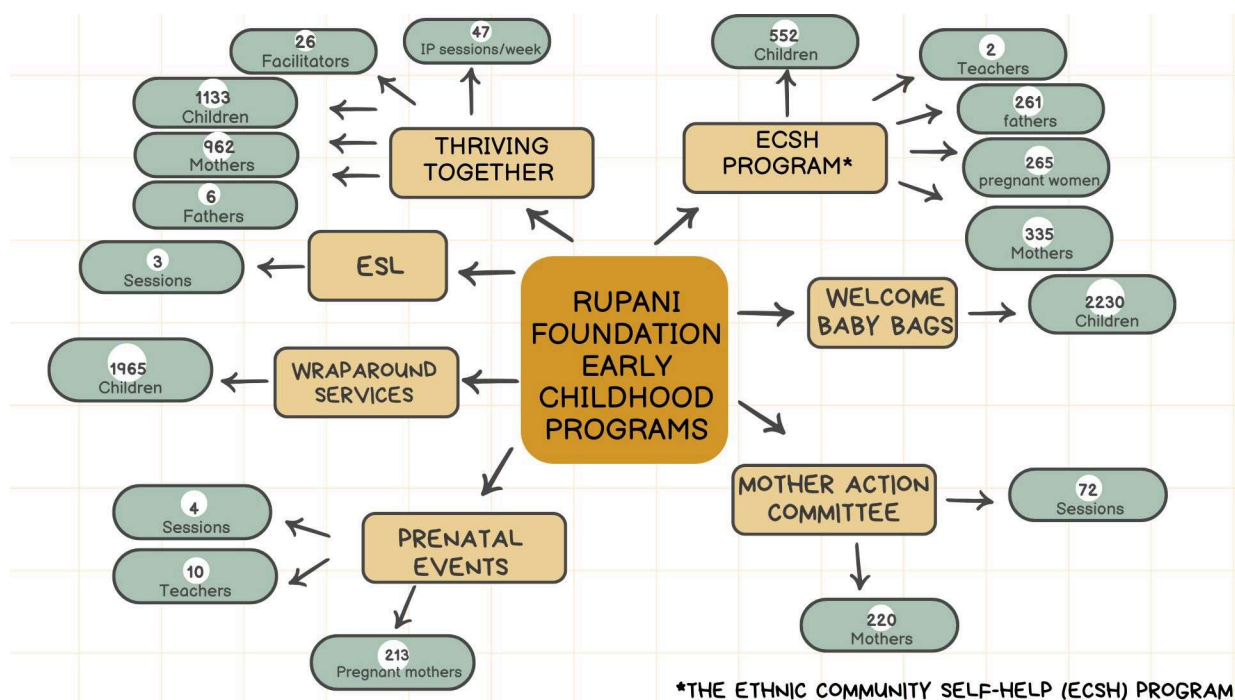
On November 12, 2024, Marc-Antoine Adam, CEO of the Rupani Foundation, shared a heartfelt testimony at the Commissioners Court, expressing gratitude for the ongoing support provided through the Early Childhood Impact Fund (ECIF). The Rupani Foundation, a proud recipient of this funding, acknowledged the significant role it has played in expanding their capacity to positively impact even more children and families in Harris County.

In his testimony, Adam emphasized that the ECIF funding, approved in early 2023, has allowed the foundation to scale its early childhood education programs and broaden its reach. With this support, the foundation has been able to provide transformative educational opportunities, foster deeper family engagement, and create stronger, more resilient communities.

childhood education in the county. He stressed that with Harris County's continued support, the Rupani Foundation can sustain and further enhance these vital services, ensuring that even more children and families benefit from access to quality early education.

This acknowledgment reflects the foundation's deep gratitude for the support they've received and underscores their commitment to transforming early childhood education in Harris County for the long term.

Programs in Figures



A Day of Fun at the Children's Museum of Houston



On September 27th, 2024, the Rupani families and our wonderful clients had an unforgettable day at the Children's Museum of Houston! With 32 children, 36 parents, and facilitators from Southern Oaks, Windswept, Hillcroft, South Rice, and Ashford St. Cloud, we turned the museum into a vibrant hub of laughter, learning, and creativity.

the Harris County Early Childhood Initiative Fund (ECIF). The project aims to create engaging educational experiences that foster growth, exploration, and connection for families and children in our community.

From interactive exhibits to hands-on learning activities, every moment was filled with joy and discovery, providing children with valuable opportunities to engage with science, art, and culture in a fun, educational setting. The families also had the chance to build deeper connections, sharing experiences and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

We are incredibly proud to partner with the Children's Museum of Houston in this incredible initiative, which is helping children and families thrive through unique learning opportunities. The Thriving Together Project continues to focus on providing access to resources that encourage educational development, creativity, and community-building.

A heartfelt thank you to all the families, facilitators, and staff who joined us for this amazing adventure. Your participation and enthusiasm were key to making this day so special. We look forward to many more fun-filled outings and exciting opportunities to support families in our community as we continue this important journey together!

Celebrating a Special Milestone in Early Childhood Education



We are thrilled to announce a significant milestone at the Rupani Foundation as we celebrate the graduation of 73 incredible mothers and their 104 amazing children from the Informed Parents and Brain Builders classes held at Windswept Center, Southern Oaks, Tracey Gee, Tierra Bella and Gables. This accomplishment marks a journey filled with growth, learning, and lasting memories.

These families have embraced every opportunity to learn, connect, and grow together, and we are so proud of their dedication. The classes, designed to foster early childhood development and strengthen parenting skills, have been instrumental in empowering these mothers to continue building a bright future for their children.

A special thank you to our outstanding facilitators, whose unwavering support and passion have made this journey possible. Your dedication has had a profound impact on these families, and we are deeply grateful for your hard work.

Congratulations to all the graduates! We are excited to see how each of you will continue to shine and inspire others in your community. Your perseverance and commitment to your children's future are truly remarkable.

supporting more families on their path to success!

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this amazing journey. Here's to more milestones, more growth, and many more families thriving together!

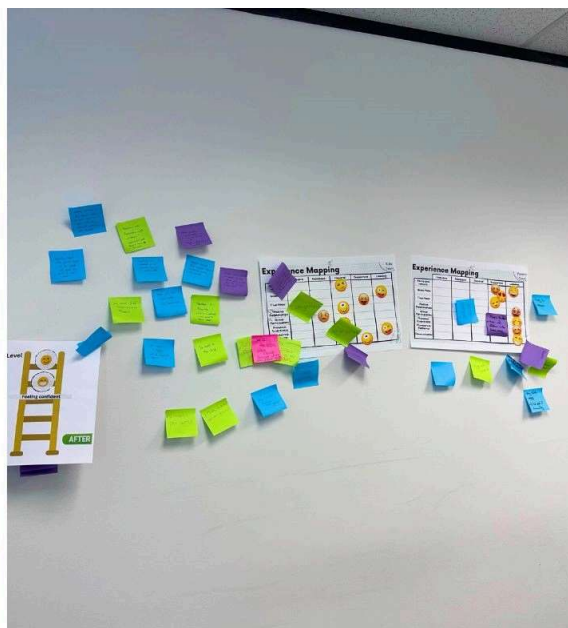
Continuing Our Commitment to Families: IP and Brain Builders Sessions



At Rupani Foundation, we are proud to continue our dedication to the community by offering our Informed Parents (IP) and Brain Builders classes across 30 different sites in Harris County!

Our passionate Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilitators are working tirelessly to support families through our 18-week program. They provide personalized guidance, closely monitoring each child's growth and assessing the progress in parent-child interactions. Through these sessions, parents receive valuable encouragement and practical strategies they can implement to

ECD Impact Focus Group



As part of the midline evaluation for the Thriving Together program, we conducted a parent focus group on November 16, 2024, with 10 parents attending and sharing their valuable feedback in a participatory session. This open exchange provided insightful perspectives on their experiences with the program, highlighting both successes and challenges. The feedback from this focus group, alongside data from surveys and other focus groups, will enrich the evaluation findings and be instrumental for Rupani in assessing the program's impact. It will also guide corrective actions for the second year of the project and inform future iterations, ensuring that the initiative continues to meet the evolving needs of families and drives positive outcomes in the community.

The University of Houston Community Health Workers Training

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In October 2024, we were proud to celebrate the graduation of 12 dedicated staff members from the Rupani Foundation's Early Childhood Development (ECD) team who successfully completed the University of Houston's Community Health Worker (CHW) training course. This comprehensive program, which is approved by the Texas State Department of Health and Human Services (DSHS), was designed to provide participants with essential skills and knowledge to address a wide range of health issues in the Greater Houston area. Over the course of the training, our staff gained expertise in critical topics such as social determinants of health, logic models, motivational interviewing, program evaluation, and much more. The program emphasized the eight core competencies required for effective CHW practice, ensuring our team is well-prepared to engage with and support the community in meaningful ways. We are incredibly proud of our team's achievements and look forward to the continued growth and success of these skilled professionals.

The 60th Annual TXAEYC Conference



The Rupani team had the honor to participate in the 60th Annual TXAEEYC Conference in Dallas (October 10-12, 2024), the largest early childhood conference in Texas. With over 120 sessions, the conference offered a wealth of knowledge on topics such as supporting high-quality professional relationships, building resilient children, maximizing play-based center time, and implementing trauma-informed practices in the classroom. Our team: (from the right to the left) Laysa, Fahima, Selina, Sehrish, Brenda, and Nida, had the opportunity to attend a variety of engaging workshops, including American Sign Language Fun Songs, Fun with Shapes to Discover Geometry, Nature Play in Childcare, and STEAM activities, all designed to deepen our understanding and skills. The event also provided valuable networking opportunities to connect with like-minded professionals, thought leaders, and experts in early childhood education. The insights gained, along with the inspiration from the diverse lineup of speakers, empowered our team to bring fresh ideas back to our own classrooms and projects, reigniting our passion for making a meaningful impact in the field.

Empowering Leadership: Insights from the Performance Management Training



On November 7-8, 2024, our team had the privilege of attending the Performance Management: Building Leaders from Within training, organized by Training Strategies, Inc., and led by the esteemed Nancy H. Baird. Held at the Doubletree Hotel/Houston, this two-day workshop provided us with in-depth, hands-on learning opportunities designed to enhance our leadership capabilities and performance management skills.

Throughout the training, we explored critical topics that are key to fostering a thriving work environment, including effective communication strategies, managing generational differences, and developing leadership potential within our teams. Nancy's engaging style and expertise kept us involved and motivated as we learned practical tools for delegating effectively, conducting behavior-based interviews, and leading teams through times of change. We also gained insights into the importance of performance evaluations, setting stretch goals, and addressing challenging employee situations with clear, documented processes.

Additionally, the workshop focused on understanding the diverse values and goals of different generations in the workforce, including Generations X, Y, Z, and Boomers, and how to best manage and support younger employees. We also tackled the vital topics of preventing workplace harassment, managing office politics, and maintaining ethical boundaries in the workplace. One of the key highlights was learning how to develop and implement performance improvement plans and progressive discipline strategies to support employee growth and success.

This enriching experience not only strengthened our skills in management and leadership but also reinforced our commitment to creating a supportive, accountable, and high-performing workplace.

Distribution of Welcome Baby Bags (WBB) and My Keep It Kits (MKIK)

We are excited to announce the successful distribution of 250 Welcome Baby Bags (WBB) and 140 My Keep It Kits (MKIK) from the CMH to the children and families we serve. These bags are provided by the Children's Museum Houston as part of our partnership in the Thriving Together project.

The WBB, designed for newborns up to 12 months of age, provides essential items to support new parents during the first critical months of their child's life. These bags are filled with carefully selected products that contribute to the health and well-being of both baby and caregiver.

The MKIK, which serves children aged 0-36 months, offers a range of age-appropriate supplies to assist in early childhood development, ensuring that young children have the resources they need to grow and thrive in their early years.

This distribution is part of our ongoing commitment to support families and help lay a strong foundation for children's health and development.



Refresher and Orientation on the Use of WBB and MKIK

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of our programs, The CMH held two important refresher and orientation sessions on the use of the WBB and MKIK for our teams. These sessions took place on October 1st and October 8th and were designed to ensure

The orientation sessions were held in two separate groups, providing an opportunity for more interactive discussions and personalized feedback. CMH focused on reviewing the contents of both the WBB and MKIK, offering a detailed look at the items inside and their specific purposes. Emphasis was placed on how these kits can be used to support families and improve their parenting practices through focusing on Early Child Development.

One of the key highlights of the training was a deep dive into the practical use of the kits. Staff were shown how to introduce these resources to families, ensuring they understand the value of each item and how it can benefit their daily lives. We also gathered valuable feedback from participants on their experiences with the kits, which will inform future improvements and ensure that these resources continue to meet the needs of families.

Thanks to the Children's Museum for their dedication to this cause and for helping us make a meaningful difference in the lives of families. We look forward to continuing this wonderful partnership!

Colgate Bright Smiles Bright Futures Virtual Dental Van Visits Our Community Centers



We are thrilled to announce the arrival of the Colgate Bright Smiles Bright Futures Virtual Dental Van, which visited five of our community centers to provide interactive virtual educational sessions on dental health. This exciting initiative is designed to empower children and families with the knowledge and tools they need to maintain healthy smiles for life.

As part of the program, Colgate will also be donating oral care kits to participants, ensuring that families have the necessary products to support their oral health at home. The sessions will focus on educating children and their families about the importance of good dental hygiene, offering practical tips and strategies to help prevent dental issues and promote lasting oral health.

The Colgate Bright Smiles Bright Futures program is committed to empowering children and families to achieve bright, healthy futures. We believe that every child deserves a lifetime of healthy smiles, and we're proud to partner with Colgate in championing this mission.

Colgate for their ongoing commitment to dental health and for making this valuable program possible!

Exciting News: Rupani Foundation Launches Refugee Career Pathway (RCP) Program

REFUGEE CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAM (RCP)

The Refugee Career Pathways (RCP) program helps resettled refugees get the training and knowledge they need to begin skilled jobs or continue professional careers in the United States.

CAREER EXPLORATION
Learn about careers, skills/qualifications required for different professions, and identify personal interests/strengths to make informed career decisions.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING
Obtain the education and instruction that prepare you for your specific trade, craft, or career that requires particular technical skills, certifications, and practical knowledge.

CAREER-SPECIFIC JOB READINESS
Learn the necessary skills, knowledge, and qualifications required to excel in your chosen career pathway.

VOCATIONAL ESL
Receive English language instruction designed specifically to help non-native English speakers develop the language skills needed to succeed in their particular job or career pathway.

ELIGIBILITY

- Eligible for ORR Refugee Resettlement Program benefits and services for 5 years or less
- Eligible clients include refugees, asylees, Cuban-Haitian entrants, victims of trafficking, and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders from Afghanistan and Iraq
- Conversational level of English
- Not a U.S. citizen
- Authorized to work in the U.S.
- Able/willing to begin/continue employment in a professional or skilled career field during the program

(832) 590-3446 **Workforce@RupaniFoundationUSA.org**

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the Refugee Career Pathway (RCP) Program, a groundbreaking initiative from the Rupani Foundation, made possible with support from the Office of Refugee Resettlement. This program, which officially launched in October 2024, is designed to empower refugees by breaking down barriers to professional careers and providing the essential tools needed to succeed in the U.S. job market.

The RCP Program is built around the career pathways model, which helps refugees identify clear, achievable entry points into their chosen professions. Through comprehensive career mapping, participants gain valuable insights into their desired field, including qualifications, responsibilities, career growth, and salary expectations.

The program offers a wide range of resources and support, including:

- Personalized Employment Services to match each participant with the right career opportunities.
- Specialized Vocational English Training to improve workplace communication skills.
- Job Readiness Workshops to prepare participants for successful interviews and smooth workplace transitions.
- Career-Specific Academic Support to bridge any skills gaps and meet industry standards.
- Access to Community College or Vocational Training for further education.
- Direct Financial Assistance to help overcome immediate challenges.

With this program, refugees are not just finding jobs, they are building lasting, fulfilling careers that lead to long-term economic independence. We are excited to see the impact this initiative will have and are proud to support refugees as they achieve their professional dreams!

Empowering Afghan Youth: A Successful Academic Camp at George Ranch Historical Park!

collaboration with the George Foundation, held at the beautiful George Ranch Historical Park. This impactful event brought together 20 eager participants and 12 dedicated Youth in Philanthropy (YIP) volunteers from the George Foundation, who served as mentors and guides throughout the day.

The camp was a dynamic space for learning and cultural exchange, focused on empowering Afghan youth with essential academic skills and fostering a strong sense of community. Participants took part in enriching workshops on leadership, media and digital literacy, goal setting, and mentorship, all designed to support their educational journeys and inspire personal growth.

Our mentors, both from the George Foundation and our team, played a key role in guiding, encouraging, and uplifting the participants. Their commitment and passion were essential to making this event a success.

In recognition of their hard work and dedication, we presented Certificates of Appreciation to our volunteers, while each participant received a Certificate of Participation, celebrating their commitment and the skills they developed during the camp.

A huge thank you to the George Foundation for their invaluable support, and to all the volunteers and staff whose contributions made this day unforgettable. Together, we've helped create an empowering experience that will inspire Afghan youth to continue on their path to success.

We look forward to future collaborations and are excited to continue supporting Afghan youth in their journey toward growth and achievement.



Update on the Second Project Period of the ECSH Program

As we enter the second project period of the Ethnic Community Self-Help (ECSH) program, we are proud to reflect on the significant strides we've made in fostering community engagement and promoting mental well-being. A highlight of this period was the impactful Mental Health Awareness Session led by Sabrina Begum, which brought together 16 participants.

This session was an invaluable opportunity to open up discussions around mental health, offering attendees practical tools and resources to better navigate mental health challenges. Sabrina

only emphasized the importance of mental health awareness but also nurtured a stronger sense of community among the participants.

We look forward to building on this momentum and continuing to support the well-being of our community throughout the project period.



Mothers Task Force Meetings: Strengthening Connections and Support

In addition to our focus on mental health, the ECSH program successfully organized two Mothers Task Force meetings, with a total of 27 women participants. These gatherings provided a supportive and empowering space for mothers to connect, share their challenges, and explore strategies for building stronger support networks within their communities.

During the meetings, participants exchanged valuable insights on parenting, discussed available community resources, and shared ideas on how to better support each other. These discussions not only reinforced the sense of solidarity among the mothers but also strengthened their commitment to collective well-being.

The positive engagement and active participation in these meetings are a testament to the ECSH program's dedication to fostering a resilient and connected community. We are excited to continue building on this momentum as we progress further into this project period.

Celebrating Diversity: A Recap of Our Culture Diversity Celebration

Between October and December, our team celebrated a series of vibrant cultural events as part of our ongoing team culture activities. The festivities began with our National Family Day & Pardon Day Celebration, where we took time to reflect on the importance of family bonds and the power of forgiveness. The event featured engaging activities that encouraged open communication, healing, and the appreciation of diverse family traditions, allowing team members to share personal stories and connect on a deeper level.

In October, we embraced the playful spirit of the season with a Halloween Celebration, where creativity and fun took center stage. Team members dressed up in imaginative costumes, participated in themed games like pumpkin carving and Halloween trivia, and enjoyed a variety of

In November and December, we celebrated the Thanksgiving and Christmas Party, a beloved annual event that highlight the cultural diversity within our team. We came together to share traditional foods, music, and festive customs from different cultures, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere to celebrate the season. This party is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on what we are grateful for, bond over shared experiences, and celebrate the unique backgrounds that make our team so special.

These events, held between October and December, are a testament to our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive team culture. They allow us to connect with one another, celebrate our differences, and strengthen the relationships that make our community so vibrant.



Community Outreach Events

The Elevate Conscious Discipline Conference



Possibilities conference by the Program Director, Neelofar Ali, and the Program Coordinator, Sabrina Begum. Together, they attended this professional development event in Las Vegas, where they engaged in the exploration of Conscious Discipline, its principles, and strategies for fostering self-regulation, compassion, and positive community change within educational settings.

Their participation provided them with valuable insights into Conscious Discipline, which they can now apply to enhance their work in empowering educators and building supportive environments for students. The conference offered them both a unique opportunity to network with other educators and leaders in the field, as well as to further develop their skills and understanding of this transformative approach to teaching and learning.

Harris County's 3rd Early Childhood Ecosystem Convening



The Harris County's 3rd Early Childhood Ecosystem Convening, hosted by the Early Childhood Initiatives (ECI) Division, was an outstanding event that brought together over 220 professionals, educators, and advocates from across Harris County, all committed to strengthening the early childhood ecosystem. Held on October 17, this gathering focused on fostering connections, learning, and collaboration to advance the field of early childhood education.

The Rupani Foundation team had the honor of participating in this incredible event, alongside many other dedicated stakeholders. The convening featured dynamic presenters who shared valuable insights on key topics such as the future of early learning, strategies for policy engagement, ECI program updates, and successful cross-sector collaborations. The day was filled with meaningful conversations, idea exchanges, and inspiring discussions, setting the stage for impactful changes in the early childhood landscape.

making a lasting difference in the lives of young children and their families.

Rupani Foundation Highlights Early Childhood Development Programs on Chai Time Radio Show



On November 11th, 2024, Neelofar Ali, the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Program Director, and Marc-Antoine Adam, CEO of the Rupani Foundation, had the opportunity to share their work and mission on Chai Time, a popular radio talk show on 103.5 HumFM. The engaging interview provided listeners with an in-depth look at the history of the Rupani Foundation, its journey from a single center to now operating 40 centers, and the impactful role the organization plays in providing quality early childhood education (ECD) to underserved communities and refugees.

During the interview, Ali and Adam discussed their belief that 80% of a child's education comes from the mother at home, and how the foundation works to empower families through education, fostering self-sufficiency within the community. They also highlighted the foundation's commitment to providing children with a strong educational foundation, regardless of their background, and the vision to make communities more resilient and self-reliant.

The conversation underscored the importance of quality ECD and the foundation's ongoing efforts to support the educational development of children and families in need. This interview was an excellent platform for the Rupani Foundation to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood education, the challenges faced by underserved communities, and the strides the organization is making toward a brighter future for all children.

Thank you to Chai Time on HumFM for giving us the opportunity to share our story and continue to build support for the future of ECD in our communities.

[Full Interview](#)



ECDAN

Early Childhood Development Action Network

The Rupani Foundation is thrilled to join the Early Childhood Action Development Network (ECDAN)! 🌍

ECDAN's mission to drive collective action for young children and their caregivers aligns perfectly with our commitment to making a meaningful impact in the early years. Together, we aim to foster collaboration, share knowledge, and advocate for better policies, resources, and accountability to support the youngest members of our society.

We look forward to growing our expertise and expanding our impact by participating in ECDAN's learning events, contributing to resource collections, and supporting their calls to action. By joining this global movement, we are eager to connect with other local, regional, and global partners and make an even bigger difference for children and families everywhere.

We invite all stakeholders to join us in this important work and encourage others to be part of ECDAN's transformative efforts! 🌍 ❤️

Celebrating Our Employees of the Month: October, November, and December

We are delighted to honor our Employees of the Month for October, November, and December, recognizing their exceptional contributions and unwavering dedication to the Rupani Foundation's mission. Please join us in congratulating (from the right to the left) Parwana, Lysa and Sehrish.

Your hard work, commitment, and passion for making a difference are truly inspiring. You each bring something special to our team, and your efforts have made a significant impact on the families and communities we serve. We are incredibly grateful for all that you do and are proud to have you as part of our team.

Thank you for your outstanding dedication, your work is deeply appreciated and celebrated by everyone at the Rupani Foundation. Keep up the fantastic work!

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Celebrating the Season of Joy: A Recap of the Rupani Foundation's Annual Holiday Party



The holiday season is always a time for celebration, joy, and appreciation, and the Rupani Foundation's Annual Holiday Season Party on December 12th was nothing short of spectacular! Our team came together to celebrate the spirit of the season, enjoy fun activities, and reflect on the incredible accomplishments of the year.

The evening was filled with laughter and excitement as employees participated in a variety of fun-filled activities. From holiday trivia to festive crafts, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

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One of the highlights of the party was our annual gift exchange. Employees brought their festive cheer and creativity as they exchanged thoughtful, unique gifts. Of course, the White Elephant gift exchange brought even more fun and laughter! The unpredictable gift steals and quirky surprises were a big hit, adding an extra dose of fun to the evening. From humorous trinkets to delightful surprises, the White Elephant game kept everyone entertained!

The Rupani Foundation takes pride in recognizing the hard work and dedication of our incredible team. During the event, we took a moment to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of our employees. Each and every person plays a vital role in the success of the foundation, and we are so grateful for their passion, commitment, and teamwork. The holiday party was a perfect way to show our appreciation for all their efforts throughout the year.

A big thank you to everyone who made this celebration a memorable occasion! We look forward to more events like this in the coming year. Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season filled with happiness, peace, and prosperity.

Happy Holidays from the Rupani Foundation! 🎄

Exciting News: \$25,000 Grant Secured from The George Foundation

We are thrilled to announce that we have secured a generous \$25,000 grant from The George Foundation to support the expansion of our Early Childhood Development (ECD) and economic development programs in Fort Bend County. This funding will enable us to further enhance our services, providing vital resources and opportunities for children, families, and communities in the area.

This grant will help us expand our reach, deepen our impact, and continue working toward building a brighter, more prosperous future for all.

We are incredibly grateful to The George Foundation for their belief in our mission and for partnering with us to create lasting change in Fort Bend County. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Wraparound Services

- Oak Forest Foster Closet is doing incredible work supporting families who are fostering, adopting, or serving as kinship providers. So far this year, they've helped 1,313 children by providing essential resources. They've distributed a wide range of items including musical tools, puzzles, toy dinosaurs, baby bottles, milk machines, toy trucks, toddler gyms, and newborn diapers. These donations continue to come in, ensuring that families have the necessary supplies for their children as they navigate the foster and adoption journey.
- We're excited to share that Books Between Kids has donated 150 books to support early childhood literacy! The collection includes bilingual English Spanish books, infant literature, and monochromatic books, all aimed at engaging young readers. These books will be distributed to our community to inspire a love of reading.

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Mother Action Committee (MAC) to mothers, highlighting opportunities for leadership and self-development. We encourage mothers to join the MAC to support their community and assist us in recruiting more families to our program. To show our appreciation and motivate their involvement, we provide H-E-B gift cards to those who actively contribute and help us address community needs.



**Oak Forest
Foster Closet**
FOR FOSTER, KINSHIP &
ADOPTIVE FAMILIES



Rupani Foundation
Empowering Communities

JAN-
MARCH
2025

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thriving Together

- Graduation of 270 mothers and kids from IP and Brain Builders sessions
- Opening of 36 new centers
- Distribution of 300 Hygiene Kits
- 3rd Children's Museum Trip for 70 kids, 50 mothers, and 13 facilitators

ECSH Program

- Youth Camp for Afghan refugee
- Two prenatal events for our community
- IP classes for mothers and kids between 0 to three years old

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