

Texas Loves Children Is Honored with the 2010 Award for Excellence in Social Innovation for the Impact of Its Unique Project to Help Abused and Neglected Children

Texas Loves Children, Inc. (TLC) was honored with the 2010 Award for Excellence in Social Innovation, given by the Dallas Center for Nonprofit Management, after selection by an independent panel of community leaders. The award recognizes the impact of the Texas Lawyers for Children Online Legal Resource and Communication Center in helping abused and neglected children. This prestigious award is given to the organization that best provides ***"a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient and sustainable... and demonstrates significant positive change around a specific social issue."*** The award ceremony was held during the "Night of Light" gala on November 19, 2010, at the Hilton Anatole Hotel, with 700 people in attendance.

The single most pivotal event in an abused child's life is the civil court case where every major aspect of that child's life is determined by a judge, based on evidence presented by an attorney. Abused and neglected children fall through cracks in the system unless they have a judge who understands their needs and an attorney making sure their needs are met while they are without a permanent family. TLC is a Dallas-based nonprofit organization that has developed a highly-effective way to connect and assist judges and attorneys across the state to improve the lives of at-risk children and youth. This project, the Texas Lawyers for Children Online Legal Resource and Communication Center (Online Center) brings information and communication networks for colleagues to the fingertips of judges and attorneys who handle children's cases, allowing them to instantly share their expertise across the state. These judges and attorneys estimate that their cases involve 63,500* Texas children this year (57,000* last year). The Online Center is effective. The judges and attorneys using the Online Center consistently report that it helps them achieve the best interest of the children in their cases—giving children statewide a better chance for a safe home and a higher quality of life. TLC's Online Center has been replicated for the state of California. TLC's vision is that by replicating the Online Center project state by state, TLC can go from helping 63,500* children to hundreds of thousands of children nationwide.

* Some children may have been double-counted if a judge and attorney included the same child in their estimates.



TLC's President, Barbara Elias-Perciful, J.D., (left) accepts the "Award for Excellence in Social Innovation" from Ms. Gillian Breidenbach at the Dallas Center for Nonprofit Management's annual gala, "A Night of Light".
Photo by Michael Garrett.