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## **AVANCE HEAD START HEALTHY MARRIAGE PROGRAM EXCEEDS GOALS IN 2009**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Houston, Texas, (September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009) — The AVANCE Head Start Healthy Marriage Program will be highlighted at the 2009 Administration for Children and Families conference “Celebrating Our Success” for its excellence in program quality and outcome. The conference will be held in Washington D.C. on November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009 by the Administration of Children and Families from the Office of Head Start to celebrate and acknowledge with other 24 grantees the successes of 22 organizations nation wide.

The HS Healthy Marriage Program provides vital services that promote the well-being of children and families by strengthening family formation and Healthy Marriage among Head Start and Early Head Start families. AVANCE’s Executive Director, Jose Villarreal commends AVANCE for this initiative and success.

“I congratulate AVANCE’s families for their desire to improve their children’s lives by learning more about their relationship. Projects like this focused on skills-based marriage education, relationship skills-building, and parenting education improves a family’s ability to effectively manage family business affairs providing economic stability to our community and encouraging children to succeed”.

AVANCE’s mission is to improve child well being through family learning and parental involvement in children’s education. AVANCE, meaning “advance” in Spanish, has served the educational needs of thousands of lower income families in Harris County since 1988.

In addition to a total of 13 Head Start centers, AVANCE provides classes in parenting, adult literacy, healthy marriage, fatherhood, ESL, computer skills and GED throughout Harris County. AVANCE plans to incorporate these adult education programs in its Head Start centers to create comprehensive learning centers for entire families.

For more information on the Head Start Healthy Marriage Program, contact the Program Coordinator Antoinette Ball at 713-812-0033, ext. 110 or visit our webpage at [www.avancehouston.org](http://www.avancehouston.org).

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