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## Caring alternative

Clinic next to Galveston School treats uninsured children who otherwise would likely be headed to an emergency room.

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Dr. Jeanette Camacho writes a prescription as Sarah Bojorquez holds onto her mother, Maria, at the Children's Assistance Resource and Education Clinic near Chandler Boulevard and McQueen Road.

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# Medical clinic a godsend to city's poor

New facility next door to Galveston school offers free health care

By Kerry Fehr-Snyder  
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One by one, Maria Bojorquez's four children lifted themselves up on the table so a doctor could examine them.

Victoria, the 9-year-old, had a 102-degree fever and a sinus infection. Her 12-year-old brother, Uriel, was suffering from asthma and needed steroid medication. Sisters Sarah, 3, and Marian, 5, had ear infections.

Bojorquez, who doesn't have health insurance, said she had little choice but to bring her children to a free clinic, the new \$2.5 million C.A.R.E. Clinic in central Chandler.

"I would be at the emergency room at Chandler Regional (Medical Center)," she said of her only alternative.

The clinic opened three weeks ago next to Galveston Elementary School. The clinic is on Galveston Street, south of Chandler Boulevard and east of McQueen Road.

The clinic is staffed by doctors like Jeanette Camacho, who volunteers to see sick children who have no other options for care. C.A.R.E. stands for Children's Assistance Resource and Education.

The center replaces a cramped clinic that has operated at San Marcos Elementary School for more than a decade. Last Friday was Camacho's first day volunteering at the clinic after eight years working at the old site.

"Holy moly, this is beautiful," she said of the center. "At the other clinic, we were tripping over food boxes in the food bank and there was just one room."

By comparison, the new clinic is a sprawling, 9,000-square-foot facility with three patient rooms, three dental chairs, group counseling and private



Dr. Jeanette Camacho tries to calm 20-month-old Elizabeth Cossio, in the arms of her mother, Perla. Elizabeth's eczema covers her face and ears. Camacho wrote a prescription for antibiotics and creams.

PHOTOS BY PAT SHANNAHAN/THE REPUBLIC



Camacho inspects Sarah Bojorquez for an infection at the C.A.R.E. Clinic. Her mother, Maria, brought Sarah and her three siblings.

mental health counseling rooms. The facility contains a quiet room for young dental patients who cry and space for medical supplies and records.

The clinic, which is open to Chandler residents only, saw

close to 20 patients the first day it took appointments. An additional 23 patients streamed into the clinic last week.

Among them was Anthony Orozco, an 11-year-old student from Galveston Elementary

**"I would be at the emergency room at Chandler Regional (Medical Center)."**

**Maria Bojorquez**  
Uninsured Chandler mother, explaining her only alternative to the free C.A.R.E. Clinic

who complained of a growth on the top of his head.

His mother, Concepcion, wanted to ensure the growth wasn't something to worry about.

Camacho determined that it was a wart and that Anthony should use a prescription medicine every night for two weeks to remove it.

But before she was done, Camacho checked Anthony for other medical problems, including back pain and asthma. Anthony recently fell off his skateboard while riding it down a slide.

"He probably just bruised his back," Camacho told his mother.

## C.A.R.E. Clinic

**Address:** 777 E. Galveston St., Chandler.

**Services:** Free dental, medical and counseling services.

**Cost:** \$2.5 million.

**Features:** Three patient rooms, three dental stations, a food bank.

**Information:** 480-812-7900, www.chandlercarecenter.org/.

The doctor also checked his breathing to ensure his exercise-induced asthma was under control.

Camacho's next patient was Elizabeth Cossio, a 20-month-old girl with eczema that covered her face and ears.

"It's infected, really infected right now," she told the girl's mother, Perla Cossio.

The doctor wrote out a prescription for antibiotics and two creams and told the mother to keep the child's skin clean with Dove soap.

Cossio, who paid nothing for the visit, said she heard about the clinic from her aunt after she considered taking her daughter to the hospital.

Clinic patients get prescriptions filled for free by taking them to a Basha's grocery. The program is paid for by Chandler, Toyota Financial Services, Walmart and Chandler Unified School District employees who donate money to United Way.

"This is the only place in the East Valley for the uninsured to get free treatment, free imaging and free medical tests," center director Susan Horan said.

That was something Beverlee Spisz, 14, was counting on while suffering from headaches after hitting her head on a shelf.

Her mother, Susan Allen, said she was worried her daughter had suffered a concussion.

"Thank God this clinic is here because she's been hurting and in pain, and I didn't know what to do," Allen said.