



Media Advisory

Media Contact: Rashena Flagg, 713.301.4577

CHILDREN AT RISK to Host Press Conference on Children's Surge

Organization calls for humanitarian response to the recent surge in unaccompanied children crossing the border to escape violence

When: Tuesday, August 5, 2014, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley, 724 N. Cage Blvd, Pharr, TX 78577

Who: Statement from Senator Eddie Lucio, *Texas State Senator – District 27*
Representative from the Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley
Dr. Bob Sanborn, *president and CEO, CHILDREN AT RISK*

HOUSTON, TX (August 1, 2014) – CHILDREN AT RISK will host a press conference addressing issues raised by the surge in unaccompanied children crossing U.S. borders in an attempt to flee the violence occurring in Central American countries. Several myths have been spread about these children that are not supported by the facts. With 57,525 children having been apprehended between last October and June (up 106% in 1 year), now more than ever, we have the need for a humanitarian response. This includes maximizing potential protections available under federal law, including Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status offers a pathway to lawful status for unaccompanied migrant children fleeing abuse, neglect, and abandonment. The Office of Refugee Resettlement has predicted the numbers of unaccompanied youth fleeing violence and entering the United States will reach over 60,000 by the end of the year. The violence is so pervasive that children are seeking refuge not only in the United States, but also in Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, Nicaragua, and Mexico. CHILDREN AT RISK is calling for citizens, public officials, and the media to dispel the myths being circulated and to support humanitarian responses in their communities.

“Regardless of whether they ultimately remain in this country or are returned home, these children deserve to be treated with dignity while they are here,” said Dr. Bob Sanborn, president and CEO of CHILDREN AT RISK. “Despite what some are saying, these children have not posed a major risk to our communities.”

CHILDREN AT RISK is producing a publication aimed at providing policy recommendations concerning Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

About CHILDREN AT RISK

CHILDREN AT RISK is a nonprofit organization leading the way to improving the quality of life for children through research, collaboration, and advocacy. CHILDREN AT RISK educates the community and public officials based on its groundbreaking research, which tracks children's health, safety, education, and economic conditions. By understanding children's

needs and speaking out on their behalf, CHILDREN AT RISK drives change. For more information, visit www.childrenatrisk.org.

###