



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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"Streets 2 Safety" Donation Drive kicks off

The project is a collaboration between the Office of Senator José Rodríguez, the Texas Veterans Commission, and the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Endeavors.

El Paso - The office of Sen. José Rodríguez participated in a news conference announcing the "Streets 2 Safety" donation drive for the El Paso Center for Children. The drive is a joint collaboration with the Texas Veterans Commission and the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Endeavors, to help homeless youth of El Paso as well as the youth who reside in the Center for Children's emergency shelter.

The drive aims to gather items critical for personal hygiene, health, and education, as well as bring awareness to our community about homeless youth in El Paso. **Attached is a flyer with a list of needed items.**

"Our youth are the future of our city, state, and nation. With every child taken off the streets, there is hope for a brighter future. This drive will give members of our community an opportunity to get involved, spread the word about how serious the situation is, and make a difference," said Rodríguez.

The mission statement of the El Paso Center for Children is "to empower youth and families to brave adversity and conflict through constantly evolving, innovative programs in order to co-create a brighter future." Many of those served by the center have nowhere else to go, and the facility is the only emergency youth shelter in the region for unaccompanied youth ages 11 to 17. The center also provides a free family counseling program, a therapeutic and specialized foster care program, and a housing program for homeless youth ages 16 to 24.

"We are proud to have this opportunity to collaborate with committed and caring community partners - the El Paso Center for Children, thank you for sharing in the efforts to care for not only our military and veteran families but our community families and children as well," said Sandy Emanuel, The Clinic Director for the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Endeavors.

According to a 2016 study led by Texas Appleseed, there were approximately 16,000 homeless students attending Texas public schools, more than 45,000 young people reported missing in Texas every year, and more than 1,000 youth reported as runaways from foster care placements. The study also found that, in Texas, one in 30 youth ages 13 to 17 and one in 10 youth ages 18 to 25 experience homelessness. While data is still being collected on the local level, since October 2017, the El Paso Center for Children has served 175 homeless youth through street outreach. In that same time period, the center also has provided shelter to more than 100 youth, some of whom are homeless and others who come to the center as referrals from various government and non-profit agencies.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with Senator Rodriguez and his team for this effort. Youth homelessness is a significant problem in El Paso and we want everyone to be aware that there are services to bring these children to safety. This is a wonderful opportunity for the community to support local youth that need our help," said Beth Singer, CEO for the El Paso Center For Children.

José Rodríguez represents Texas Senate District 29, which includes the counties of El Paso, Hudspeth, Culberson, Jeff Davis, and Presidio. He represents both urban and rural constituencies, and more than 350 miles of the Texas-Mexico border. Senator Rodríguez currently serves as the Chairman of the Texas Senate Democratic Caucus, and is a member of the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Economic Development; Transportation; Veteran Affairs and Border Security; and Agriculture, Water, and Rural Affairs (Vice Chair).

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