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**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE [Dec. 14, 2018]**

Hope, Joy and Holiday Cheer for Homeless Children and Families

DALLAS – Nearly **700 homeless children and families** from Dallas-area shelters experienced the magic of the holidays this weekend at **Rainbow Days’ annual Saturday with Santa** event. On **Dec. 8**, Rainbow Days was delighted to host families from **17 different shelters, transitional living sites and motels** in our community for a **meaningful holiday family bonding** experience held at **Lovers Lane United Methodist Church**.

Saturday with Santa was a jovial day for families to **celebrate the holiday spirit outside of the shelter environment**. Participants played fun **carnival games**, enjoyed a delicious **lunch provided by Chuy’s (Knox-McKinney location)** and got to spend time with **Santa Claus** himself! **Each child left with a stocking** filled with presents and a **brand new toy** for Christmas, and all **parents also received necessities and holiday treats** in stockings of their very own.



“Saturday with Santa enables us to bring the **joy of the holidays** to children in our community who are experiencing challenges no child should have to face,” **Rainbow Days CEO Sherri Ansley** says.

“We are so grateful to be able to meet this need with the help of many **generous supporters who continue to invest in Rainbow Days** and the children and communities we serve.”



Many individuals, corporations and local organizations helped make this day possible through **financial gifts, in-kind donations and volunteer hours**. Rainbow Days is especially grateful for the support of: **Lovers Lane United Methodist Church; The Rees-Jones Foundation; Chuy’s (Knox-McKinney location); Citi; PepsiCo; National Charity League; Young Men’s Service League;**

Texas A&M DFW Hispanic Network; Heart of Texas Therapy Dogs; Nicole Williams; Diane Oxley and Christian Stringer; Susan O'Suilleabhain and Clare Ni'Suilleabhain; Liz Case Pickens; and countless other kind-hearted donors, volunteers and supporters.

This year, children, youth and adult family members from **17 local shelters** and **transitional living sites** participated in Saturday with Santa. Housing partners include: **Family Gateway; Salvation Army; Family Place; Reconciliation Outreach; Hope's Door New Beginning Center; Nexus Recovery Center; Family Gateway Permanent Supportive Housing at Meadow Lane, Cedar Crest and Pemberton Hill; Dallas Life; Under 1 Roof; Interfaith Family Services; Shared Housing Center; Mosaic Family Services; Brighter Tomorrows;** and **Genesis Women's Shelter.** Several **families experiencing homelessness** and living in **Budget Suites motels** were also present at the event.

ABOUT FAMILY CONNECTION: **Saturday with Santa** has been a key activity offered within Rainbow Days' **Family Connection program** since the **early 1990s.** Family Connection is Rainbow Days' award-winning collaborative model for meeting the critical needs of **children ages 4-12 who are experiencing homelessness.** Each year, Family Connection positively **impacts more than 1,000 homeless children** through support groups, summer camps, family outings and tangible goods. Through these **effective services** and **local partnerships** with around 50 partners and shelter sites, Rainbow Days brings **hope, coping skills** and **resilience** to these children to help them overcome life's challenges.



ABOUT RAINBOW DAYS: **Saturday with Santa** is a program of **Rainbow Days, a 501(c)(3) Dallas-based nonprofit** organization. Founded in **1982,** Rainbow Days has a mission to help children and youth in adversity build coping skills and resilience to create positive futures. Through support groups, camps, mentored events and tangible items, Rainbow Days serves over **11,000 at-risk children and youth in the Dallas area annually.** For more information, please visit our website, www.RainbowDays.org, or call our office at (214) 887-0726.

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