



America's Promise Alliance CEO Opens Bright Space Play Area for D.C. Homeless Children

Children at Community of Hope Now Have Beautiful Place to Learn and Grow

Washington, D.C., August 4, 2009 — America's Promise Alliance president and CEO Marguerite Kondracke, along with members of the nonprofit Bright Horizons Foundation for Children, and faculty from Bright Horizons at 1111 Pennsylvania Avenue Child Care Center, today cut ribbons to officially open a Bright Space for homeless children at Community of Hope. The Bright Space is a dedicated play area for the children, filled with books, games and toys in a warm and beautiful setting, and was funded by a personal gift from Marguerite Kondracke in addition to generous funding from the Freddie Mac Foundation.

"During these tough economic times, it is critical that we all do as much as we can to help children facing difficult odds and place them on a path to future success," said Marguerite Kondracke, CEO of America's Promise Alliance. "All children need to be physically and emotionally safe and this Bright Space allows them to develop and learn in a beautiful play area."

Earlier in her career, Kondracke co-founded Bright Horizons Family Solutions, the leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, early education, and work/life solutions. She continues to serve on the company's board. The Community of Hope is the third Bright Space that Kondracke has sponsored.

Victoria Roberts, spokeswoman for Community of Hope, says, "The children and teens at Community of Hope use the Education Enrichment Program (EEP) space to study, play, and learn. We are so grateful to both Ms. Kondracke and the Freddie Mac Foundation for funding the revitalization of EEP to provide an updated, cheerful Bright Space for our residents to spend time in."

Bright Spaces Enable Children in Shelters to Discover the Magic of Childhood

Studies have shown that children of all ages thrive when they have a safe place in which to explore the world around them, filled with books, toys and activities that are developmentally appropriate and provide an opportunity for them to discover the magic of childhood. Children experiencing the stress of homelessness especially need access to these kinds of child-friendly spaces in order to develop social, cognitive, gross motor and language skills, which are vital to their development and success later in life.

A special Bright Space playroom designed just to meet their needs can become a valuable tool for children and families trying to maintain a sense of normalcy and routine in a very difficult situation.

The Bright Horizons Foundation for Children, the nonprofit organization of Bright Horizons Family Solutions, established the Bright Spaces program to create appropriate play and learning areas for children of all ages living in shelters. A Bright Space is a room transformed by a team of early education and design professionals to create a warm, inviting area where children at risk can simply be children.

Curtains are hung, cozy nooks are strategically placed around the room to give children of all ages a comfortable place to explore, and shelves overflow with award-winning children's books, educational toys and games and soft toys. Dramatic play areas are set up so children can act out their fantasies and learn to socialize with their peers.

This new Bright Space at Community of Hope was designed specifically for the children at the shelter by early education professionals from Bright Horizons at 1111 Pennsylvania Avenue to help meet the needs of the children living there.

“We are inspired and energized by this partnership with Marguerite Kondrake and Community of Hope to provide an engaging and educational place for the children to play, learn and find security and warmth. It is our mission to raise the bar for the quality of care and early education for young children across this country, and this partnership ensures that children in need in Washington D.C. will get an early start and opportunity to begin a never-ending journey of success in school and life,” said David Lissy, Bright Horizons Family Solutions CEO and Board Member of the Bright Horizons Foundation for Children.

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About Bright Horizons Family Solutions and the Bright Horizons Foundation for Children

Bright Horizons Family Solutions is the world's leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, early education and work/life solutions. The Bright Horizons Foundation for Children was founded in 1999 to help forward the vision of Bright Horizons to make a difference in the lives of children and families. Bright Spaces is a program of the Foundation, creating dedicated play areas in homeless shelters and agencies serving children in crisis. More information is at www.brighthorizonsfoundation.org.

About Community of Hope

The mission of Community of Hope is to improve the health and quality of life of low-income, homeless, and underserved families and individuals in the District of Columbia by providing healthcare, housing with supportive services, educational opportunities, and spiritual support. More information is at www.communityofhopedc.org.

About America's Promise Alliance

America's Promise Alliance is the nation's largest partnership alliance comprised of corporations, nonprofit organizations, foundations, policymakers, advocacy and faith groups committed to ensuring that children receive the fundamental resources – the Five Promises – they need to lead successful, healthy and productive lives and build a stronger society. Building on the legacy of its founder General Colin Powell, the Alliance believes a child's success is grounded in experiencing the Five Promises—caring adults; safe places; a healthy start; an effective education; and opportunities to help others—at home, in school and in the community. For more information, visit www.americaspromise.org.

About Freddie Mac Foundation

The Freddie Mac Foundation works to make home a place where vulnerable children and their families can thrive. For more information, visit <http://www.freddiemacfoundation.org/>.

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