

Sanctuary Scoop

Vol. 1
No. 1

November is National Runaway Prevention Month

What is National Runaway Prevention Month?

The goals are two-fold:

1. To raise awareness of the runaway and homeless youth crisis and the issues that these young people face; and
2. To educate the public about solutions and the role they can play in ending youth homelessness

Fresno EOC Sanctuary and Youth Services is grateful to our elected officials who Proclaimed the month of November as National Runaway Prevention Month in City of Fresno and Fresno County. Also, we appreciate our affiliated national partners (National Runaway Safeline, National Network for Youth, National Safe Place Network) and individuals like you, for committing to keeping Fresno's youth safe and off the streets.

"The National Runaway Safeline (NRS) commends Fresno EOC Sanctuary and Youth Services for being a resource for runaway, homeless and at-risk youth for the past 23 years. They have also been a great partner in National Runaway Prevention Month, helping to raise awareness of the issues runaway and homeless youth face, and energizing their communities to work together to develop solutions to end youth homelessness. With 1.6 to 2.8 million youth running from home this year, we need more organizations than ever devoted to serving this very vulnerable population."

Maureen Blaha, Executive Director, National Runaway Safeline.

1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)

To learn more about NRPM, visit: www.1800runaway.org/runaway-prevention-month/



of



Did you know 3,884 children were reported missing in Fresno County this year? Many end up on the streets and fall victim to violence and sexual exploitation. The youth on the streets need your help now. There is still much work to be done. In September, SOS was notified that it would not be re-funded and would have to cease operations. However, with your help we can continue to provide critical survival items for homeless youth and get many of them off the streets.

#SaveSOS

Youth are in alleys, vacant buildings, abandoned cars and sleeping on sidewalks with nowhere to turn. Kids leave home for many reasons. Many runaways think that the streets are better than home, but the reality is they routinely face drugs, violence and trafficking.

Over the last 17 years, the Sanctuary Outreach to the Streets (SOS) team has gone out nightly helping youth exit the streets as well as bringing them food, hygiene supplies, warm clothing and most of all - hope. Hope that they can take the steps needed to thrive as young adults in safe housing. Last year, over 200 youth were saved from the streets by SOS outreach.

We need your help to continue to save youth from the streets.

Watch Tyler's story, a former homeless youth whose life has been impacted by SOS:

<http://bit.ly/sos-tyler>

November is National Runaway Prevention Month. Let's stand together and end youth homelessness!

Sponsor A Youth for \$1,000 go to www.FresnoEOC.org/SOS



Fresno **Economic Opportunities Commission**
Sanctuary and Youth Services

Upcoming Sanctuary Event

22nd Annual Making Spirits Bright

December 5th 12 to 3 p.m.

Join us at Lincoln Elementary School (Fresno Unified School District), a designated Safe Place for youth. The event will provide holiday cheer for 30 low-income families, including over 150 children. Families will receive a warm festive meal, gifts, stockings, a Christmas tree and an opportunity to visit and take photos with Santa. Sanctuary's Making Spirits Bright event brings together Fresno's businesses and community groups working together to serve others.

Our 2015 partners include: PG&E, Macy's Fashion Fair and River Park, USDA Forest Service-Sierra National Forest, London Properties, and Anthem Blue Cross of California.

Since 1993, Making Spirits Bright has reached 630 families, including 2,145 children residing in Fresno County. We need your help!

For more information, visit: www.FresnoEOC.org/MSB

Making Spirits Bright Volunteers

A Community Celebration Benefitting Lincoln Elementary School - Fresno Unified School District

Holiday Volunteers Needed!

Most volunteer services will occur the day before or the day of the event.

Stocking Stuffers – 125 hand-crafted stockings from holiday felt need to be filled by generous individuals for needy and deserving toddlers and teens.

Decorators – Local “Martha Stewarts” are needed to transform a school cafeteria into a Winter Wonderland the day before the event. Volunteers are encouraged to donate Christmas decorations for the event. Table settings, table linen, and holiday ornaments and lights are in big demand.

Door Greeters – Greet each family with a smile and handshake, present a Christmas Program, direct traffic, and answer general questions about the program. Bilingual

(Spanish/English) volunteers are needed.

Host/Hostess – Assist families to a table, provide courteous and polite service, bring meals and drinks to each family member, and engage in conversation with families at assigned tables.

Entertainers – Provide holiday entertainment for guests. Suggestions: a Christmas ensemble/band, Christmas carolers, storytelling, piano player, or cultural dancers or musicians.

Meal Preparers – Help in the meal preparation; carving turkeys, warming rolls, preparing salad, and serving dessert.

Christmas Tree & Stand Helpers – Help is needed to trim trees, place trees in stands, and to provide tree stands for 30 Christmas trees that will be donated to families in attendance.

Contact (559) 498-8543 x103

Can't volunteer? Make a donation online at: www.FresnoEOC.org/MSB



Community Engagement

From June-July 2015, Sanctuary and Youth Services program created art through paper mâché to support and raise awareness to restore activities for Rotary Storyland Playland. Fresno Art Museum staff served as art instructors for the 8-session art series with over 90 volunteer hours committed to the project. A total of 30 paper mâché figurines inspired by Storyland and Playland were displayed as table centerpieces for the Cultural Arts Rotary Club of Fresno's "Storyland and Jazz at the River" fundraiser event held on August 22nd with over 400 attendees. Partial proceeds from youth art donations support continual art education.



Meet a Sanctuary Client

Michelle Tutunjian, Sanctuary Director, Interviews Jacob

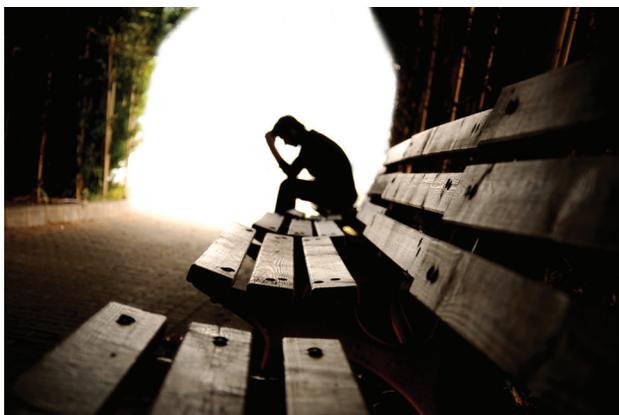
How did you come in contact with Fresno EOC Sanctuary and Youth Services?

In 2006, I lived in various motels in Fresno and Sanctuary Outreach to the Streets (SOS) team would drop by delivering me a brown bag lunch. This was my very first contact with the SOS team. With my meal they gave me a “golden ticket” that had information about services to link me into housing. I did take advantage of services at Sanctuary Drop-In Center including getting a free meal and accepting a warm coat in the Winter. The Drop-In Center was a place I could go to get out of the cold. SOS also assisted me with laundry, allowing me to have clean clothes to wear.

In 2007, at age 14, I was homeless and a freshman at Design Science School in Fresno. My school principal found out I was homeless and gave me an ultimatum. My choices

were to enter foster care, stay with family, or go the Sanctuary Youth Shelter. Since I knew about the Shelter from the SOS team, I found this to be my best option. The Shelter provided me with a safe place to call home and the staff influenced my life through their support of individual

and group counseling over a two-week period. When I exited the Shelter I moved in with my cousin. This did not work out and I was homeless again. While homeless again, I revisited the Sanctuary Drop-In Center on several occasions for services and eventually ended up going to foster care. I was not happy with my living situation and decided to visit the Drop-In Center and participate in Sanctuary’s Transitional Living Center (TLC) Orientation. At age 18, I emancipated from foster care and entered TLC-3 for eight months and then enlisted in the Army. At age 19, I served in the Army for three years. In August 2015, at age 22, I re-enrolled in TLC-3 and have been living there since.



How has the services changed your life?

The impact the Sanctuary and Youth Services program has had on my life is very positive. Without this program, who knows where I would be today?

What are you looking forward to in your future?

In January 2016, I will have earned by Associates of Arts degree from Fresno City College and plan to get into the job market to make some money to exit into permanent housing on my own. My goal is to get a job at Veteran’s Hospital (VA Central California Health Care System).

For information on TLC, go to www.FresnoEOC.org/tlc

Meet SOS Program Manager

Fresno EOC Sanctuary and Youth Services

program started in 1992 with the mission of addressing the needs of runaway and homeless youth.



Joe Martinez

Hire Date: 04/06/92

When did you start working for Fresno EOC?

I was a senior in college when I began my career with EOC Sanctuary and Youth Services. In the early 1990’s there was no shelter for homeless and runaway youth to go to as a Safe Place until Fresno EOC opened the Sanctuary Youth Shelter. Over the years, I worked hard and learned as much as I could about community outreach, and was given opportunities to grow and be promoted in various positions. For the last 7 years, I have worked as the Community Relations & Outreach Manager. I am thankful and humbled that I can help our youth achieve their full potential and become productive and responsible citizens.

How did you get involved with working with youth? As a former foster child and homeless adult, I experienced first-hand the issues that many of the youth we see every day at the Sanctuary and on the streets and this is why I do what I do to give youth hope and encouragement.

Describe an Outreach case that has greatly influenced you? I was standing in line at McDonald’s when I heard someone say that Mr. Martinez saved my life. I looked behind me and it was a former street youth with his parent. His mom said tell him what you just told me. The young man looked at me, pointed his finger and said, “Mr. Martinez because of you, I changed my life, got back into school and moved away and now I am doing better!” I gave that young man a hug and said thank you.

Favorite Hobby: Cycling with my friends

Favorite Color: Gold and red, my 49er’s team colors!

Favorite Movie: Any movies from the 1980’s: The Goonies, The Breakfast Club, and Pretty in Pink.

Favorite Childhood memory: Leaving foster care and graduating from college.

What is something we may not know about you?

My beloved son passed away two years ago and he inspires me to never give up and live by the words of Jeremiah 29:11.



Great News!

Sanctuary Youth Shelter was recently awarded the 2015 Basic Center Program grant; a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. The grant supports funding for shelters to provide immediate help (shelter, basic needs, case management, counseling and referrals) to runaway or homeless youth.

Congressman Jim Costa, instrumental in achieving this award said, "Here in our Central Valley, we continue to combat homelessness, and this vital funding will allow the Sanctuary Youth Shelter to expand their efforts in transforming lives and helping our most vulnerable youth."

Sanctuary Youth Shelter was also the first shelter to be granted the new Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter (RHYS) license under the new California Department of Social Services regulations. The new license will allow Shelter to serve a larger population with less administrative restrictions.

Sanctuary Advisory Board:

Members of the Sanctuary Advisory Board serve to advice guide, review, assess, and advocate in all matters pertaining to Sanctuary. The membership of the Advisory Board includes volunteers for the community at large that are concerned with youth.

Tom Nino, Interim Chair
EMQ FamiliesFirst – Fresno

Sergeant Curtis Chastain
City of Fresno Police Department

LaShawn Baines
Fresno EOC Commissioner
Local Business Owner

Erica Cabrera
Fresno EOC Commissioner
Pacific Gas & Electric

Cheryl Sullivan
Fresno EOC Commissioner
Fresno City College

Sanctuary and Youth Services Projects

Safe Place is a community outreach program that links runaway and homeless youth to immediate help and safety through a network of 270 community sites that open the doors to at-risk youth and connect to safe shelter. Teens, text the word **SAFE** and your current location (**street address, city, state**) to **69866**

Sanctuary Youth Shelter is a 24-hour shelter for runaway and homeless youth ages 12-17 (18 if still in high school). Youth receive emergency shelter, food, hygiene, case management and referrals to community programs with the goal of reunifying with family. 1-800-820-4968 (YOU)

Transitional Living Center (TLC) is a supportive housing program for youth ages 18-24 and their families. Youth receive housing and supportive services for up to 24 months with the goal of transitioning to permanent housing. (559) 443-0004

Project PHOENIX is a permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) provides outreach and rapid rehousing to homeless individuals and homeless prevention to at-risk of homelessness individuals.

Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) is a community referral based program that addresses the social, health, educational, and economic consequences of adolescent pregnancy by providing comprehensive case management services to pregnant and parenting teens and their children. (559) 263-1395

Central Valley against Human Trafficking (CVAHT) provides awareness, training and technical assistance, and advocacy about human trafficking and trafficking-related issues. National Human Trafficking Resource Center: 1-888-373-7888

It takes \$1,000 to get a youth off the streets Help us save 200 youth in 2016!

 **\$400**
feed one youth for a year

\$200 feed 10 youth for a month


 **\$100**
4 youth receive survival kits

 **\$25**
Hygiene supplies

 **\$50**
backpack filled with school supplies

To DONATE
Scan: QR Code
Text: SaveSOS to 41444
Sanctuary Youth Services
Online: www.FresnoEOC.org/SOS



- Follow us on Facebook
- Subscribe to our email list
- Participate in local events
- Volunteer with our programs
- Donate funding to support youth
- Volunteers needed for Making Spirits Bright

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twitter.com/EOC_Sanctuary

www.FresnoEOC.org/Sanctuary