



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **ST. JUDE'S RANCH FOR CHILDREN OPENS FIRST TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM OF ITS KIND IN SAN ANTONIO**

*New Home to Provide Disadvantaged Teens the Chance to Succeed*

**San Antonio, TX April 3, 2009** – St. Jude's Ranch for Children is opening its Transitional Living Program in San Antonio on Friday, April 3, 2009. This is the first home for the organization in the Alamo City, and the Program will offer the first services of its kind in the area. **To celebrate this major achievement, there will be an open house and reception at the home on April 3 from 4-7p.m.** The event will allow community leaders and other invitees to tour the home, meet its residents and learn more about the Program. It will be hosted by St. Jude's Ranch for Children Chief Executive Officer Christine Spadafor, her staff and organization board members.

"This is a major milestone for St. Jude's Ranch, our Transitional Living Program, and the children it will serve," Spadafor said. "Our Transitional Living Program has accomplished amazing advancements and growth since it was established in Bulverde two years ago, and by moving the Program to San Antonio we will be able to take it to a whole new level and help more kids succeed."

Initially based at The St. Jude's Ranch for Children Bulverde Campus, the Transitional Living Program allows 12 teenagers, ages 16 to 21, to learn and live the life skills necessary to become thriving and responsible adult members of the San Antonio community. The program's residents will learn to run their own household and become fully responsible for their own everyday activities such as having a full-time job, being a full-time student, maintaining a budget and other daily adult responsibilities. By being in San Antonio they will be closer to schools, jobs and public transit, giving them the opportunity to be a part of a real urban setting. Additionally, Transitional Living Program residents can now take advantage of services and programs in San Antonio, such as Preparation for Adult Living (PAL), Casey Family Services, City Corp, and Good SAMM services.

Residents of the Program have initially been placed in St. Jude's Ranch's care by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS). Most have been taken from their natural parents or caregivers because of some form of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

"Establishing this program in San Antonio is critical, as children aging out of foster care at 18 years old are typically not ready to be on their own," stated Spadafor. "Bexar County statistics show that one out of two children who age out of foster care at 18 are homeless within one year. The Transitional Living experience helps to ensure that the residents will be able to maintain a stable living environment on their own in the community once they leave."

Moving the Transitional Living Program to San Antonio has been a long-time vision of St. Jude's Ranch

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for Children, and was finally made a reality last November when they were awarded the 2008 Impact San Antonio grant for \$100,000. This grant is the largest amount awarded by Impact San Antonio to date – almost double the amount of the 2007 grant. The 2008 grant process was competitive with more than 80 charities submitting applications for consideration.

The Transitional Living Program home is located at 614 Gable Point, in a new, quiet neighborhood in North San Antonio. A 3,400 square-foot, two-story contemporary, the house has six large bedrooms - a master for staff on the first floor and five bedrooms for residents upstairs. With a large open floor plan, residents will enjoy a large kitchen with new stainless steel appliances, a front living area that will serve as the kids' study room, a spacious living room with a 47-inch flat-screen HDTV, a dining room with seating for 12, three full baths and one half-bath. The new home also features a large, fenced-in back yard, two-car garage, plenty of closet space and an ADT security system. It is located in the Northside Independent School District within walking distance of Stevens High School and a VIA bus stop.

An added benefit of moving the Transitional Living Program to San Antonio is that St. Jude's Ranch will now be able to provide care for 12 more "Basic Care" children on its Bulverde Campus. The former Transitional Living home is currently being renovated in preparation for taking more children. This represents a new benchmark in the care St. Jude's Ranch can provide to children across Texas.

St. Jude's Ranch for Children, a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization, rescues abused, abandoned and neglected children of all races and faiths from the vicious cycle of child abuse. They provide healing and nurturing in a safe home-like environment where children can learn life skills to start new lives with new chances, new choices and new hope. The Transitional Living Program is one of the most distinctive learning experiences that benefit eligible children ages 16 to 21 years old. The program prepares its residents for integration into society by teaching them life skills to become self-sufficient, productive, civic-minded citizens.

**St. Jude's Ranch for Children - Transitional Living Program**

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