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Contact:
Robert Martin
Director of Communications
800-25-PEACE, ext. 7797
Robert.martin@kidspeace.org

KidsPeace Receives \$10,000 Verizon Grant for Lehigh Valley Walk-In Assessment Program

LEHIGH VALLEY, PA (December 1, 2020) - KidsPeace has received a \$10,000 grant from Verizon to support walk-in assessment services at its offices in Allentown and Bethlehem, PA, so that more residents can get mental healthcare when they need it.

KidsPeace provides the free walk-in sessions for individuals or families who are experiencing issues and need an assessment by a trained professional. The no-appointment-needed assessments are seen as a way for individuals to get help before they experience a full-blown mental health crisis; the service also is shown to reduce visits to hospital emergency departments – a key consideration for healthcare providers struggling to address the impact of COVID-19 in our community.

“Verizon has made over \$55 million in contributions and donations to COVID-19 relief efforts in the U.S. and around the world,” said Robert McGuckin, Verizon Manager - State and Local Government Affairs. “Our grant to KidsPeace will support their important work in providing mental health assistance across the Lehigh Valley during a time when the need is greater than ever.”

In 2019 KidsPeace professionals made nearly 1,000 assessments, and demand for the service continues to be high amid the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the cost of each assessment estimated at \$50, the Verizon grant will fund 200 assessments at KidsPeace’s three offices in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania.

“We’ve seen the walk-in assessment program work to improve access to mental healthcare for members of our community over the last five years,” said Michael W. Slack, president and CEO of KidsPeace. “As we prepare to handle the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental well-being of our neighbors and their families, we could not be more grateful to Verizon for its generosity to make sure the program continues to benefit our Lehigh Valley community.”

KidsPeace recently renovated its Green Street office space in Allentown to help facilitate programming like the walk-in assessments. In a video highlighting the renovation, a young woman named Dakota told of the impact of the walk-in assessment program on her situation:

“The experience I was going through at the time I came in for the walk-in was something I never thought I would be able to move past... but after coming to KidsPeace and talking with the counselor, that single interaction helped me so much to change my point of view on everything about that situation and move forward and live my life the best I can...”

For information about the walk-in assessment program at KidsPeace, visit www.kidspeace.org/outpatient-services. To support the walk-ins and the other community services KidsPeace provides, please visit www.kidspeace.org/donate.

Since 1882, KidsPeace has been building on its expertise to give hope, help and healing to children, adults and those who love them. Through its comprehensive range of residential treatment programs; accredited educational services; unique psychiatric hospital and foster care and community-based programs, KidsPeace is dedicated to helping people connect, transform and overcome their challenges to ensure a stable future, transition to adulthood and gain independence. Since its doors opened, nearly 300,000 children have participated in one of the multitude of programs KidsPeace offers.

For additional resources or more information on how to get involved, become a foster parent or make a donation, please visit www.kidspeace.org. Follow us at www.facebook.com/kidspeace.org or on Twitter @KidsPeace.

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