



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HOPE REALIZED: UNITED WAY'S READYKIDSA COALITION DEVELOPS FIRST EVER BEXAR COUNTY CHILDREN'S AGENDA

(San Antonio, TX) ReadyKidSA, a United Way initiative, is a coalition of organizations across Bexar County that focuses on children age birth through 8 years old (3rd Grade) to ensure they are *Happy, Healthy and Ready*. Over 140 leaders and stakeholders met last October and a working group of some 50 people has been meeting weekly to devise strategies and solutions that will significantly improve children's lives and "move the needle" on the data. The coalition's findings will be published in the first ever Bexar County Children's Agenda and Results Based Accountability scorecard.

DATA ABOUT CHILDREN IN BEXAR COUNTY

- Kindergarten Readiness: 24.3% of Kindergarteners Assessed as "Very Ready" in Four or More EDI
- Child Abuse: There were 4,550 confirmed cases of child abuse and neglect reported last year; the 4th highest number in the State; 10 children in Bexar County died from physical abuse in 2016
- Prenatal Care: Mothers who do not receive prenatal care are three times more likely to give birth to a low-weight baby, and their baby is five times more likely to die. In 2014, 36.6% or 10,175, of Pregnancies Received Late or No Prenatal Care

"The Bexar County Children's Agenda is positioning us as a community to improve the lives of very young children in San Antonio to grow up happy, healthy, and ready, as our vision states. I hope other funders and policy-makers will join me in using this as a blueprint for our children," said Harvey Najim of the Najim Family Foundation, Chair United Way Board of Trustees, and Chair of the Bexar County Children's Agenda. "And I want to thank the Working Group for their countless hours in preparing this agenda for San Antonio's children. We have identified the areas that we need to improve upon and solutions to address these areas through more efficient and effective programming and policy recommendations. We have the momentum and more importantly the will, to improve outcomes for San Antonio's children, and I hope other community leaders and funders will join me in championing the Bexar County Children's Agenda!"

In support of National Child Abuse Month, the Bexar County Children's Agenda Breakfast Launch will be held on Friday, April 21st at the Pearl Stable from 8:30a -10a. A press conference will immediately follow the breakfast to launch the Agenda, and announce the recent state contract award of \$1.8 million for the Healthy Outcomes through Prevention & Early Support (HOPES) III Grant from Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Prevention & Early Intervention Division (PEI). United Way will act as the fiscal agent responsible for the administration and execution of the HOPES III Grant in partnership with the following local subcontractors: Any Baby Can, Boys Town, Catholic Charities, The

Children's Shelter, The Center for Health Care Services, Family Service Association, KLRN, Martinez Street Women's Center and Respite Care.

The launch will also include the unveiling of the ReadyKidSA website, an update on the new HOPES III grant, and an introduction of the ReadyKidSA Coalition Partners.

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About United Way: United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County invests in well-managed health and human services programs and brings together strong community partners to address immediate and long-term needs of our residents and neighborhoods.

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