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Media Contact: Chaundra Luckett
Director of Marketing & Communications
404.564.3426

Chaundra.Luckett@CHRIS180.org

CHRIS 180 Serving Community As Mental Health First Responders During COVID-19 Crisis

Behavioral healthcare nonprofit serving on frontlines of public health emergency

ATLANTA, GA (March 24, 2020) As the COVID-19 public health emergency continues to intensify across our communities and our state, CHRIS 180, an Atlanta-based nonprofit organization, is on the front lines serving and supporting its clients and community during this time.

For many residents in Metro Atlanta, staying at home to protect their health is not an option because they are living on the street, or their housing situation is unstable. That's why CHRIS 180 is providing critical services for the community in a variety of ways to help those who lack basic resources on any given day, including during this crisis.

"CHRIS 180 is committed to serving and advocating for those who are the most vulnerable during this crisis. We are an essential healthcare organization providing critical mental health services and we have spent the past few weeks ramping up our work and will continue to increase our outreach during this time," said Kathy Colbenson, LMFT, President & CEO.

Currently [five of the organization's seven counseling centers](#) are open & providing tele-counseling to help those who are struggling with anxiety, depression or other mental health issues and need support. Additionally, therapists who work in CHRIS 180's School-Based Mental Health program are working remotely with their young clients who are now at home for the next few months. The children and young adults who live in CHRIS 180's 10 foster homes and its apartment complex for formerly homeless youth are also being supported with staff on-site each day, helping them understand the importance of social distancing, hand washing and providing food, shelter and care during this uncertain time.

At CHRIS 180's drop-in center for youth experiencing homelessness, the organization is providing education about COVID-19, daily meals and help with daily hygiene including reminding the young adults, many of whom live on the streets or in shelters during the night to wash their hands and practice social distancing regularly. The center makes it possible for youth to wash their clothes each day and shower. At the Atlanta Police Foundation's At-Promise Youth & Community Center, where CHRIS 180 is the lead organization, staff members are providing daily meals, programming and therapy for youth and the Westside community. Community health workers and other CHRIS 180 clinical team members are also calling and visiting clients to provide necessities for them to survive, while following screening protocols and using safety precautions.

To continue their support of the children, youth, adults and families CHRIS 180 serves, the organization needs financial support to help the community heal and recover from this traumatic situation. Donations can be made at CHRIS180.org/donate.

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About CHRIS 180

Since 1981, CHRIS 180 has transformed more than 90,000 lives. CHRIS 180 saves, serves and protects traumatized children, adults and families through trauma-informed, solution-focused programming that empowers them to change the direction of their lives. For more information, visit CHRIS180.org