



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**National Safe Place Week Celebrates Safe Place® Program for Youth**  
*Youth Service, Inc. operates local Safe Place program*

Philadelphia, PA March 17, 2021 – National Safe Place Network (NSPN) and Youth Service, Inc. (YSI) are pleased to announce March 21-27, 2021 as National Safe Place (NSP) Week. The nationally recognized week serves to raise awareness about the Safe Place program, a national program which brings together youth service agencies, businesses, volunteers and other community partners to help youth in crisis.

Philadelphia social service agency [YSI](#) joined the National Safe Place Network in 2007, as part of its [Youth Emergency Service \(YES\)](#) program. Youth Emergency Service partners with businesses and community organizations such as the YMCA at [Columbia](#) North and ShopRite grocery stores to provide immediate safety and support for local youth. There are over 30 Safe Place site locations in Philadelphia, and they can be identified by their black and yellow Safe Place signs.

"The Safe Place Program is a vital resource to youth and the community. This year, so far, we have been able to assist 25 youth in crisis, facilitating immediate housing and providing supportive resources. It is our hope that the Safe Place initiative will propel us forward in our efforts to eradicate youth homelessness," said Vanessa Ingram, Community Outreach Worker at Youth Service, Inc.

**YSI is kicking off Safe Place Week with a social media campaign on Monday, March 31.** "Make some noise Monday" will spread awareness of youth homelessness through messages and short videos by YES staff with information about YES, data on youth homelessness, and how to support programs with advocacy. The public is invited to follow the campaign [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

"Youth facing housing insecurity may experience other problems during their young lives. These may lead them to respond emotionally to escape what they are going through. Providing Safe Place as a

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resource for these young people gives them a safety net and much-needed support.” said Keevon Johnson, supervisor for Runaway and Homeless Youth Program at Youth Services, Inc.

**In addition to Safe Place sites, youth may also access immediate help via TXT 4 HELP, a text-for-support service for youth in crisis.** Teens can text the word “safe” and their current location (address, city, state) to 4HELP (44357) to receive a message with the closest Safe Place location and the number for the local youth shelter. Users also have the option to text interactively with a counselor for more help.

Since its inception in 1983, Safe Place has helped more than 359,000 youth and currently serves more than 1,500 communities across the country. The program is managed by 140 youth agencies in 38 states and the District of Columbia.

Safe Place consists of a national network of more than 22,000 partnering businesses and community locations, such as fast-food restaurants, convenience stores, fire stations, public buses and libraries, which display the Safe Place sign in their windows. As youth enter a designated Safe Place and ask for help, trained staff members connect them to the appropriate youth shelter for assistance.

**About Youth Service, Inc.:** Youth Service, Inc. is a non-profit organization that has provided immediate shelter and support services to Philadelphia’s children, youth and families for over 70 years. YSI offers unique programs and niche services throughout the city, including Philadelphia’s only Crisis Nursery program and the longest standing shelter in the area for runaway and homeless teens. Through shelter, counseling, and in-home support services, YSI reaches more than 4,000 clients annually, the majority of whom live below the poverty level.

**About National Safe Place Network:** National Safe Place Network (NSPN) provides quality training, capacity building, and technical support to youth and family service organizations across the nation. NSPN operates nationally-recognized programs, including Safe Place®. More than 20,000 businesses and community locations participate as Safe Place sites – such as restaurants, convenience stores, fire stations, public buses, and libraries. These locations display the Safe Place sign and connect youth in crisis with resources and supports. Safe Place also provides a national text-for-support program, TXT 4 HELP. Teens can text the word “SAFE” to 4HELP (44357) and access options to locate the nearest Safe Place and text one-on-one with a counselor. TXT 4 HELP is available 24/7/365. Learn more about NSPN and Safe Place at [www.nspnetwork.org](http://www.nspnetwork.org) and [www.nationalsafeplace.org](http://www.nationalsafeplace.org).

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