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Project Safe Place goes mobile on IndyGo

Beginning today, IndyGo bus becomes a rolling Project Safe Place where children can get help if they are in danger.

Children's Bureau, Inc. and IndyGo launched a partnership that will carry the yellow and black Project Safe Place logo on IndyGo buses.

On the yellow, diamond-shaped Project Safe Place sign, a pair of arms forms a protective circle around a child. More than 150 IndyGo buses serving 29 fixed routes will carry the prominent stickers and all drivers are trained to provide immediate assistance to children 17 and younger who are in distress.

IndyGo professional coach operators and transportation supervisor have received procedural training and will work closely with local Project Safe Place officials on handling and transporting children who need assistance.

"Hundreds of children ride IndyGo buses every day. And hundreds more see the buses in their neighborhoods," says Ron Carpenter, president & CEO of Children's Bureau, Inc.

"Children should always be able to think that an IndyGo bus is safe. Project Safe Place will protect more children by moving out into the neighborhoods. IndyGo is providing a tremendous service by actually bringing a refuge to children who need emergency help," says Carpenter.

Gilbert Holmes, president and CEO of IndyGo, says "IndyGo professional coach operators are often the eyes and ears on our city streets, so adding Project Safe Place as a responsibility reinforces the important role IndyGo plays in the community beyond transporting more than 8.5 million passengers annually."

Across the U.S. and Canada, Project Safe Place is offered by 48 out of 6,500 transit agencies.

The Children's Bureau has sponsored Project Safe Place in Indianapolis for 21 years. Perhaps a hundred Marion County children each year come to a Project Safe Place site such as a fire station, Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, YMCA, Village Pantry or neighborhood Post Offices. They are immediately given shelter from their threatening situation and an advocate from the Children's Bureau is called.

Safe Places provide access to immediate help and support services for all young people in crisis through a network of business and community sites sustained by qualified agencies and trained volunteers.

In 2006, 9,001 youth received immediate help through the more than 15,000 Safe Place sites across the country. Another 10,000 youth contacted a Safe Place site for help after learning about the program through school and community education.

Founded in 1983 in Louisville, Ky. and headquartered there, National Safe Place provides training and technical assistance for youth service agencies and businesses interested in developing a Safe Place program.

The Children's Bureau of Indianapolis, Inc. is a private nonprofit human services agency that provides help to individuals and families. It reaches ten counties with programs aimed at family preservation, prevention of child abuse and neglect, effective parenting and adoption.

For more information about IndyGo and its service area, visit www.IndyGo.net or call 635.3344.