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**Contact:**

Jamie Resnik

Philosophy Communication, Inc.

303-394-2366

[jresnik@philosophycommunication.com](mailto:jresnik@philosophycommunication.com)

**HomeAid Colorado Helps Students Understand Homeless Issues**

*Innovative program teaches Pomona High School students  
the reality of being transitionally homeless*

DENVER, Colo., Nov. 9, 2006 – Nearly 10,000 Denverites are homeless on any given day. Two thirds of those people are families with children. HomeAid Colorado, a non-profit that builds dignified housing for the transitionally homeless, is sponsoring Project Safety Net again this year. The program gives high school students a glimpse into the life a homeless person and offers ideas for how the students can get involved in their community and make a difference.

“The face of the homeless in Denver is not the single man on the street corner begging for money. It is a working family with children that has fallen on hard times because of domestic abuse, catastrophic illness or unexpected job loss,” said Laura Brayman, executive director of HomeAid Colorado. “Project Safety Net helps us dispel common myths about homelessness and educate our youth about important social issues.”

Project Safety Net (PSN) is an experiential learning program designed by HomeAid in collaboration with educators at Pomona High School in Arvada. PSN takes students through a week-long curriculum of educational materials and activities and introduces them to community leaders and organizations who are working to end homelessness in Colorado. The idea is to put students in someone else’s shoes and show them the impact of homelessness on their community.

The curriculum includes classroom instruction and experiential learning opportunities. For example, participating students must give up their own “safety nets” for a week, including cell phones, showers, make-up, money and a change of clothes. One day the students must skip meals and ask friends for food or money to get them through the day. The week culminates with students sleeping in their cars in the high school parking lot. The event is supervised, and each student must have parental permission to participate.

The program is taught in Kerrie Dallman’s civic and governments class and is held one week before Thanksgiving during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. During this week, a number of schools, communities and cities take part in this nationwide effort to bring greater awareness to the problems of hunger and homelessness.

PSN is privately funded, so no monetary investment comes from the school, government or taxpayers to support the initiative.

**About HomeAid**

HomeAid Colorado identifies reputable care providers for the homeless and matches them with a participating local “builder captain.” The captain brings the in-kind resources of subcontractors, suppliers and consultants, and delivers quality housing for the temporarily homeless, who comprise approximately 90 percent of the homeless population.

Since its inception in 2000, HomeAid Colorado has built 17 homes or shelters for the homeless in Colorado. It recently broke ground on a teen treatment center in Lowry and a triplex for homeless families in Colorado Springs. Nationally, HomeAid is the leading non-profit provider of housing for the homeless.

For more information about HomeAid Colorado visit [www.hacolo.org](http://www.hacolo.org) or call 303-691-0104.