OUR

FOSTER
CHILDREN

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

HOSA Chapter #3189 – Secondary Division
Thomas Dang, Margaret Le,
Lauren Truong & Andrew Vu
Target Audience: Ages 13–60
Total Number of Participants: 7000
Plano East Senior High School
Texas
Selection of Project Issue: One of our dearest friends, Tori, lived through the foster care system from the ages of 5 to 20 after her mother, an abusive meth addict, dropped her off and never came back, forcing Tori to pass through 12 different schools throughout her childhood with no permanent home. While she has finally been adopted by a loving family, she still must visit the psychiatrist and take medications—four years after Tori left the system. With our friend’s story told, we couldn’t resist raising awareness for foster children like her. Of the 670,000 children currently in the foster care system, over 70% have been abused or mistreated (Conn, 2013). Foster kids have experienced incredible trauma (Webb, 2013). These lifelong scars leave them twice as likely to suffer PTSD and emotional disorders than a war veteran (Szilagyi, 2012). City House provided a safe haven for Tori and other foster children, and we wished to help.

Goals, Accomplishments, Impact, & Effectiveness: The goal of our project is to educate the community about the mental health-related struggles foster children face. We created a Hygiene for Hope drive at schools across the community and followed it up with donation drives at Kroger, providing over 9,600 donated items—worth over $19,145—and bringing hope to hundreds of foster kids in the community. We had the honor of being featured in the Murphy Messenger newspaper, and the mayors of two different cities were so moved by our cause that they proclaimed city-wide Foster Care Awareness holidays. Our team even partnered with Northplace Church to construct care boxes with a week’s worth of groceries for 37 foster families. Along with a TV story in the works by Cynthia Izaguirre, WFAA Channel 8 news anchor, we have opened the eyes of thousands of once-oblivious people to the struggles foster children encounter.
STARTING SMALL

**SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

We educated students and staff about the mental health conditions foster children face. Most people had no idea these problems even existed!

**3,130 STUDENTS + STAFF EDUCATED**

**12 AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS**

**BEFORE OUR EFFORTS,**

**73% OF OUR COMMUNITY WAS UNAWARE**

**OF THESE HEALTH-RELATED ISSUES**

**DISTRICT-WIDE VIDEO**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

Our team filmed a district-wide video informing students about mental health struggles afflicting foster children.

**9,720 STUDENTS INFORMED**

**BROADCAST TO 10 SCHOOLS**
EXPANDING OUR REACH

"HYGIENE FOR HOPE" AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

We created our Hygiene for Hope drive, distributing hundreds of flyers and bracelets to educate our community about the mental health struggles foster children face.

608 PEOPLE EDUCATED & DONATED
608 AWARENESS BRACELETS WORN
1,132 DONATIONS COLLECTED

STUDIES SHOW THAT

PHYSICAL UPKEEP CORRELATES TO INCREASED SELF-ESTEEM DECREASED DEPRESSION

Hygiene for Hope
Help protect foster children!

51%
55%

foster children report having a traumatic experience at some point in their lives.
of foster children report having at least one mental illness, such as depression or anxiety.
PUBLISHED IN CITY NEWSPAPER  
DECEMBER 1, 2018

Karen Chaney, editor-in-chief of the Murphy Messenger newspaper, published an article about the medical and mental health conditions foster children face!

21,000 READERS EDUCATED

WE INFORMED CITIZENS ABOUT  
CLINICAL DEPRESSION AND  
POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

ENDORSEMENT BY CITY LEADERS  
DECEMBER 2018

Mayor LaRosiliere of Plano and Mayor Bradley of Murphy issued proclamations educating our cities about the mental health struggles afflicting foster children!

OUR MAYOR PROCLAIMED PLANO’S FIRST  
FOSTER CHILD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

300,000 RESIDENTS INFORMED THROUGHOUT  
2 CITIES
AWARENESS TO ACTION

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN DRIVES
OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2018

We organized multiple donation drives at busy grocery stores, distributing flyers to spread awareness about the mental health conditions foster children face.

850+ FAMILIES EDUCATED

25 HOURS EDUCATING SHOPPERS

DID YOU KNOW?
TWICE AS MANY FOSTER CHILDREN SUFFER PTSD THAN WAR VETERANS!
HELP IMPROVE THEIR MENTAL HEALTH!

Today at Kroger, pick up items below.

Help Foster Kids!

MOBILIZING OUR NEWLY-AWARE COMMUNITY
NOVEMBER 24, 2018

After several months, we delivered the fruits of our community’s newfound awareness to City House foster shelter.

2,500+ FACEBOOK "FOLLOWERS" SAW OUR CAUSE

$19,145+ VALUE OF THEIR DONATIONS
BROADER HORIZONS

MAKING "TOGETHER BOXES" FOR FOSTER FAMILIES
FEBRUARY 18, 2019

We recruited volunteers to make "together boxes," providing a week's worth of dinners to support foster families.

50 VOLUNTEERS EDUCATED

37 FOSTER FAMILIES CONNECTED

900 CHURCHGOERS MADE AWARE

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT
FAMILY TOGETHERNESS DURING MEALS
IMPROVES MENTAL HEALTH OF FOSTER CHILDREN

ON DFW TV WITH CYNTHIA IZAGUIRRE
APRIL 2019

Cynthia Izaguirre, news anchor of DFW's WFAA ABC News, was so moved by our cause. She is filming a news story featuring our team in April 2019!

1 MILLION PEOPLE WILL BE MADE AWARE
References

