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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Are You Willing to Give Up One Hour for Homeless Youth this Holiday Season?

HOPE 4 Youth Supporters to Go "Out in the Cold 4 Youth" December 4-8.

WHAT: Tonight, more than 6,000 homeless young people in Minnesota will be out in the cold. This simply should not happen, and HOPE 4 Youth is working to bring many of these youth out of the cold by giving them the tools they need to thrive. This holiday season HOPE 4 Youth is holding our second annual Out in the Cold 4 Youth to bring our community together to raise awareness of what homeless youth experience on the streets while raising funds to allow us to continue changing lives every day.

Participants not only sign-up for one-hour timeslots, but also connect with their network to raise necessary funds to support HOPE 4 Youth programs that bring homeless youth out of the cold. During their timeslot, they will be out in the cold in a shelter, sharing their experience and asking for donations via social media, phone, etc.

WHEN: **Tuesday, December 4, 2018 through Saturday, December 8, 2018**
One-hour timeslots from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. each day.

WHERE: **Eagle Brook Church – Anoka:** 1100 US-10 in Anoka. *Timeslots December 4-8.*
Andover Fire Station Number 1: 13875 Crosstown Blvd NW in Andover. *Timeslots December 4-6.*
Anoka County Sheriff's Office: 13301 Hanson Boulevard Northwest in Andover. *Timeslots December 7-8.*

WHO: Out in the Cold 4 Youth is open to anyone who wants to go Out in the Cold 4 Youth. There are still spots available and participants will spend one hour in a shelter – it will be cold.

WHY: Out in the Cold 4 Youth is critical to bringing homeless youth out of the cold. Participants experience the same things that youth may in the cold and by tapping into their own network to raise funds are helping to make sure that the youth never have to sleep on the cold again.

Take Derek for example. When it turned cold, he should have been sleeping in a warm bed with a loving family that provided for him. But that wasn't the life he was given. Instead, he was living outside and eventually sleeping in the truck he worked to save up for. Derek's dad went to prison when he was young, and his mom died when he was still in high school. He was alone, sad, angry and very cold. Until he found HOPE 4 Youth.

HOPE 4 Youth helps to end homelessness for youth who walk through HOPE 4 Youth's doors by first meeting their basic needs and providing them hope for their future. This is exactly what HOPE 4 Youth helped Derek do. He was able to take hot showers, wash and dry his laundry, eat nutritious meals, get warm clothes and obtain an ID so he could finish school and get a job and an apartment. He no longer sleeps in his truck, he is warm, and he has left his title of homeless in his past.

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HOPE 4 Youth was able to help Derek after he was already homeless, but our ultimate goal is that Derek never would have become homeless in the first place. HOPE 4 Youth is now building new programs that will provide pathways to end youth homelessness by addressing the crisis through our innovative prevention initiatives. These initiatives identify the leading indicators of youth homelessness - like Derek's dad going to prison - and will provide assistance to the young people and their families in real time, so they never need to walk through our doors as homeless, unaccompanied youth later in their lives.

Additional Highlights:

- **New: Out in the Cold at Home or Work in 2018!** Participants choose how they want to do it. Examples include spending your coffee or lunch time out in the cold, pitching a tent at home or work, etc. You can find hints to help you in the Out in the Cold 4 Youth Guide found at HOPE4YouthMN.org/C4Y.

About HOPE 4 Youth

HOPE 4 Youth, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit headquartered in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, serves youth experiencing homelessness by providing hot meals, hot showers, clothing, food and hygiene products, laundry facilities, computer and internet access, and case management; meeting health needs at on-site HOPE Clinic, as well as the needs of moms through HOPE 4 New Moms; securing housing through the Housing Navigation program and at HOPE Place transitional housing facility; assisting with employment and educational opportunities; offering a spiritually-based program via HOPE TreeHouse; and providing basic resources and referrals through outreach on the streets and in schools. HOPE 4 Youth also operates Pathways 4 Youth, a replication of the Drop-In Center located in St. Cloud, and hope's closet, a resale boutique in Champlin, with 100% of the profits benefiting HOPE 4 Youth. For more information, visit HOPE4YouthMN.org or contact Kristin VanHeel at kvanheel@hope4youthmn.org.

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