



**Contact:** Meghan Palumbo  
Director of Development  
The Center for Youth  
(585) 473-2464  
mpalumbo@centerforyouth.net

### **The Center for Youth, Community Partners Announce Impact of Safe Place Program**

*After nearly eight years, Safe Place has reached thousands of young people and directly helped dozens of youth in crisis in the Rochester area.*

*March 16-22 marks National Safe Place Week.*

**Rochester, N.Y., March 21, 2014** – A 13-year-old boy recently walked into the Tops Friendly Markets location on Mt. Read Boulevard after seeing the yellow “Safe Place” sign on the building. He was looking for help; a family member had made him feel unsafe in his home as a result of persistent verbal abuse. The boy had come to the right place.

This Tops location is one of nearly 300 designated sites in Rochester for Safe Place, a national program that launched in Rochester in 2006. The youth outreach program has educated thousands of young people locally about the dangers of running away or trying to resolve difficult, threatening situations on their own. In crisis, a youth can go to a Safe Place site in the Rochester area to access immediate help from The Center for Youth.

In the case of the 13-year-old, Safe Place responders brought the young man to The Center for Youth where counselors were able to connect him with a trusted family member.

“We all want to live in a community that cares deeply about the safety of our children and youth,” said Executive Director Elaine Spaul. “Safe Place is a program that reminds our young people that we care about them and that we want them to be able to access safe alternatives. For that reason, Safe Place is truly a prevention and intervention program that works with youth and families to respond but also to avert crises. We are pleased to have partners across the community to join this effort.”



"Tops is proud to partner with Safe Place and The Center for Youth to provide youth access to immediate help and a safe haven in times of need," said Kathleen Graim, Tops' Community Relations Specialist. "As a licensed Safe Place in the Rochester area, Tops and its management team are trained to provide shelter and help individuals who are seeking help at the early stage of a crisis."

At a press conference this morning, Spaul and Graim described the importance of Safe Place, pointing to the impact it has had on youth in our community:

- Since 2006, an average of 500 youth each month have received information about Safe Place through The Center for Youth's outreach efforts, so young people know where to turn in cases of a crisis.
- In 2013, close to 3,700 youth were educated about the Safe Place program through presentations at schools and community events as well as nightly street outreach.
- Thirteen youth accessed services through local Safe Place locations during a crisis in 2013. Dozens more youth have accessed a Safe Place site for help since 2006.
- Nationally, 146,401 youth have been connected to immediate help and safety at Safe Place locations.
- The Center for Youth has partnered with 65 stationary and 230 mobile Safe Place sites, including Tops, RTS, McDonalds, Neighborhood Service Centers, libraries, recreation centers, YMCA locations and other local shops and businesses. (See the attached page for a complete list.)

In addition to announcing the impact of Safe Place, program leaders displayed the newest Safe Place sign and logo – a yellow diamond with a home and the words "Safe Place" – so youth know how to identify a Safe Place location.

This week (March 16-22) marks National Safe Place Week. For more information, visit [www.nationalsafeplace.org](http://www.nationalsafeplace.org).

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