

Target helps renovate child wing of Salvation Army facility in ailing St. Paul neighborhood

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In a time when resources are dwindling for children living in the Eastside neighborhood of St. Paul, support from Target Corp. has allowed the Payne Ave. Salvation Army to ramp up its outreach efforts.

The local retailer recently gave more than \$50,000 toward a complete makeover of the facility's child education wing, including computer upgrades and new chairs, tables and bookcases. In addition, volunteers from Target painted the walls of several rooms in bright orange, blue and green.

The Payne Ave. Salvation Army offers quality after-school care to more than 60 children a day, including education programs, sporting activities, nutritious food and a positive environment.

"We are thankful that Target recognizes the significance of education and opportunity in the success of children and families living in the Eastside neighborhood," said Major Darryl Leedom, Commander of the Twin Cities Salvation Army. "This wonderful gift from Target is more than a response to faded paint and broken furniture – it is a call to action to combat the challenges in this community."

In recent months several service providers in the Eastside neighborhood have been forced to either scale down or eliminate their child programs, a situation that has left an estimated 200 children without after-school care. The Payne Ave. Salvation Army has created a waiting list for some of these children, as staff members attempt to expand child programming using the limited space and resources they have available.

A dedication ceremony to celebrate the new renovations were held at the Payne Ave. Salvation Army in St Paul on Oct. 21. Children enjoyed snacks and games in their new surroundings. The event featured guest speaker Lee Buckley, Gov. Tim Pawlenty's top advisor for the state's Council on Faith and Community Service Initiatives.

Much of Target's donation came through its Target Library Grant, a \$1 million fund that provided \$25,000 to 40 Salvation Army divisions across the U.S.

Target offers support to Salvation Army facilities in the Twin Cities and across the nation. The company recently held "Target School Spree," a program that allowed 200 children served by the Twin Cities Salvation Army to buy \$100 worth of new back-to-school clothing and supplies. In addition, 130 local Target employees have already signed up to volunteer at Salvation Army Toy Shop, which provides gifts to thousands of children in need during the holidays.

The Twin Cities Salvation Army serves more than 200,000 people a year through its 25 local centers of operation. Daily it serves 2,000 hot meals and shelters 850 people. More than 14,000 local volunteers help The Salvation Army provide a multitude of services, from child daycare to senior housing. To volunteer or donate call 800-SAL-ARMY or visit www.thesalarmy.org.