

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



10641 N. San Fernando Rd.
Pacoima, CA 91331
phone | 818.896.0246
fax | 818.897.0128

www.mendpoverty.org

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Media Contact: Veronica Soto
Tel: 818-686-7328
veronica@mendpoverty.org

MEND Will Provide Free Shoes to Children Through *Payless Gives Shoes 4 Kids* Holiday Giving Program

PACOIMA (Dec. 15, 2010) – Payless ShoesSource has donated \$3,000 in gift cards to MEND – Meet Each Need With Dignity – to provide shoes to children this holiday season.

MEND, celebrating 40 years of easing poverty in the San Fernando Valley, was chosen as an official partner of Payless Gives, an annual giving program from Payless ShoeSource. MEND is among 800 charitable agencies representing all 50 states, Canada, Puerto Rico and 10 nations of Latin America to be included in this program.

MEND, a nonprofit charitable organization based in Pacoima, will distribute the coupons so clients can buy their children new shoes. This donation is particularly timely because, like most organizations serving low-income families, MEND's client base continues to expand as the economy stagnates.

“We are honored Payless has chosen MEND to distribute this generous gifts to children in need,” said Veronica Soto, MEND's Clothing Center Manager. “This donation will buy families of more than 100 youngsters new shoes for the New Year.”

MEND is the largest poverty agency in the San Fernando Valley, providing emergency food, clothing, medical, vision and dental care, job skills training and job placement assistance, English-as-a-Second Language classes, youth activities and a Christmas program. In 2009, MEND served up to 31,000 individuals each month.

The organization is run primarily by volunteers and accepts no government funding, relying on private donations such as this gift from Payless.

“In its third year, the goal of the *Payless Gives Shoes 4 Kids* program remains the same – to provide footwear, a basic necessity, to children who might otherwise go without,” said LuAnn Via, chief executive officer of Payless.

“The success of the program over the past two years, and the number of children and families we have been able to assist, continues to drive our efforts. Unemployment is still very high, affecting many families who must struggle to provide their children with basic essentials. This is especially challenging during the holidays, and with MEND’s help, we hope to make a bigger impact than ever this year.”

To contribute to MEND, log on to mendpoverty.org.

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