

**ATTENTION: PHOTOGRAPHERS/ REPORTERS**



**Daisy Troop #4574 Help the Homeless Mini-walk for Bright Beginnings raises awareness of homeless families with young children**

WASHINGTON, DC: Daisy Troop #4574 held a Help the Homeless Mini-walk at the People's Congregational United Church of Christ on October 22, 2011 on behalf of Bright Beginnings, Inc., a child and family development center for homeless families with young children. Twenty-seven Daisies and their families walked down Thirteenth Street on a chilly Saturday morning to bring much-needed visibility to homelessness in our community. The girls were also educated about homelessness with a presentation by Chastity Lewis, a Bright Beginnings teacher, who read and discussed the book *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting, which describes a young boy who is homeless and living at the airport.

The Daisy Troup Mini-walk is part of Fannie Mae's Help the Homeless Walkathon program, which includes community mini-walks as well as the walkathon on the National Mall on November 19, 2011. Bright Beginnings is one of the many beneficiary organizations who serve homeless families in the region and raises financial resources and support through the Help the Homeless Walkathon program. The Daisy Troup Mini-walk raised nearly \$1,000 for Bright Beginnings' education, social services and family-stabilizing services for homeless infants, toddlers and preschoolers and their families.

"We are all part of the village meeting the immediate needs of homeless children and their families. It warms my heart to see these young children taking action for our young children who don't have homes," says Dr. Betty Jo Gaines, Executive Director at Bright Beginnings.

In the District of Columbia, more than 800 families, including 600+ children under 5 years old, were homeless last year. Bright Beginnings helps to address the needs of homeless families with young children with a holistic program that incorporates educational and therapeutic support for young children that prepares them for kindergarten and intensive parent services that stabilize their families.

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