



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 14, 2008

For further information, contact:
Beth Bishop
Saint Louis Science Center
(314) 289-1455 or (314) 267-9916
ebishop@slsc.org

Karen Sieve
Youth In Need's Safe Place Manager
636-946-5600, ext. 251
ksieve@youthinneed.org

SAINT LOUIS SCIENCE CENTER JOINS PROJECT SAFE PLACE INITIATIVE

*Science Center is First Metropolitan Zoological Park & Museum District
Institution to Participate in At-Risk Youth Program*

ST. LOUIS—The Saint Louis Science Center announced today it has joined the national at-risk youth initiative Project Safe Place, which is administered locally through the not-for-profit social service agency Youth In Need.

Project Safe Place is a prevention program which strives to help children and teens in crisis situations. When a young person is in need of a “safe place,” specially-trained businesses and youth-friendly organizations, like the Science Center, serve as temporary safe locations until a Safe Place case manager can assess the situation, provide transportation for the child or offer assistance and social services. According to Youth In Need representatives, young people seek Safe Place assistance if they are lost, in danger, avoiding a bully or for other, similar reasons.

“The ‘Safe Place’ designation of the Science Center provides the Forest Park area a central location to give local youth shelter and assistance in the event of a personal emergency,” said Doug King, President and CEO of the Science Center. “We’re proud to be the first institution within St. Louis’ Metropolitan Zoological Park & Museum District to participate in this important community program.”

Safe Place partners work closely with Youth In Need to ensure all employees complete a brief, but thorough training program before the location can publicize the designation. Safe

Places are identified with distinctive yellow and black signs or decals. Some other Safe Place locations in the St. Louis region include YMCA locations, Quik Trip convenience stores, community fire stations, churches and banks.

Already, members of the Science Center's staff have been trained on the Safe Place eight step process, and on-going training is planned so the Science Center staff is always ready to help young guests seeking assistance.

“Because the Science Center is family-friendly, centrally-located, and open seven days a week, it makes sense for us to offer assistance to children and teens in need. We recognize that many young people who visit us may feel more comfortable coming to our facility for help in crisis situations than other places,” said Marti Cortez, Senior Vice President for the Science Center. “The sad reality is that there are many kids who are homeless, experiencing abuse, neglect, fear for their safety, or have serious family problems. If they come to us and ask our staff members for help, we'll start the process to find them a ‘Safe Place.’ If we are the link in the system that helps at least one child, it will be worth our effort.”

Jim Braun, Youth In Need's President and CEO, said, "We are thrilled to have the Saint Louis Science Center as a Project Safe Place partner. As a highly visible and extremely popular attraction for youth and families, the Science Center is ideally suited to help ensure that children and teens will know where to get immediate help during a crisis. Project Safe Place helps cultivate our community's support of young people, and assures future generations that they can gain assistance from local organizations when necessary. By participating in Project Safe Place, the Science Center has added significantly to this community's commitment to the safety and future of our region's children and teens.”

For more information about the Project Safe Place program, the public may contact Karen Sieve, Youth In Need's Safe Place Manager, at 636.946.5600, ext. 251. For more information about the Saint Louis Science Center's community education and outreach programs, the public may call 800.456.SLSC or visit slsc.org

###

Trademarks:

Thank you for your interest in covering the Saint Louis Science Center. We ask that you include the full names of our institution: Saint Louis Science Center, OMNIMAX[®] Theater, and James S. McDonnell Planetarium when writing your story.

Saint Louis Science Center

The Saint Louis Science Center is one of the top five science centers in the United States, serving 1.2 million visitors annually. Recently named one of America's most visited museums by *Forbes Traveler Magazine* – the only museum in Missouri to be named to that list - the Saint Louis Science Center complex includes a four-story OMNIMAX[®] Theater, the air-supported EXPLORADOME[®], the James S. McDonnell Planetarium, and the state-of-the-art Taylor Community Science Resource Center. The goals of the Saint Louis Science Center are to educate, inspire and motivate visitors of all ages and engage the community in public dialogue about science-related issues of the day. For more information about the Saint Louis Science Center and its programs, visit slsc.org.

Youth In Need

Youth In Need is an eastern Missouri regional agency serving more than 10,000 children, teens and families each year with residential group homes, homeless street outreach, education, counseling and support groups, foster care case management and infant, child and family development programs. Youth In Need's mission: Believing in the power of potential, Youth In Need's mission is to provide nurturing environments and educational opportunities so children, youth, and families will find safety and hope, achieve their goals, and build a positive future. Youth In Need's programs and services are funded, in part, by its 2008 Corporate Partners, including Culpeppers Grill & Bar as the exclusive Principal Partner. Visit www.youthinneed.org for a complete listing of Youth In Need's Champion, Guardian, Trustee and Patron Partners.