



For Immediate Release

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A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out campaign

Fairfield, California (Tuesday, August 15, 2017)—In September 2016, the Fairfield City Council adopted the second phase of a multi-dimensional Homeless Strategy. An element of the plan was to create a public awareness and education campaign to help our entire community with a shared approach to addressing homelessness in town.

The City convened a multi-disciplinary workgroup of community stakeholders that created the “A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out” educational campaign with the goal of shifting the generous culture in Fairfield from giving a “hand-out” to the homeless, to a “hand-up” mindset. Presently, it is common for well-meaning community members – individuals, organizations, and businesses – to offer money, food, or other items to homeless individuals, not realizing that this can be a disincentive for the homeless to obtain needed social services and shelter.

“A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out” approach is meant to encourage the well-meaning citizen to instead give the homeless individual a resource card that provides contact information for shelter, food, clothing, health, and other services provided by established providers. In addition to providing immediate assistance, these service providers are better equipped to identify and begin addressing underlying issues that may be preventing an individual from breaking the cycle of homelessness. “By getting homeless people into environments equipped to shepherd them into systems of care, we expect to see a change on our streets and a better quality of life for the whole community,” explained Dawn La Bar, Special Projects Manager.

The campaign also encourages businesses and nonprofits to assist the City with its education and public awareness campaign, and to work together to support and augment existing services to get people into safe, sheltered environments.

The workgroup's Speakers Team is ready to visit your organization to explain the program, and how you can support this campaign for change in our community. For more information or to schedule a presentation for your group, please visit www.fairfield.ca.gov/HandUp.

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A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out Workgroup

A coalition of concerned individuals, businesses, and organizations working together to better inform and engage the Fairfield community on the matter of reducing homelessness in town. The group's goals are 1) reducing homelessness in Fairfield, and 2) providing strategies, training, and successful methods for interfacing with homeless individuals in your neighborhood.