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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**More than 70 local children affected by addiction get holiday gifts through new program**

*Grace Street, Talbot County Sheriff's Office and Mid-Shore Restoring Hope in Women partner for Nicole's Promise*

**EASTON** – More than 70 children with parents lost to, struggling with, or in recovery from addiction got Christmas gifts this month thanks to a new program in Easton.

Nicole's Promise is a program from Grace Street, a recovery community organization in Easton, and directly supported young people who have lost a parent to addiction with a special shopping trip hosted by Talbot County Sheriff's deputies. Nicole's Promise also included a Christmas gift drive for children and teens with a parent struggling with, or in early recovery from, substance use disorder.

Bri S., a peer support specialist at Grace Street in Easton, thought of the program in honor of her best friend, Nicole, who died of an overdose last March. Nicole left behind six children.

Last week, 19 children and teens, ages 3 to 16, who lost a parent (or both) to addiction met at the Talbot County Sheriff's Office in Easton for the Christmas event. After a visit and gift from Santa, the group rode in a caravan with Talbot County Sheriff Joe Gamble and his deputies and staff to Target, where each child was given a generous donation to spend any way they chose. The kids fanned out with the sheriff and his crew and had a blast deciding what to buy. Target donated wrapping paper, bows and popcorn.

After a generous Secret Santa paid for the gifts, the group headed back to the sheriff's office for a visit with an elf, hot chocolate, cookies, pizza, and gift wrapping – plus, an impromptu game of soccer with the sheriff.

Nicole's Promise also provided top wished-for gifts for 22 children in Talbot County, and another 30 in Caroline County, thanks to Mid-Shore Restoring Hope in Women. All total, Nicole's Promise provided gifts this holiday season to 71 children and teens.

Grace Street is the area's first recovery community organization (RCO). RCOs are a nationally recognized model that help bridge the gap between professional treatment and a successful life in long-term recovery through enhanced supports and services. Chesapeake Charities received a one-year grant from Maryland's Opioid Operational Command Center to establish the Grace Street RCO.

Easton's center delivers an assortment of non-clinical, community-centered peer recovery support services; harm reduction resources; workforce training and development; youth

programming; overdose prevention activities and resources and support groups. The center helps people establish healthy lifestyles and reacclimate into society, while building recovery capital and working to reduce stigma often associated with addiction.

Grace Street serves people in Easton and Talbot County, as well as neighboring counties across the Mid-Shore. Referrals are not necessary, and services are free. The center is open weekdays and Sundays, 4 – 9 pm. and Saturdays, 2 – 7 p.m. Daytime hours vary. For more information, visit [GraceStreetRecovery.org](http://GraceStreetRecovery.org).

*This project is supported by the Opioid Operational Command Center. The views presented here are those of the grantee organization and not necessarily those of the OOCC, its Executive Director, or its staff.*

*Located in Stevensville, Chesapeake Charities is a community foundation that supports more than 140 nonprofit funds that impact a range of charitable causes including animal welfare, arts, education, health and human services, and the environment. To date they have generated more than \$32 million in investment and grant funding for charitable projects in ten counties: Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's and Talbot. For more information, contact Chesapeake Charities at (410) 643-4020 or [info@chesapeakecharities.org](mailto:info@chesapeakecharities.org), or visit [www.chesapeakecharities.org](http://www.chesapeakecharities.org). Chesapeake Charities is accredited by the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations.*

The [Opioid Operational Command Center](#) is Maryland's principal coordinating office for addressing the opioid crisis. Under the guidance of the Inter-Agency Heroin and Opioid Coordinating Council, the OOCC leads Maryland's opioid-related strategic planning and coordinates the efforts of all state agencies involved in Maryland's opioid crisis response, various community partners, and all 24 local jurisdictions throughout the state. The OOCC can be contacted by email at [help.oocc@maryland.gov](mailto:help.oocc@maryland.gov).

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