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Local Nonprofit Expands Access to Affordable Childcare to Offset Pandemic-Related Childcare Crisis

(Sacramento, CA) – <u>Single Mom Strong</u>, a nonprofit created to meet the unique needs of local single mothers and their families, has partnered with City of Sacramento to bring its innovative childcare program to families in North Sacramento.

In response to the childcare crisis, City of Sacramento Youth, Parks & Community Enrichment Department partnered with Single Mom Strong to bring their quality, affordable childcare option to Sacramento families. The agreement gives families a safe location for licensed preschool and childcare, while still allowing local residents to utilize the community building outside of business hours. SMS places an emphasis on community involvement through volunteerism, program partnership and community events.

Single Mom Strong took on the challenge of addressing inequities in early childhood education three years ago when they added EmpowerME Preschool & Childcare to their programming: inclusive, high quality, affordable preschool and childcare that serves all children, but specifically addresses needs of single parent, single income families. With lower tuition than all other providers in the region, and opportunities for single parents to volunteer in exchange for additional tuition discounts, participation reduces strain on the family budget. Voted "Best of Citrus Heights" in the Preschool/Childcare category for 2021, they are also making waves with the quality of care provided.

"Our intent has always been to duplicate the success we've had in Citrus Heights by strategically locating centers throughout the region to ensure we are within a ten-minute drive of every single mother," said Single Mom Strong's founder Tara Taylor. The childcare shortage created by closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this effort. Now, Single Mom Strong is poised to occupy the community center building and serve 30 children.

"This move into Sacramento not only brings us closer to our goal of ensuring all children have access to high quality early childhood education, it plugs more single mothers into the Single Mom Strong community," noted Taylor. From workforce development programming to creating connection and community, Single Mom Strong's comprehensive approach to supporting single parent families improves outcomes.

Taylor created Single Mom Strong as a response to her own challenges as a single mother. "I know from my own experience that it really does take a village to raise a child. Raising my daughter alone was the hardest, but most rewarding thing I have ever done. I wanted to make that path a bit easier for other single mothers, so I created the 'village' that every mom needs."

Along with the addition of the North Sacramento facility, Single Mom Strong is searching for suitable locations in South Sacramento and expanding <u>The Empowerment Center</u> in Citrus Heights to include infant and toddler care and a clothing closet to provide free professional clothing to single mothers.

Since its inception five years ago, Single Mom Strong has served over 900 mothers and children in the greater-Sacramento area. The interest list for Single Mom Strong's EmpowerME program in North Sacramento is now open, with priority given to Sacramento's District 2 residents. Learn more at SingleMomStrong.org.

About Single Mom Strong

Based on the premise that a single mother can simultaneously be a professional success and a great parent, and the belief that neither the single mother nor her children are limited in any way by this circumstance, Single Mom Strong is:

- A community, meeting the need for belonging and love for single mothers and their children
- A place of empowerment: for single mothers through education and opportunity for balance; for their children through education and positive relationships
- A means for betterment: with their children in safe, quality childcare, single mothers can better provide for their families and achieve personal and professional goals