



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CDF Freedom Schools to Spotlight Benefits of Summer Learning Program
Students, Families to Bear Witness to Local Communities' Investments in Education

What: On Wednesday, July 27, 2011, Children's Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom Schools® sites from across Texas will join in Houston for an *End of Summer* event to spotlight the importance of high-quality summer learning opportunities for young people, and to address the need for greater community investment in light of recent budget cuts to education.

The public is invited to witness important investments already being made by a number of local community groups who have partnered with CDF to help stem summer learning loss and bridge the achievement gap for poor and minority children. Nearly 80% of Black and Hispanic fourth graders cannot read at grade level, and in Houston and throughout the nation, summer programs play a critical role in keeping children safe and healthy, sending them back to school ready to learn, and providing support to their working families. Community investment and support for children's summer learning is especially critical now after the state's recent damaging cuts to public education and Congress negotiating massive cuts to a broad array of social services.

The *CDF Freedom Schools* model mobilizes community partners to provide summer and after-school enrichment that helps children fall in love with reading, increases their self-esteem, and generates more positive attitudes toward learning. Children are taught using an Integrated Reading Curriculum that supports children and families around five essential components: High quality academic enrichment; Parent and family involvement; Civic engagement and social action; Intergenerational servant leadership development; and Nutrition and health and mental health.

Who: Hundreds of *CDF Freedom Schools* Children from **Beaumont, Dallas, Galveston, Houston, and San Antonio**
Community leaders
Parents and families

When: Wednesday, July 27, 2011
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Where: Houston Community College West Loop Center
5601 West Loop South
Houston, TX 77081

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