

Local business donates teddy bears for children in care

(May 25, 2005) ...Imagine you are a child in an abusive or neglectful family. As traumatic as that would be, it would be equally distressful when a caseworker arrives to take you to safety. A local company is stepping up to help children coming into care.

Peak Energy Services donated 100 teddy bears to the Brooks office of Southeast Alberta Child and Family Services Authority to help comfort children brought into care. Kristi Frost of Frostich Embroidery donated her services to decorate the bears' sweaters in bright, friendly colours. The cuddly, stuffed animals will be given to children who must be removed from their families due to abuse or neglect.

Darcy Hemsing, branch manager for Peak Energy Services in Brooks, says one of the company's employees raised the idea. "We're interested in doing anything to help kids," he says. "Kids and teddy bears just go together. Hopefully, the bears will help them take their minds off their troubles in a bad situation."

"When children are going through a traumatic experience – especially with strangers in a strange environment – to have something they can hold on to is comforting to them," says Larry Horeczy, regional manager with Southeast Alberta Child and Family Services Authority. "The bears mean a lot to the children."

Heather Cluett, casework supervisor with the Child and Family Services Authority, says the bears do make a difference. "The children who received bears in the past talk about them for years," she says. "It's a tradition we want to keep and Peak Energy Services really stepped up to the plate. That's spectacular."

Peak Energy Services Trust is a diversified energy services organization operating in western Canada and mid-west United States of America. Through its operating segments, the Trust provides drilling and production services to oil and gas producers.

Under the mandate of Alberta Children's Services, Southeast Alberta Child and Family Services Authority delivers a wide range of services and programs to keep children and youth safe and strengthen families, including child intervention services (family enhancement and protection), child care licensing and subsidy, prevention of family violence and bullying, prevention of child sexual exploitation, Family Support for Children with Disabilities program, foster care, adoption services and permanency planning.

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