

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Church raises \$50K for charities - children in the congregation direct funds**

Rochester, NY...Each year, the congregation of First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY is asked to donate half of what they plan to spend on holiday presents to charities. The youngsters vote on the recipient, and this year they picked an effort to provide scholarships for both children in Honduras and Children's Institute, to disseminate the Coping Power program, a violence prevention program that helps middle school age students reduce aggressive behaviors and manage conflict constructively. This funding will allow us to bring the program into eight additional Rochester schools.

Coping Power is an evidence-based social and emotional program which can be implemented with children in intermediate grades. Coping Power is proven to decrease delinquent behaviors by teaching skills in adaptive coping, organization, goal-setting, and self-control. The program reduces aggressive behaviors, decreases suspensions, increases school bonding, and improves social competence—all leading to a decrease in youth violence and juvenile crime. Currently, there are few schools and organizations implementing Coping Power in the Rochester area.

The church has given away more than \$325,000 in the past five years to support charities in the Rochester area along with international non-profit organizations and projects.

Children's Institute is a national charitable organization that works to improve the lives of children by strengthening their social and emotional health. Through sound research and evaluation, the organization develops and promotes effective prevention and early intervention programs, materials and best practices for children, families, schools and communities. Children's Institute is affiliated with the University of Rochester and has served the community for over 50 years.

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