



# City of Refuge, Inc.

<http://www.cityofrefugeknox.org>

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **What does it mean to be broken and left out?: Community of Artists, Musicians, Therapists, and Social Workers Bringing Artistic Coping Skills to the Broken and Left Out in Knoxville**

Knoxville, TN, Tuesday, November 7, 2017 - With the rate of depressed teens rising, families being torn apart by stresses or lack of support, and foster teens being passed between one family to another the world for a teen and their family can be a tough one.

One group of artists, musicians, therapists, and social workers have a new way of supporting this group and are bringing after-school programs, house shows, and mentorships to the Knox and Blount County area: bridging the gap between artists/musicians and the broken/left out.

Most people connect being broken with being worthless, but not City of Refuge, Inc. By using the arts to teach foster/at-risk children and their families skills they can use to cope with stress, trauma, and anger issues their brokenness can be turned into a strength.

### **After-School Programs:**

City of Refuge, Inc. has been partnering with Great Schools Partnership the 2017-2018 school year with their after-school program in South Knoxville Elementary. With a visual arts class on Mondays and a

music class on Thursdays, City of Refuge, Inc. has been teaching elementary-aged children creativity and getting them comfortable with different artistic coping skills they can use.

Starting this January 2018, City of Refuge, Inc. will be providing a class one afternoon a week with 11-18 year olds at The Birdhouse Community Center. Focusing on providing a safe place for foster teens, at-risk teens, or those who would rather create art and music than participate in sports, The Sanctuary will offer artistic projects that will be bigger than one person (or artistic medium) could create.

### **House Shows:**

Organized by local poet/songwriter, Daje Morris, City of Refuge, Inc. is offering a series of house shows for families featuring local musicians to encourage/uplift the family while supporting the local musicians, in the process. 25% of the door charge goes to City of Refuge, Inc. so they can keep the after-school programs free for the families, while the rest of the money goes to the featured musicians. The house shows are listed on their facebook, as well as [www.cityofrefugeknox.org](http://www.cityofrefugeknox.org).

### **Parent/Artist Connection:**

Not only is it difficult for the broken and left out child, but also for the parent. Because of this, City of Refuge, Inc. will be partnering with Bare.Thred to host a dinner once a month at Bare.Thred's space on Chickamauga Ave. in North Knoxville starting January 2018. Artists, musicians, makers, and parents will meet together and learn about how the arts can help them cope with stress and the pressures that come with parenting and keep their family together.

“Growing up, poetry and my Bass Guitar were two things that got me through my awkward high school years. After working with foster and at-risk teens for over ten years, I have certainly seen how the arts and music can calm teens and give them a voice where they normally do not.” said Kyle Ford, Co-Founder and CEO of City of Refuge, Inc.

It takes more than a village to raise a child... it takes a city! For those who would like to help support City of Refuge, Inc. either by volunteering or sponsoring one of their programs, more information can be found at [www.cityofrefugeknox.org](http://www.cityofrefugeknox.org), or by calling (865)210-8643.

### **About City of Refuge, Inc.**

Founded in 2016 by Kyle and Liz Ford, City of Refuge, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit artistic community focusing on providing love and hope for the broken and left out through: arts-focused after-school

programs, house shows, support system workshops for parents, and mentorships with local artists/musicians.

The Co-Founder/CEO of City of Refuge, Inc., Kyle Ford, is available for interviews on how artistic coping skills can help our community and provide stability for a demographic that may not have any other stability in their lives.

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