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Contact:  
Matt Alexander  
(415) 902-5447

**\*\*\* MEDIA ADVISORY \*\*\***

***Homelessness system fails:  
7-year-old hospitalized with multiple surgeries  
remains without access to housing subsidy***

**WHAT** Press conference and rally led by the family of Samara, a homeless 7-year-old who is recovering from complex surgeries and whose family has been denied housing assistance from the City Department of Homelessness.

- Samara's mom Maria, and other homeless parent leaders
- Educators and families from Samara's school (Cesar Chavez ES)
- Other members of United Educators of San Francisco
- Clergy and community allies

**WHEN** Wednesday, August 27 at 11:30 am

**WHERE** In front of Cesar Chavez School, 825 Shotwell Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

**VISUALS** Photos of Samara, children's artwork, school entrance as a backdrop

**BACKGROUND** (see also [this video featuring Samara and her mom](#))

Samara is a 7-year-old girl with complex medical conditions which have required multiple surgeries over the past month. Samara and her family have spent two years living in shelters. Her parents have been working hard so they can give Samara a safe, dignified home for her recovery, but they still can't afford San Francisco's extremely high rents.

According to the Department of Homelessness, Samara and her family do not qualify for any housing assistance because a computer says they do not have enough points. Staff at the City's Access Point told Samara's parents that they are not "homeless enough" based on the computer's point system, which is called "Coordinated Entry."

Maria Zavala, Samara's mom, is a Faith in Action Bay Area leader who's been organizing along with other immigrant families to ensure that other children and families do not have to go through what she has endured. In May, she co-authored [an op-ed in the San Francisco Examiner](#) asking Mayor Lurie to stop evicting homeless families from shelters and to invest in real solutions. In July, the Mayor agreed to end the experimental eviction policy and invest \$30 million in new funds for family homelessness. But Maria is still being told that there are no solutions for Samara once she leaves the hospital.

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