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## Statement of Child Center CEO Traci Donnelly on the Redfern Community Center

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"I am thrilled to announce that The Child Center of NY will serve as the new provider for the Redfern Community Center in Far Rockaway, Queens.

For years, children and adults alike have looked to the Redfern Community Center, a Cornerstone program of the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development, for a safe and fun place to come together. Last week, they were understandably shocked and upset to find the doors literally closed to them.

As a provider of Cornerstone programs in Flushing and elsewhere in Far Rockaway, we at The Child Center know that they play an invaluable role in the communities they serve. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to serve a dynamic and dedicated community, and we couldn't be more excited. I felt this way before I met with residents last Saturday, and I left the meeting feeling even more strongly. The youth with whom we met were very engaged, and the parents passionate advocates for their kids. Far Rockaway, and the area surrounding the Redfern Houses in particular, may be underserved, but it is not undeserving. The Child Center will continue to offer the afterschool enrichment, adult programming, and sense of community that the Redfern Community Center has been known for, and we will make certain that the revitalized center reflects the proud and vibrant spirit that is palpable throughout the neighborhood.

While our role is effective immediately, it will be a couple of weeks before we can fully reopen Redfern's doors. In the meantime, we are investigating facility issues that must be addressed, hiring qualified staff, and building programming that meets the needs of the community as expressed by its members. We are grateful to have the strong support of Council Member Donovan Richards, Senator James Sanders Jr., and DYCD, and we look forward to working with the people of Redfern."

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