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CONTACT: Joshua Avedon, Jumpstart, Santa Monica
424.273.5867
joshua@jumpstartlabs.org

TOP PHILANTHROPISTS AND FOUNDATIONS ADOPT STANDARDS TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS
AGAINST CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Schusterman, Leichtag, Bronfman, and Ruderman Foundations take funder pledge aimed at
youth-serving organizations, urge others to follow

SANTA MONICA, Calif. – In a move aimed at strengthening protections against child abuse, four major foundations representing millions of dollars in grants pledged to require youth-serving organizations they support to adopt policies increasing the safety of children in their care.

The Samuel Bronfman Foundation, Leichtag Foundation, the Ruderman Family Foundation, and the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation have signed the Child Safety Pledge, an initiative of Los Angeles-based Jumpstart Labs.

“The prevention and treatment of child abuse has been a focus of our foundation for more than 30 years, in Oklahoma, in Israel and beyond.” said Schusterman Family Foundation President **Sanford R. Cardin**.

“We adopted the Pledge because we believe there is nothing more important than ensuring the safety, security and dignity of all children. We welcome the opportunity to engage other funders in this vitally important work.”

The Child Safety Pledge is the brainchild of Los Angeles philanthropist and advocate **Rochel Leah Bernstein** in collaboration with Jumpstart Labs Co-Founders **Joshua Avedon** and **Shawn Landres**. Bernstein approached Jumpstart Labs in 2015 with a challenge: devise a strategy that would upgrade protections against child sexual abuse within Jewish youth serving organizations (YSOs). The hope was that piloting the pledge in the Jewish community could lead to adoption more broadly in other faith-based and secular realms.

Research among Jewish day schools and overnight camps led to the publication of a Jumpstart Labs report, “Child Safety First” (2017), which found potentially critical gaps in their anti-CSA programs. These gaps, and organizations’ lack of awareness of these gaps, enable vulnerabilities that sexual predators can exploit.

“Child safety needs to be a front-burner issue for the Jewish community,” said **Dana Raucher**, executive director of The Samuel Bronfman Foundation and co-chair of the Founding Signatories group. “As funders, we believe that our investment in the future of children also means making sure they have safe places to learn and grow.”

Today more than 20 major foundations and noted philanthropists are working with Jumpstart to pursue adoption of the Child Safety Pledge. According to Jumpstart CEO Avedon, “The process of developing the pledge with funders, nonprofit leaders, and child sexual abuse experts has already raised awareness and is prompting action.”

Implementation of the Child Safety Pledge will bring additional benefits to youth-serving organizations.

“Developing the Child Safety Pledge has given us new insight into building our grantees’ organizational capacity,” said **Charlene Seidle**, executive vice president of Leichtag Foundation and Founding Signatories co-chair. “Effective prevention, training, detection, and response not only helps shield children from sexual abuse but also protects them from other threats to their physical and emotional well-being.”

The Ruderman Family Foundation, which also has embraced the Pledge, has led the way for the inclusion of differently abled kids in Jewish organizations and beyond.

“Child sexual abuse disproportionately affects children with physical and developmental disabilities,” noted its president, **Jay Ruderman**.

“Welcoming and including people of all abilities in our communities also means protecting them from preventable harm. This pledge reinforces the commitment -by funders and youth-serving organizations alike to do everything we can to keep our children safe.”

Learn more, including FAQs and the list of Pledge Adopters at <http://childsafetypledge.org>.