

BEAR's Stetsons & Stilettos Gala Raises Record \$750,000 to Support Houston's At-Risk and CPS-Involved Children

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, October 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [BEAR \(BE A Resource for CPS Kids\)](#) celebrated a record-breaking evening at the 4th Annual [Stetsons & Stilettos](#) Gala on October 12, 2025, held at the Royal Sonesta Houston Galleria. The "Deep in the Heart of Texas"-themed event raised more than \$750,000 to support Houston's at-risk and CPS-involved children through BEAR's year-round programs.

This year's event featured a spirited "Deep in the Heart of Texas" theme, welcoming nearly 600 guests for an evening of gourmet dining, live acrobatic entertainment by The DB Duo, and an exciting live auction. Guests also participated in various engaging activities throughout the evening, including a Wine and Whiskey Pull, Kendra Scott Jewelry Pull, the Branded Hat Bar, and a one-of-a-kind AI Photo Booth experience. The luxurious Tenenbaum Jewelers Champagne Wall offered guests a chance to win sparkling prizes while supporting BEAR's mission, with winners announced throughout the night.

The event honored Betsy Mercer, a

BEAR
PROVIDING HOPE AND HELP



Legacy Chair and BEAR Board Member of over 20 years, and Kori Gough, Director of Heart Galleries of Texas, for their lasting dedication to improving the lives of Houston's most vulnerable children. Former NFL player and children's advocate Quan Cosby delivered a powerful keynote, sharing his personal journey and passion for supporting youth in foster care. Additionally, guests heard moving testimony from a foster mother of six children who were served by BEAR.

"Each year, this event reminds us how strong our community is when it comes together for children who need us most," said Tammy Hetmaniak, Executive Director of BEAR. "The funds

raised from Stetsons & Stilettos allow BEAR to stock emergency BEAR Rooms with clothing, shoes, diapers, hygiene kits, and comfort items, like the teddy bears that often become a child's first sense of security after entering care. But more than that, these donations help children feel seen, valued, and supported. Every clean outfit, every backpack, every wrapped gift is a message that their lives matter and that this community cares deeply about them."

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Tammy Hetmaniak, Executive Director at BEAR



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The evening was chaired by Meredith and Ben Marshall, Amy and Rob Pierce, and Kelli and John Weinzierl, whose leadership, along with the presenting sponsors Kinetik and Vitol, helped make the night BEAR's most successful fundraiser to date. Additional sponsors included Vanessa and Chuck Ames, Dylan and Jordan Seff, and numerous generous underwriters and donors recognized throughout the night.

In 2024 alone, BEAR provided more than 90,000 services to children across the Greater Houston area, ranging from basic necessities and school supplies to holiday gifts and adoption support. This fundraising event supports the organization's unwavering commitment to helping children in crisis find stability, comfort, and hope.

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ABOUT BEAR

BEAR is a 501(c)(3) whose mission is to improve lives by providing hope and help for at-risk and CPS-involved children and their caretakers in the Greater Houston area. BEAR provides not only the basic needs of children recently uprooted, but also supportive services that provide comfort, dignity, and celebration of successes that propel the child toward a successful future – for abused and neglected children. Community partnerships are vital to BEAR's success as an organization, allowing \$0.88 of every dollar earned through fundraising efforts to go back to effectively operating four core programs. For more than 25 years, BEAR has been an important advocate for the most vulnerable population in the Greater Houston area... its children. This advocacy is represented through the basic necessities provided for children in BEAR rooms year-round, backpacks and school supplies distributed each fall, the Christmas gifts wrapped and delivered each winter, and in the canvas photos of adoptable children that are displayed year-round throughout venues in Houston. For more information about BEAR, visit bearesourcehouston.org.

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