

## AWARENESS MONTH

S.O.S. Ministries' Awareness Month is around the corner! Every April, we make it our mission to not only get the word out about S.O.S., but to share the love and good news of Jesus Christ in our community. During Awareness Month this year, we will be hosting Community Outreach Events every Friday evening in April and hold an Online Auction the entire month of April!

Our Friday neighborhood outreach events take place in two prayerfully selected neighborhoods where abuse, poverty, and violence have been a way of life. We come to help bring restoration through food, fellowship, and the gift of hope and salvation that God offers to all in Jesus Christ. Also, we will be hosting an Online Auction for the first time, from April 5th to April 30th, featuring unique items and special experiences to help raise funds for our After School Program. Our After School Program allows us to build relationships with over 100 at-risk children every weekday by sharing the Gospel and Biblical Truth, tutoring them in academics, teaching technical skills, and introducing them to a variety of extracurricular activities. These skills uncover hidden talents and strengths, build confidence, and set these children up for future success.

Our foremost purpose in Awareness Month is for people in our city to know and believe the Gospel, the only truth that could ever set them free! We invite you to partner with us through prayer, attending our outreaches to spread the hope of the gospel to our city, participating in our Online Auction, and financially supporting our mission to Save Our Streets.

To GIVE, see insert or visit [saveourstreetsministries.org/give/](http://saveourstreetsministries.org/give/)

For more information, see back article, visit [saveourstreetsministries.org](http://saveourstreetsministries.org), or call (979)775-5357 to participate in our events.

## RICK'S STORY

GOD'S CALL TO REDEMPTION AND FORGIVENESS

My name is Rick Contreras, and I was raised here in Bryan. At the age of 14, I remember my brother coming home from school having been jumped. I saw him beat up and angry; that's when anger started to take root in my heart. My brother formed a gang, and I soon joined in. We skipped school, drank, did drugs, constantly fought, and got in trouble at school and eventually was expelled. JJ would constantly come and preach Jesus to our gang at my house and I thought he was brave, but I wasn't ready to listen.

We had at least 11 reported drive-bys done on our house, and I turned to cocaine to numb the fear. At 16, I had a son, and at 17, my daughter was born. I wanted out of the gang but I did not know how. It took me seeing my brother-in-law die after bullets ripped through his body that I knew I was headed down that same road. I wanted to be around for my kids, so I pulled myself from the gang and filled my time with work. I went to church, but it didn't last. For years I tried to run my own life.

I then met my beautiful wife, Ana, who inspired me to want to be a better man, and together we had two beautiful kids. Although I was happily married, something was missing.

One day in my truck, I was listening to Tony Evans when he called out to the listeners who wanted Jesus. I wanted a relationship with God so

I said the prayer to receive Jesus as my Lord and Savior, repented of my wrongs, and cried out for forgiveness. I felt peace, as if God were saying, "Everything is going to be okay."

A few days later while praying, I heard God speak to my spirit the need to go to S.O.S. We began to attend and for three weeks straight JJ spoke on the need to forgive. God began to restore broken relationships in my life, but I knew that it would be difficult to let go and forgive rival gang members. Soon after, my friend asked me to pray for his brother to come to S.O.S. I agreed to pray,

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but I did not know at the time I was praying for a former rival leader. My biggest test came when he walked through the doors at S.O.S. "What if he disrespects me?" I thought. He walked straight to me and hugged me. At that moment, peace and love entered the room. God showed Himself through a former enemy and now we serve side by side as brothers here at S.O.S. I now serve as the Men's Home Director for S.O.S.

I want to thank you for giving to and supporting S.O.S. Ministries. It is here that I see God replacing the years the locusts have taken. And now, my desire is to have the courage to share this same unconditional love and message for Jesus with others to further the Kingdom of God.



Vocational Training - First Day



Awareness Month Outreaches



Awareness Month Outreaches



Awareness Month Outreaches

# Awareness Month Fundraiser Auction



We are excited to host our **FIRST online auction** during this year's Awareness Month! We have carefully selected unique items and special experiences for auction to **benefit our After School Program!** This auction is **ONLINE ONLY.** The online auction will begin **April 5th** and last through **April 30th.** Come participate and bring home some amazing items! We hope you are as excited as we are for this special fundraising opportunity! Check the S.O.S. website for upcoming details and be on the lookout for the auction link on our home page at: [saveourstreetsministries.org!](http://saveourstreetsministries.org)

## DID YOU KNOW?

The **Dansby Grant Foundation** has been a long time supporter of S.O.S. Recently, they awarded funds to continue growing our After School Program by partially funding the program for the next school year! We are so thankful for the continued support we receive from all of our donors and sponsors!



## CHAMPIONS OF HOPE

SOS MINISTRIES MONTHLY DONOR SOCIETY

Become a **Champion of Hope** & help bring the love of Jesus Christ to the streets by giving monthly to SOS!

Visit: [www.saveourstreetsministries.org/champions-of-hope](http://www.saveourstreetsministries.org/champions-of-hope) to sign up!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar 15-19** Spring Break - Office Closed
- Mar 25** Thursday Night Adult Discipleship Class Begins
- Mar 27** Easter Event
- Mar 27** Family Picnic



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