



## ***What is Project Night Night?***

Founded in 2005, Project Night Night (PNN) is an award-winning Bay Area-based nonprofit organization that equips children ages 0-12 living in unhoused and low-income situations with the essentials they need to have a predictable source of comfort in a time of great upheaval.

## ***How Did Project Night Get Started?***

It began with a basic observation.

Kendra Stitt Robins was on vacation with her husband Billy and their then one-year-old son, Cole. The couple loved taking Cole on trips, but it came at a cost. When he was disoriented being away from home, in a hotel room or a friend's house, he didn't sleep well. And when he didn't sleep well, his parents didn't sleep, and that night and the next day were miserable for everyone involved. Through classic parental trial-and-error, Kendra discovered the key: Cole's blanket, stuffed monkey, and the 1001<sup>st</sup> reading of Goodnight Moon.

With these comfort items and a nighttime book reading ritual, Cole slept soundly and contentedly no matter where he travelled. It occurred to Kendra that this might not be the case for those without permanent homes, without access to comfort items, and without books to lull them to sleep. Worse yet, what if the children used to own these items, but when they fled with a parent to a domestic violence shelter, their precious nighttime items were left behind?

Over dinner that night, Kendra discussed the problem with her husband, Billy. "Homeless children need to have the kind of comfort that Cole has. I want to give every single one of them a blanket and a stuffed animal so they aren't scared when they get to the shelter." Kendra and Billy discussed it for awhile. The idea didn't seem grand or revolutionary. It seemed practical and obvious. "Maybe," she said to her husband, "it's just that simple."

She decided to add another element to the package: a book. With study after study stressing the importance of early childhood literacy, the addition made sense.

Through her work as a corporate lawyer, Kendra had worked on numerous pro bono projects to set up non-profit organizations. Those assignments had resonated with her beyond the requisite paperwork, stoking a desire to do something

herself. In 2005, shortly before Cole turned 2, Kendra opted to be a mom and a non-profit founder full-time.

Her simple idea soon resonated far beyond the Bay Area, into living rooms, and into boardrooms across the country. Kendra tapped her network of college and professional friends to get involved and those friends in turn involved their own friends, neighbors and colleagues. From Girl Scout Troops to Fortune 500 corporate retreats, she armed groups of volunteers with the tools to assemble Night Night Packages.

Today, Project Night Night distributes tens of thousands of those packages annually. Since 2005, the organization has served almost 300,000 homeless children in an effort to reduce stress and provide access to high-quality literacy materials.

### ***What's a Night Night Package?***

Each Night Night Package contains a blanket, a book and a stuffed animal, all in a special tote bag. Each bag is designed to be age appropriate, up to pre-teen boys and girls.

Night Night Packages are tailor-made to give homeless and underserved children familiar objects of comfort to reduce stress and to strengthen the trust bond between the caregiver (the shelter) and the recipient (the child).

In addition, Project Night Night places tens of thousands of new books into the hands of children every year. Children's book distribution programs such as Project Night Night's were created to provide greater access to high-quality, age-appropriate reading materials for children from low-income homes as one effort to address the achievement gap.

Project Night Night strives to give children something they can call their own, something that can give them that little bit of comfort, and confidence, to deal with what's in front of them.

### ***Who's Behind Project Night Night?***

#### Key Staff

**Kendra Stitt Robins** is the executive director and founder of Project Night Night, a mother, and a lawyer. Educated at Georgetown University, where she earned a bachelor's, master's and law degree, she worked as a lawyer in San Francisco after graduation. Kendra left her firm in 2004 to run Project Night Night.

**Jessica Silverman Bryan** is the deputy director of Project Night.

Jessica earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Middlebury College and worked in development and event planning roles at Harvard University and the University of Michigan's Stephen M. Ross School of Business before joining Project Night Night.

#### Board of Directors

Kendra assembled a volunteer board of directors comprised of women across the country committed to fighting homelessness and promoting health and literacy for children whom the system has largely forgotten.

#### **Quick Facts**

- Tens of thousands of Night Night Packages are donated each year to homeless children across the country
- Project Night Night has served over 300,000 homeless children since our founding in 2005

#### **Award-Winning Work**

- Top-Rated Nonprofit from Great Nonprofits for over a decade
- Top 25 children's charities in the country, Babble.com
- "Most Awww-Inspiring Charity" by San Francisco Bay Guardian
- "Best Children's Charity" by San Francisco Magazine.
- A-List Award Winner for Best Bay Area Charity
- Classic Woman Award from Traditional Home Magazine
- "A Charity You Love" by 7x7 Magazine
- People Magazine and MLB "All Star Among Us" for founder Kendra Robins

#### ***Shelter Reference***

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