



P.O. Box 567, Ojai, CA 93024  
805-715-2693, Fax 805-715-9701, [www.vitaminrelief.org](http://www.vitaminrelief.org)

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*News Release*  
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*Media Contact*  
Mary Morton (805) 715-2603  
[mary@vitaminrelief.org](mailto:mary@vitaminrelief.org)

## **Vitamin Relief USA Launches “Nourishing Katrina’s Forgotten Children” In Response to Escalating Humanitarian Crisis**

*100,000 Children in Gulf Coast Disaster Area to Receive Multi-vitamins Every Day for Three Years*

**Ojai, CA** – Nineteen months ago, Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast leaving tens of thousands of children suffering a dreadful fate – no place to call a real home, memories filled with fear and horror, little food with sufficient nutritional value, few doctors and inadequate healthcare, no safe place to play. Some even live alone without parents. The terror of Katrina and its aftermath have never left these children. It is no wonder there is little joy in their eyes – and why they are increasingly depressed. They are burdened with unresolved loss and have lost all hope. And life for many Katrina children is only getting worse.

92,409 eight by thirty foot FEMA trailers are home for many Katrina children. In addition to being unsanitary and cramped, the trailers’ kitchens are unequipped for cooking hot meals. Home cooked meals for most Katrina children are non-existent. Construction of new school structures can be seen throughout New Orleans but few offer breakfast or lunch programs. Those that do, serve cold food with little nutritional value. Malnutrition is rampant and increasing in Katrina’s forgotten children at an alarming rate. Recently a director of an after-school program in New Orleans said he’d be surprised if the children lived to the age of thirty. Medical clinics throughout the Gulf States are urgently requesting nutritional supplementation, particularly for the children.

“We have a growing humanitarian crisis and something must be done. Even with the many public agencies and humanitarian relief organizations working hard in the area, the need overwhelms the current resources and we are losing an entire generation of children. We have an obligation both as citizens and as a nation to face this crisis square on and find the moral resolve to do our part to fix it now,” states Michael Morton, Executive Director of Vitamin Relief USA. “For this reason, Vitamin Relief USA is spearheading a program to help these children with nutritional support. Our vitamin programs have a track record of helping malnourished children become healthier and gain emotional balance, immune support, mental alertness and concentration, better grades, school attendance, and even self confidence. We know that daily multivitamins will help these children heal the traumas of yesterday, meet the challenges they face today, and give them hope for a better tomorrow.”

VRUSA has joined with Operation USA and its medical clinic network for this initiative including the New Orleans Department of Public Health as well as EXCEL, Inc., Iberia Comprehensive Community Health Centers, and Jefferson Community Healthcare Centers, Inc. whose staff in mobile medical units will deliver daily vitamins directly to families in FEMA trailer villages and other locations housing displaced families.

“Given the magnitude of this crisis and wide-spread suffering, Vitamin Relief USA is putting together a top-notch group of service agencies and organizations to make sure this special group of America’s children receive at least the recommended amounts of the recognized essential vitamins and minerals,” states Connie Whitaker, President of Vitamin Relief USA. “I want to personally thank Tishcon Corp. and Natural Alternatives International for stepping forward to jump-start this initiative. Because of their generosity we are already providing daily vitamins to over eight thousand of Katrina’s forgotten children.”

“Vitamin Relief USA invites everyone in the natural products industry to join with us to fix this catastrophic situation in our nation’s own back yard. To grow stronger as a nation, we must first take care of our own. As members of this great industry, we can make a tremendous contribution in these children’s health, their future and the future of our nation,” says Ms. Whitaker.

**Vitamin Relief USA**, a “Four-Star” rated charity by Charity Navigator, currently provides daily multivitamins to more than 26,000 needy children as well as 14,000 low income seniors at more than 300 sites in 31 states across the United States. Collaborative distribution sites include: Head Start, Healthy Start and WIC programs, K-12 public schools and school districts, Volunteers of America, Rotary Clubs, Health Care for the Homeless Clinician’s Network, community health centers, Council on Aging programs, homeless and battered women shelters, Native American programs, Salvation Army, YWCA and YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, City Park and Recreation Departments, hospital outreach programs, public health departments, medical and nursing school community outreach programs, and countless other community-based and faith-based organizations.

Vitamin Relief USA is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization committed to improving the health status of children, seniors and adults at risk for malnutrition through vitamin supplementation. To support Vitamin Relief USA, or for further information, please call 805-715-2693 or log onto [www.vitaminrelief.org](http://www.vitaminrelief.org) .

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