



**THE STOP ORGANIZATION**  
Helping People, Strengthening Families and Communities

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*For Immediate Release*

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## **STOP HELPS 28 YEAR OLD WITH RARE GENETIC DISEASE**

NORFOLK, VA – At 10 o'clock am on June 2, 2008, The STOP Organization will begin organizing efforts to help 28-year-old Jessica Simpson from Portsmouth, Virginia renovate her home.

Jessica was born with a rare genetic disorder called Recessive Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa (RDEB). The condition affects her entire skin and mucus membranes where even the slightest trauma or friction causes blistering and scarring. In Jessica's case, the condition is so severe that it also affects her eyes, mouth and joints, causing chronic corneal abrasions, periodontal disease and fusion of her fingers and toes. It has contributed to her skin cancer and chronic anemia. The condition has progressed to such a level that 75 to 80% of her body must be bandaged daily.

The treatments are not always covered by insurance and medical costs are becoming more burdensome than ever. She lives with her father in a home that is not handicapped accessible. Her father, who suffered a heart attack last year, cannot address her physical needs to provide the house with the necessary updates it needs for her to be able to move easily through the house.

Therefore, The STOP Organization has established the Jessica Simpson Fund in order to raise money to cover the costs of having the house renovated for handicapped accessibility, as well as providing for any other ongoing medical needs she may require.

"STOP sees this as an opportunity to truly touch someone's life and give them the ability to remain independent," says President and CEO Edith R. Jones, "Anything we can do to help this young woman we will do."

All donations may be sent to:

The STOP Organization  
2551 Almeda Avenue  
Norfolk, Virginia 23513  
Attn: Tyrone Sessoms  
Phone (757) 858-1360

All donations are tax deductible. Please write The Jessica Simpson Fund in the memo portion of checks.

The STOP Organization is the largest Community Action Agency and Head Start program in Virginia. Since 1964, The STOP Organization has been dedicated to improving the quality of life of low income individuals and families by providing educational, employment training, economic opportunities and housing assistance.

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