

Ronald McDonald House: Making A Difference For 30 Years—You Can, Too

(NAPSA)—Imagine a three-year-old little girl—happy and healthy one day, fighting for her life against leukemia the next. Her family is there with her every moment—sleeping in the hospital on waiting room chairs, constant stress and concern, nowhere to go that could allow just a short reprieve.

In 1974, that was exactly what happened to the Hill family. Fred and Fran Hill, parents of daughter Kim, heard of an idea offered by Dr. Audrey Evans for a house where families could stay close to their hospitalized child. They, together with the Philadelphia Eagles football team and many others, worked with McDonald's® to host a fundraiser that led to the opening of the first Ronald McDonald House® in Philadelphia—a home-away-from-home for families whose seriously ill children are receiving medical treatment at nearby hospitals.

Thirty years later, nearly 240 Ronald McDonald Houses exist throughout the world with more than 150 Houses in the United States. The Ronald McDonald House program is the cornerstone of Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC®), whose core programs also include the Ronald McDonald Family Room™, located in hospitals, offering a homelike, safe haven where families can reflect, shower or rest; and the



A noteworthy charity helps families stay close to their seriously ill children.

Ronald McDonald Care Mobile™, a fleet of state-of-the-art vehicles that deliver cost-effective medical, dental and health education services directly to underserved children in their own neighborhoods.

While these programs offer comfort and care to millions of children and families around the world, there is still more to do. RMHC welcomes your help to continue its mission of creating, finding and supporting programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children. Each new volunteer or donation means that one more child and family can be helped.

How can you get involved? It can be as easy as R-M-H-C.

• **R: Reach Out**—Contact a RMHC Chapter and/or House to donate items that make a Ronald McDonald House a home. New toys, books and games are always

welcome additions, and are sure to brighten a child's day. Canned goods and non-perishables are also great donations for Houses, and make it easy for families to fix quick meals and snacks.

• **M: Make a Difference**—Celebrate 30 years of the Ronald McDonald House program by contacting a RMHC Chapter or Ronald McDonald House to find out how you can contribute by donating your time and talent to help children and families in your community.

• **H: House**—Bring a group of friends and/or family with you to a Ronald McDonald House and cook a meal, play with the children, help with the garden, read books to the kids, knit blankets or bake cookies with the families.

• **C: Charitable Donations**—Raise funds to donate to RMHC or a nearby RMHC Chapter and/or House. Encourage your co-workers, friends and family to donate by putting spare change in the RMHC collection canisters in McDonald's restaurants. You can also take part in World Children's Day™—the annual fundraiser held November 20 in McDonald's restaurants around the world.

These are only a few of the ways to become involved in RMHC and celebrate 30 years of the Ronald McDonald House program. To find out more, visit the Web site at www.rmhc.org.