

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Brian Feldman

954 428-4477

bfeldman@smith-knibbs.com



HIGHLIGHTS

**RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES® AWARDS \$35,000 GRANT TO YMCA;
S.W.I.M. PROGRAM AIMS TO KEEP KIDS SAFE, PREVENT DROWININGS**

**WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY ANNOUNCEMENT IS PART OF RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE
CHARITIES' COMMITMENT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF AREA KIDS**

Boca Raton, November 20, 2008 – Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) is gearing up to mark World Children's Day, an annual global fundraiser, on November 20 with activities in South Florida that spotlight and support the health and well being of local children.

RMHC of South Florida today announced a \$ 35,000 grant to the YMCA of South Palm Beach County for its S.W.I.M. program to teach youngsters of underserved neighborhoods in Boca Raton and Boynton Beach how to have fun and be safe in the water. The grant is the latest example of RMHC's impact, which has generated grants of more than \$3 million for local children's causes since 1984.

"This grant will go a long way in helping to reduce accidental drowning by equipping children and families, especially those with limited resources, with important lifesaving skills," said Jorene Jameson, Chief Development Officer of the YMCA. "Thanks to RMHC of South Florida, we will be working in concert with the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Palm Beach County to see that children enjoy the water and are aware of basic safety rules."

The Safe Water Instruction Module, or S.W.I.M. program will be held at the DeVos-Blum YMCA of Boynton Beach and the Peter Blum Family YMCA of Boca Raton for children in preschools, churches and synagogues and community agencies. Classes are scheduled once or twice weekly for six to 12 weeks, Jameson said.

“Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida’s mission is to make a difference in children’s lives,” said Jim Booth, president of Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida. “It is an ongoing commitment that is evident in RMHC’s partnership with programs such as this, and in McDonald’s restaurants.”

On November 20, McDonald’s restaurants around the world will host an unprecedented simultaneous fundraiser for children in their communities. World Children’s Day at McDonald’s builds on a rich heritage and tradition of McDonald’s being a good community partner and neighbor. With restaurants in 121 countries around the world, McDonald’s is in a unique position to bring people together to improve the lives of children, said Soraya Rivera-Moya, executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Florida.

Funds raised from World Children’s Day will benefit RMHC, whose South Florida chapter already has provided more than \$3 million to local children’s causes and Ronald Houses. Among the programs supported by local RMHC grants are Junior Achievement Exchange City in West Palm Beach. Fifth graders from throughout Palm Beach County operate Junior Achievement’s mini-City, complete with city government, businesses and a McDonald’s, as a learning experience.

By simply visiting their local McDonald’s restaurants on November 20, people can join in the World Children’s Day effort to help children in their own communities – and around the globe. On World Children’s Day, a donation will be made to RMHC for each Extra Value Meal purchased.

World Children’s Day is one of a number of events sponsored by McDonald’s to support RMHC and children’s causes. A fund raising golf tournament will be held at Trump International Golf Club on November 24 as part of the ADT LPGA championship. Also, a record number of kids are expected to take part in the RMHC Kids-K and RMHC Read-n-Run Marathon Mile, the kids component of the Marathon of the Palm Beaches, which will be held Saturday, December 6 in downtown West Palm Beach.

About the RMHC of South Florida

Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida was established in 1988 and is a non-profit foundation dedicated to helping local children live happier and healthier lives. They are committed, through their grant program, to funding solutions that address serious children’s

issues – pediatric cancer, child abuse, youth suicide, are just a few of their efforts. Since their inception they have given over \$3,000,000 in local grants. RMHC of South Florida also helps support the Ronald McDonald House, which is a home-away-from-home for families who travel hundreds of miles outside their own community to seek medical treatment for a child. Currently, there are two Ronald McDonald Houses in South Florida; the Miami House is located on the grounds of Jackson Memorial Medical Center and the Fort Lauderdale House is located on the grounds of the Broward General Medical Center. RMHC of South Florida's goal is to build their next Ronald McDonald House in Palm Beach County

About the YMCA of South Palm Beach County

As part of the nation's largest community service organization, the YMCA of South Palm Beach County serves more than 50,000 community residents annually. Through its locations in Boca Raton and Boynton Beach, the YMCA offers an expansive menu of on-site and outreach programs that help the entire family enjoy healthier, more active lifestyles. Activities include sports programs, summer camps, preschool, after school programs, a variety of exercise classes, senior wellness programs, water and land aerobics, yoga and pilates, and a state-of-the-art workout facility featuring the computerized Fitness Advisor virtual workout partner, among many more offerings.

The YMCA serves all people, including those unable to pay fees. Financial assistance is awarded to more than 4,000 individuals each year through the Partners with Youth Scholarship Program. Membership fees, grants and contributions from individuals and corporations fund its \$10 million annual budget.

For more information about the YMCA, call the Boca facility at (561) 395-9622 or the Boynton Beach branch at (561) 738-9622 or visit www.ymcaspbc.org. For information on how to support the Partners with Youth program or other YMCA programs, call Jorene Jameson at (561) 237-0969 or jjameson@ymcaspbc.org.

###