

# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE AT PHOENIX CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL HITS 1<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY; 400 FAMILIES STAY AT HOUSE IN YEAR 1**

*Celebration Event Planned Wednesday, June 24 from 11:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

PHOENIX, Ariz. (June xx, 2009): It didn't take long to show just why a second Ronald McDonald House was so urgently needed in Phoenix.

Families started moving into the four-story house the day it opened on June 23, 2008 on the Phoenix Children's Hospital campus and the pace has been steady ever since with an average capacity near 90%.

A special celebration of "The Cambridge House's" first birthday is planned from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24. The celebratory event will include light appetizers and (of course) birthday cake will be served.

During the past year, 397 families from five states and two foreign countries stayed an average of 16.65 days in one of the House's 18 guest rooms, representing a total of 7,067 room nights.

"There was never any doubt about the need and the value the new House would bring to families whose children need medical care in Phoenix," said Ronald McDonald House Executive Director Nancy Roach. "We see it every day in their faces and hear it in their stories."

The Kemp family from Lake Havasu City was the first to find comfort in the House after Seth was diagnosed with adult peripheral t-cell lymphoma, one of only 45 children in the world and 10 in the United States with the same diagnosis in the last 20 years. The cancer, a large tumor sitting on top of Seth's lungs, required more than 20 surgeries and several rounds of

chemotherapy at a hospital in Las Vegas before he could travel to Phoenix for a life saving bone marrow transplant.

The donor, Seth's younger brother, and now hero, Mason, was the perfect match for Seth's transplant. Doctors said there was only a 1-in-3000 chance of that happening.

The Kemp family spent several months at the Ronald McDonald House at that time and still stays there when Seth is meeting with his medical team.

"Being able to stay at the House made a horrible situation much easier," Seth's Mother, Jill, said. "Without the Ronald McDonald House we would have had to sell our house and quit our jobs. Ronald McDonald House was there for us when we needed help. This could happen to anybody with a child and the House will be there for them too."

In addition to the Kemps, who travel from the state's western region, families have come from Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, New Hampshire, Canada and Mexico.

Designed by HKS Architects and constructed by UrbanEdge Builders, the new House also offers a reception entry, full-service kitchen, social dining area, outdoor playground, family-friendly activity room and full-service business offices.

"Our goal was to provide a comfortable, safe and welcoming home for families whose last concern should be where they would sleep at night, regardless of their ability to pay the \$10 nightly fee we ask," Roach said. "We have and continue to achieve that goal every day."

For more information about the two Ronald McDonald Houses in Phoenix, visit [www.rmhcphoenix.com](http://www.rmhcphoenix.com).

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#### **About Ronald McDonald House Charities of Phoenix**

For the past 24 years, Ronald McDonald House of Phoenix has offered a comfortable, welcoming and affordable haven for families who come to this "home-away-from-home." The families stay for days, weeks, sometimes months at a time, while their children undergo medical treatment at Valley hospitals. They are asked to pay just \$10 a day to stay at the House, but no family is ever turned away because of their inability to pay. The Phoenix House can accommodate up to 45 families at any one time and serves more than 1,500 families a year. Ronald McDonald House Charities of Phoenix is a non-profit organization supported by individual, corporate and foundation donations.

