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THE CAROUSEL OF POSSIBLE DREAMS 5th ANNUAL FUNDRAISER HOSTED BY THE SANFILIPPO FAMILY TO BENEFIT FIVE CHILDRENS CHARITIES

Festival of Children Foundation celebrates the 5th Annual Carousel of Possible Dreams fundraiser benefiting Barrington Junior Women's Club, GiGi's Playhouse, Little Angels Center for Exceptional Care, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana, and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

BARRINGTON HILLS, IL -- A one-of-a-kind fundraising event for five children's charities that offer critical programs and services will take place on Saturday, August 20, 2016 from 5:30 – 10:00 p.m. at the Sanfilippo Estate in Barrington Hills, Illinois.

Chicago civic, business, entertainment and philanthropic leaders will test their carousel riding prowess aboard the *Eden Palais*, a spectacular 19th Century European Salon Carousel housed at the private Sanfilippo Estate in Barrington Hills, Illinois. Armed only with their cell phones, riders will go round and round, raising money for Barrington Junior Women's Club, GiGi's Playhouse, Little Angels Center for Exceptional Care, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana, (RMHC-CNI), and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

To assist us in celebrating the 5th Annual Carousel of Possible Dreams, Ravi Baichwal from ABC 7 Chicago will be acting as Master of Ceremonies. The evening will include entertainment, estate tours, and reception.

"The Sanfilippo family is committed to helping children and families in need and we are honored to host The Carousel of Possible Dreams. The Eden Palais Carousel is the perfect venue for the event and it brings us great joy to see our guests ride the carousel knowing it benefits so many families," says James Sanfilippo.

The Carousel of Possible Dreams launched seven years ago by Festival of Children Foundation has raised approximately \$3 million for more than 100 innovative children's programs which otherwise may never have been funded. And all the money has been raised through a magical activity enjoyed by all children – riding a carousel.

"This year marks our 5th Anniversary of Carousel of Possible Dreams at the Sanfilippo Estate, and to celebrate we have invited five wonderful children's charities. It's such a fun way to raise funds and attract new donors," said Sandy Segerstrom Daniels, founder of Festival of Children Foundation, and managing partner of the world-famous South Coast Plaza shopping destination. "It also allows anybody anywhere to participate at any level. Each of us can make a difference. Together, dreams are possible."

“RMHC-CNI is grateful for the support by Festival of Children Foundation and its continued dedication to fund local charities through such a creative initiative. When a child is in the hospital, it’s vital to have their families close by to offer additional support and comfort. Our five Chicagoland Ronald McDonald Houses and three Ronald McDonald Family Rooms allow families that chance,” says Holly Buckendahl, CEO of RMHC-CNI.

RMHC-CNI is an independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to care for families of children with complex medical needs by providing a ‘home away from home’ while their child is being treated in the hospital.

"Our children and young adults at Little Angels enjoy very full, energized lives, in spite of their many challenges. But it does take extra support and assistance to help with all their activities and undertakings. This is where a fundraiser like Carousel of Possible Dreams is so invaluable- in helping us provide the necessary equipment and services that our residents need to lead the interesting lives they want and deserve.”, says Mary Jean Adkins, Director of Development.

The Little Angels Center for Exceptional Care serves children and young adults with severe disabilities and extremely complex medical needs.

“We are so grateful to be included in this wonderful event with the goal of raising funds for the Barrington Splash Pad Project, which is a 3,400 square foot Universal and Handicap Accessible Splash Pad Park designed, with 19 different features, as an interactive, physical and inspirational outdoor play-space, with extra sensitivity to children with special needs. It is free to the entire community during previously unmet times,” stated Erin Shechtman, President of Barrington Junior Women’s Club, 2015-2016.

Nancy Gianni, President and CEO of GiGi’s Playhouse stated, “The volunteers will be riding a carousel armed with only their cell phones as a way to communicate. With a cell phone, you have the ability to verbally communicate. Many of our children don’t even have that ability in their arsenal. We just heard from a parent in New York that her daughter spoke her first words in our program. It took nine years before Nina could communicate, but due to the work of the parents, staff, and volunteers at GiGi’s Playhouse in Brooklyn, Nina can now speak. When she is told she is attending programming at GiGi’s, she now speaks with one word “Love.” At GiGi’s, we love the Sanfilippo family for providing funding for programs that give our children a voice.”

Caesar Tabet, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Executive Committee Member has been a major supporter of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital for over 25 years. He notes “St. Jude is leading the way the world understands, treats and defeats childhood cancer and other pediatric life-threatening diseases. I am proud of our steadfast commitment to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and our community through Festival of Children Foundation. We are pleased to partner with this annual philanthropic event to continue to create awareness and support through Carousel of Possible Dreams.”

This is the 15th Carousel of Possible Dreams event to be held since 2009 at such venues as Central Park in New York City, King Arthur’s Carrousel at Disneyland, South Coast Plaza in Orange County and Griffith Park in Los Angeles.

About Festival of Children Foundation

Festival of Children Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves to bring together and coordinate the efforts of charities, companies and individuals who work to improve the lives of children. 100% of the administrative costs are covered by designated funding, allowing donations to go further in direct support of programs and services that improve the lives of children nationwide. For more information please visit www.festivalofchildren.org

About Barrington Junior Women's Club

The Barrington Junior Women's Club is a group of women committed to enhancing the community by providing philanthropy and community service in the spirit of camaraderie through volunteerism. The Barrington Junior Women's Club is open to women of all ages, and its current 140+ members includes former and current Barrington area residents, as well as women outside the immediate area who are interested in becoming involved in philanthropic activities. As well as varied ages and addresses, the group is composed of an eclectic and energetic group of working and non-working women with a wide variety of interests. For more information please visit www.barringtonsplaspad.com

About GiGi's Playhouse

GiGi's Playhouse is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization founded in 2003. GiGi's Playhouse is a series of unique Achievement Centers serving children and adults with Down syndrome. Each Playhouse makes a lifetime commitment to participants and their families, and each location provides unique educational and therapeutic programs in a format that individuals with Down syndrome learn best. All programs aim to maximize acceptance and self-confidence, and intend to empower children and adults to achieve their greatest potential. All educational, therapeutic and career training programs are offered to families at no charge. GiGi's Playhouse currently has 16 Playhouses in the US and Mexico. Plans are in place to bring the total number of Playhouses to 30 by the end of 2015. Last year, over 16,000 participants benefited from Playhouse programs. GiGi's Playhouse has been featured on NBC Nightly News with Kate Snow and Tom Brokaw's "An American Story" Radio Show. Currently there are more than 100 inquiries for new Playhouses worldwide. For more information please visit www.gigisplayhouse.org

About Little Angels Center for Exceptional Care

The Little Angels Center for Exceptional Care serves children and young adults with severe disabilities and extremely complex medical needs. We do this by operating the Pat Wasmond Home and the Cathy Freeman Center for Developmental Training. Located in Elgin, Illinois, both programs offer a lifetime of expert care in a warm, loving environment. Our vision is to bring new meaning to 'the best life possible.' To see how this is achieved please visit www.LittleAngels.org

About Ronald McDonald House Charities

RMHC-CNI is an independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to care for families of children with complex medical needs by providing a 'home away from home' while their child is being treated in the hospital. Every night, 153 families heal together because of the comfort, compassion and community at five area Ronald McDonald Houses® and three Ronald McDonald Family Rooms®. Allowing families to stay close to their child in the hospital, not only helps the child to heal faster, but saves our families over \$10 million in hotel and food costs each year. We are located near [Advocate Children's Hospital](#), [Loyola University Medical Center](#), [University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital](#), [Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago](#), [Edward Hospital in Naperville](#) and [Central DuPage Hospital](#). RMHC-CNI also operates a Ronald McDonald Care Mobile® which provides medical care to children in underserved areas as well as a Scholarship Program for local college students. RMHC-CNI is an approved [BBB Accredited Business](#) and holds a 4-star rating by [Charity Navigator](#). For more information visit www.RonaldHouseChicago.org.

About St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is leading the way the world understands, treats and cures childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases. It is the only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center devoted solely to children. Treatments developed at St. Jude have helped push the overall childhood cancer survival rate from 20 percent to 80 percent since the hospital opened more than 50 years ago. St. Jude freely shares the breakthroughs it makes, and every child saved at St. Jude means doctors and scientists worldwide can use that knowledge to save thousands more children. Families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing and food — because all a family should worry about is helping their child live. To learn more, visit www.stjude.org or follow the hospital on Twitter and Instagram at [@stjuderesearch](https://twitter.com/stjuderesearch).

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About the Beneficiaries and their Possible Dreams

Barrington Junior Women's Club

The Barrington Splash Pad, is 3,400 square foot Universal and Handicap Accessible Splash Pad Park designed, with 19 different features, as an interactive, physical and inspirational outdoor play-space, with extra sensitivity to children with special needs and available free to the entire community during previously unmet times. www.barringtonsplaspad.com

GiGi's Playhouse

Our dream is to ensure at least 1000 clinical speech and language therapy program sessions are available to GiGi's Playhouse families for free. This life changing therapy will lead to more friends, more experiences, less fear, less hesitation, more acceptance and more lives improved. www.gigisplayhouse.org

Little Angels Center for Exceptional Care

Children and young adults with severe disabilities are prone to life threatening respiratory illness. Our residents are in frequent need of special breathing treatments. Some residents receive treatments to help recover from an illness while other residents receive the treatments every day of their life to prevent serious illness. This system provides a specific mix of gases and humidity, and is piped to units in our resident's bedrooms. Our present system is over 15 years old and is need of replacing. Keeping our Medical Air System in top working order is extremely important for our children and young adult's health, comfort and ability to lead a full life. <http://www.littleangels.org/>

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana

Our five local Chicagoland Ronald McDonald Houses continue to host the hustle and bustle of multiple families through our doors each and every day. Each family working to balance time spent in the hospital with their child and time at their 'home away from home' where they can get a good night's rest and a home-cooked meal prepared by generous volunteers. Our *dream* this year is to help refresh and rejuvenate our Ronald McDonald House near University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital located in Hyde Park which will celebrate 30 years of serving families this fall. As we strive to deliver the daily needs of our families, we are seeking to raise over \$75,000 to support the critical need to refresh the 18 family bedrooms and update the heart of the home, the family kitchen. With these improvements, we can continue to keep families close and provide the most comforting and supportive 'home away from home' for families traveling both near and far seeking medical care for their child. <http://www.rmhcni.org/>

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

The daily operating cost for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is \$1.8 million, which is primarily covered by public contributions. With your help we would like to raise enough funds to pay for 100 rounds of chemotherapy for patients with leukemia. Acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) is the most common form of childhood cancer. In 1962, the survival rate was 4 percent but thanks to research and treatment protocols discovered at St. Jude the survival rate for this once deadly disease is 94 percent. www.stjude.org