

For Immediate Release

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Toys, Treats and Santa Highlight Annual “Sharing the Spirit Holiday Party” for More than 600 Deserving Children from Orange County

Hosted by The Happiness Project and Festival of Children Foundation, Festive Event Scheduled for Friday, December 9, in Santa’s Village at South Coast Plaza

COSTA MESA, Calif. (Dec. 6, 2016) -- More than 600 deserving children from throughout Orange County, many without permanent homes, will experience the true spirit of the season at the 10th annual “Sharing the Spirit Holiday Party” at South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, California, on Friday, December 9, 2016. Held after the retail center closes from 9:00 p.m. to midnight, the festive event is organized by Festival of Children Foundation and The Happiness Project, both based in Orange County.

The children, who range in age from 5 to 16 years old, are transported from local shelters or agencies, including: Thomas House Family Shelter, Valencia Inn, El Dorado Inn, Our Small World Foster Family Shelter, Mercy House, Project Hope Alliance, Project Believe Illumination, and Project Access. Upon arrival at South Coast Plaza, the children are greeted by a host of more than 450 volunteers, including more fortunate local teens and college students, who learn about philanthropy and giving back by accompanying each child through a variety of entertaining and interactive activities. The

“Many in Orange County are unaware that there are thousands of children here, who won’t have a Christmas tree, let alone a home in which to celebrate the spirit of the season,” said Sandy Segerstrom Daniels, Founder and Executive Director, Festival of Children Foundation. “To see the smiles on their faces as they come through the doors into a holiday party organized just for them, is one of the most rewarding moments for all of us. We are so grateful to partner with The Happiness Project for the 5th year to be able to give these children the holiday that every child deserves.”

The children enjoy photos with Santa in Santa’s Village, rides on the reindeer carousel, arts and crafts, nail, hair and makeup stations, face painting, and games. They will also enjoy treats donated by local restaurant companies, including Nekter Juice Bar and Chick-Fil-A. But perhaps most exciting for the children is the chance to take home a bag stuffed with gender and age appropriate gifts from companies, such as Diamond Sports, American Greetings Entertainment, and LEGO.

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“We are honored to partner with Festival of Children Foundation on the 10th Sharing the Spirit Holiday Party,” said Lindsay Dickhout, Executive Director, The Happiness Project. “It’s unfortunate that the need still exists, but we so appreciate our generous sponsors, donors and volunteers, who have come together again to bring holiday cheer to so many wonderful and deserving children.”

The Sharing the Spirit Holiday Party was made possible by the generous donations from the Angels Baseball Foundation, Bloomingdale’s, Ingram Micro, LEGO, Million Dollar Tan, Think Ink Marketing, and South Coast Plaza.

About Festival of Children Foundation

Festival of Children Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that serves to bring together and coordinate the efforts of charities, companies and individuals who actively work to improve the lives of children. Festival of Children Foundation gives a voice, guidance and support. 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. www.festivalofchildren.org

About The Happiness Project

Based in Orange County, The Happiness Project is a 501 (c) (3), non-profit organization with a mission to help disadvantaged and homeless children in Orange County by providing them with basic essentials that will allow them to live a healthy life, be able to attend school, never go unfed, and to have a bright future with many opportunities. For more information, visit www.HelpOCKids.org.

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