



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 16, 2010

Contact: Kate Weissman
215-790-4392
kweissman@tierneyagency.com

**ST. CHRISTOPHER'S FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN RONALD McDONALD®
CARE MOBILE CELEBRATES "NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH"**

Ronald McDonald Care Mobile Provides Dental Care at No Cost to Underserved Children

Philadelphia (February 16, 2010) – The St. Christopher's Foundation for Children Ronald McDonald Care Mobile is celebrating "National Children's Dental Health Month" by promoting early intervention and raising awareness of the importance of good oral health for children. The Care Mobile is playing a vital role in St. Christopher's Foundation for Children's *Community Oral Health Initiatives* by decreasing the number of children suffering from oral diseases.

Judy Gelinas, Director of St. Christopher's Foundation for Children *Community Oral Health Initiatives* states, "Dental decay is the most common chronic childhood disease – five times more common than asthma. Our dentist has restored over 7,000 teeth, and our hygienist has protected healthy teeth from decay with over 7,000 sealants."

The *Oral Health Initiatives* program puts great emphasis on its "Early Intervention Program", which encourages families to adopt healthy dental practices when their children are still young. Tooth decay can be prevented with adequate tooth cleaning, wise choices for beverages, infrequent snacking and regular trips to the dentist.

Some families, however, are unable to find a Medicaid provider or cannot afford dental services. Gelinas states, "Over 40 percent of low-income Philadelphia children have dental decay by the time they reach three years old and almost 75 percent of eight year olds have untreated decay."

The Care Mobile, a mobile clinic on wheels, offers comprehensive and continuous dental treatment at no cost to young underserved children. The program works mostly with schools serving over 60 area public, charter, parochial schools and pre-school programs.

The Care Mobile reaches over 2,500 children per year. Public treatment sessions occur on the last Friday of each month from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, E. Erie Ave. & N. Front St., Philadelphia, PA 19134. To schedule an appointment, please call (215) 427-4645.

About Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of the Philadelphia Region, Inc.

RMHC of the Philadelphia Region, Inc. proudly supports the St. Christopher's Foundation for Children Ronald McDonald Care Mobile. In addition to the Care Mobile, the Charity grants hundreds of dollars per year to support non-profit programs that directly improve the health and well being on local children. RMHC also supports the Philadelphia, Southern New Jersey and Delaware Ronald McDonald Houses, in addition to 13 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in area hospitals. For more information, visit www.rmhc.org.

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