

Dear Adopt-a-Family Participant,



First, let me start by saying Thank you! The team at the Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation (NCCF) works year round to assist families whose children are stricken with life threatening illnesses and help them prepare and cope with the changes that ensue. You're participation in this program is not only welcomed and appreciated, but I can guarantee it will make all the difference in the world to those we serve in the community.

Each year NCCF adopts out over thirty families in the community who have been financially devastated by their child's illness and the medical costs that come with it. This becomes especially difficult during the Holiday Season. This year you have the chance to make an incredible, positive difference in the life of a child and their family.

Enclosed is a detailed description of our Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program. Please read it carefully as it contains pertinent information regarding client confidentiality, Adopter anonymity, what to expect from your family, what to expect from NCCF, dates and deadlines, and delivery information & instruction.

As with any growing program, change is often the inevitable. There are several notable changes to our program this year. So even if you've participated in years past, please take time to review this in detail. If after you've reviewed the attached information and would like to participate in our program, please complete and sign and date the last page of this packet and mail, e-mail, or fax back to me **no later than Friday, October 23, 2009.** ***Requests for families and packets received after this date will not be accepted.*** Families recommended for this program are carefully assessed by our licensed Social Workers to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria for this program as outlined by NCCF Project A.R.K. Director, Dr. Tonie Valesano, and NCCF President/CEO, Mr. Jeff Gordon. Therefore it is imperative that I receive your completed agreement by the date listed above.

If you have any questions and/or concerns please feel free to contact me at the number listed below. We hope to bring many smiles to the faces of those who need it the most during this holiday season and with your time, generosity, and collaboration I know we can make this holiday season one to remember! ☺

Warm Wishes,

Andrea Rapanos, Patient Services Coordinator
Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation
702-735-8434 – Office
702-735-8431 – Fax
andrea@nvccf.org

☞ **How are families-in-need identified & enrolled in this program?**

Families are referred in a number of ways: social work referral, local physician(s), medical staff, self-referral, friends, and family. Families are adopted out on a first come, first serve basis after being carefully screened by our licensed Social Worker's to determine a need for assistance through the Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program. Once the need for assistance has been identified and the recommendation made, NCCF will cross-reference the recommendation against similar programs with other agencies in the community in an effort to keep "double dipping" at a minimum. Once confirmed, a NCCF staff member will notify the family by phone that they have been selected to participate in this program and we will mail them their Holiday Adopt-a-Family Packet.

☞ **How many families can I (we) adopt?**

You may adopt as many families as you can afford to. Past participants have adopted a single family and others have adopted up to 10 families. The number of families you choose to adopt is completely up to you. NCCF asks that you be as specific as possible. If you want one (1) family with no more than five (5) members in that family, then that is what you need to tell us. If you'd like seven families and could care less about how many members per family, then you'll need to specify that as well.

☞ **In this program, how is "family" defined?**

In this program, a "family" consists of the ailed child, their parent(s) or legal guardian, immediate siblings who reside in the home, and, on occasion, their family pet. 😊

☞ **Are there exceptions?**

Yes. There are times when an older sibling, aunt, uncle, or grandparent assume the role of the absent parent and become the caregiver. In those instances, and only in those instances, is someone other than an immediate family member allowed to participate.

☞ **What can we expect to receive from the family(ies) I (we) adopt?**

You will receive a written biography of the child and their family composed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Biographies tend to include a lot of detailed, personal information surrounding the circumstances of the child's diagnosis, their treatment, and how it's affected the family both emotionally, financially, and spiritually. When reading the biography please remember that what these families experience as a result of the child's diagnosis can evoke some strong and passionate feelings that will sometimes come out on paper and give you a deeper glimpse into the intimate details of their lives. It is because of this that NCCF requires **ALL** Participants to

demonstrate and maintain confidentiality of any and **ALL** information shared between you and the family you adopt.

You will also receive a “Wish List” from each member of the family you adopt. This list will give you an idea of their needs and their wants. NCCF asks that you attempt to meet the needs before meeting the wants. We ask our families to be as detailed as possible when writing their “Wish List” by including name, age, favorite color, clothing size, shoe size, coat size, bed size, and even providing a copy of a bill that they need help with.

☞ **What items can I expect to see on their Wish List?**

We have asked our families to list their individual needs, family needs, and to limit their “Wish” items to five (5) items, not to exceed \$500.00 in value, per family member. Needs may consist of groceries, gas cards, help with a utility or mortgage bill, clothing, shoes, coats, toiletries, bedding, beds, dishes, bath towels, household cleaners, prescription costs, eye glasses, bus pass/tokens, furniture, vehicle maintenance/repair, work boots, Christmas Dinner and sometimes even a Christmas Tree. Wants, or their “Wishes”, may consist of a new bike, music CD, Ipod, skate board, gift cards to their favorite department stores, mall, or restaurant, a new video game/system, books, board games, favorite sports team gear, tickets to a show or the movies, crayons/markers, T.V.’s and/or Stereo System, new parfum/cologne, fancy purse, hi-tech power tool, a vacation, a computer, or new puppy/cat/hamster/fish. **You are not expected to fulfill every item on their list.** Our families are informed of this as well. **All we ask is that you do what you can do.**

☞ **Can I (we) collect cash for our family(ies) and filter it through NCCF?**

Yes, you may. However, up to \$2000.00 of all cash donations made will go into a restricted fund for the family you’ve adopted. Those funds will be used strictly to cover their rent/mortgage and/or utility bills. Any cash donation made in excess of \$2000.00 will go into the Project A.R.K. fund to be used for **ALL** NCCF clients and their families as requested and approved by Dr. Tonie Valesano, Program Director, and Mr. Jeff Gordon, President/CEO.

☞ **How are gifts delivered to the family?**

If you opt to remain Anonymous and not participate in the delivery, you will need to bring the items you’ve purchased to the NCCF office and an NCCF staff member will have the family come and pick-up their gifts. If you would like to make the delivery yourself, NCCF will release the family’s contact information to you. You will then need to contact the family you’ve adopted directly and schedule a date and time to make your delivery. For safety purposes, please try to make your delivery before sunset. **All gifts should be wrapped and addressed to the proper individual for whom the gift was purchased for. All gifts will need to be delivered the week of December 14, 2009.**

☞ **What should I do if I have a question or concern regarding the Wish List?**

If there are any questions and/or concerns regarding the list and any item on it, please contact Andrea Rapanos or Tonie Valesano at 702-735-8434 for further discussion and/or assistance.

☞ **Understanding of the sick & things to keep in mind...**

When a child is diagnosed with a chronic or terminal illness they often experience significant physical changes that can really take its toll on their self-esteem. Treatment can cause hair loss, splotchy/flaky skin, mouth sores, weight loss/gain, fatigue, moodiness, etc... Our clients, particularly our teens, become very self-conscious and will not want someone to purchase personal items such as toiletries or clothing for them. Instead, they will often request a gift card so that they have the ability to get those personal items themselves. Some donors like to take pictures with the family when they deliver gifts to the home. While most families are happy to take a picture with you, some clients will not want to participate because of the way they look. These changes, amongst everything else that comes with their diagnosis, are very difficult for them to deal with and we ask that you respect their wishes with regards to their personal preferences. We'd also like to remind you that you may not always receive a written "Thank You" note/card from the family. Everyone has different ideas of what proper "Thank You" etiquette is or should be. Sometimes a proper "Thank You" will come in the form of a hug, a handshake, tears, or simply saying "Thank You" just before you leave their home.

☞ **Dates & Deadlines**

Adopt-a-Family Program Opens: September 28, 2009

Last Day to request a Family: October 23, 2009

Wish Lists & Bio's due to Adopters: November 20, 2009

Deliveries to be completed the week of: December 14, 2009

*****Any requests to adopt a family after the October 23^d deadline will not be accepted. Instead, you will be invited to contribute to the NCCF Gift Card Program that will be utilized by ALL clients and families of NCCF.*****

☞ *Understanding HIPAA and how it applies to this program*

Because NCCF is considered a “covered entity” under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), we are subject the rules and regulations as outlined by this piece of legislation. The HIPAA Privacy Standards regulate the use and disclosure of individually identifiable health information. **This includes ANY and ALL information you receive on the family you’ve adopted.** The “Minimum Necessary Rule” is one of the most important and most difficult rules in the Privacy Standards. This rule states that *you must make all reasonable efforts not to use or disclose more than the minimum amount of protected health information (PHI) necessary to accomplish the intended purpose of the permitted use or disclosure.* This means that any patient/family identifiable information must **NOT** be used. If you are resourcing or fundraising for your family, discretion is mandatory and non-negotiable. The following is a brief example of what is acceptable:

Dear So & So,

My name is John and I work for HIPAA Inc. We have partnered with the Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation this holiday season and have adopted a family for the holidays. Our family consists of a single mom and her three children, ages 2, 3, and 4. One of her children has been diagnosed with Leukemia and is currently undergoing several rounds of chemotherapy. This has had a significant negative financial impact on this family and we are asking for your help....

If you have any questions and/or concerns about what is appropriate or allowed, please contact NCCF at 702-735-8434 to clarify. Please remember to keep the information as discreet as possible. **IT IS THE LAW.**

It is the mission of the Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation to ensure the privacy and protection of all its clients in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). As such, participants in the Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program are also expected to protect and keep private any and all information shared with them regarding the clients we serve. If you have read, understand, and agree to the information contained in this packet please fill out the information below and return it to:

Nevada Childhood Cancer Foundation
Attn: Andrea Rapanos, Patient Services Coord.
6070 S. Eastern Ave., Ste. 200
Las Vegas, NV 89119

I (We) understand and acknowledge the above stated agreement and would like to participate in the Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program sponsored by NCCF.

Unfortunately, I (We) must respectfully decline to participate in the Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program at this time.

How many families are you able to adopt? _____

Size of each Family: Small (2-4 persons)

Medium (5-7 persons)

Large (8 persons or more)

YES! I would like to make my own delivery to the family(ies).

No. I would like to remain anonymous and NOT participate in the delivery.

Name of Person(s)/Agency Adopting Family:

| | |
|------------|--|
| Address: | |
| Contact #: | |
| E-mail: | |

Signature

Date