

# News From **SickKids**<sup>®</sup>

FOUNDATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Toronto community believes in SickKids** *Astral Media listeners dial up support to the tune of \$3.1 million*

**TORONTO, ON – Thursday, April 30, 2009** – Another exciting and emotional SickKids Radiothon came to a close shortly after 6 p.m. today after hundreds of people from the GTA community and listeners of Astral Media radio opened up their hearts and wallets in support of The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids). In all, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual SickKids Radiothon raised \$3,152,543.

More than 30 families shared their stories on Astral Media's Toronto radio stations – Newstalk 1010 CFRB, 97.3 EZ Rock and Virgin Radio 999 – during the 12-hour broadcast. A mix of current and past SickKids patients and families recounted their compelling stories and connections to the hospital motivating Toronto-area listeners to phone in and pledge their donations. SickKids was a beneficiary of Astral Media's inaugural "National Day of Caring for Kids Radiothon."

Once again this year, Foresters<sup>™</sup>, a provider of quality life insurance, shared its financial strength with the SickKids community as our very generous presenting sponsor. More than 200 Foresters employees volunteered their time to create 300 teddy bears for patients currently in hospital as well as answering donor calls throughout Radiothon.

"Leading into this year's Radiothon it was difficult to predict the total we would raise," said Patsy Anderson, Chair of the Board of Directors, SickKids Foundation. "This is the first time in eight years that we've had a one-day Radiothon and the Toronto community again demonstrated its support of SickKids loud and clear. We heard many of the most compelling and impactful family stories on air today and everyone who called in to make their donations effectively told these families that they are not alone. The community believes in SickKids and this is even more meaningful during this difficult economic time."

Adding to the excitement of this year's SickKids Radiothon, the second annual Change Crusader program saw more than 70 budding young philanthropists collect spare change and make online donations. Many Change Crusaders stopped in throughout the 12-hour event to drop off the buckets full of coins they had collected over the past six weeks through this grassroots fundraising campaign. SickKids Foundation will continue to accept Change Crusaders donations both online and at its main reception at 525 University Avenue, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor as they are an important part of the overall success of Radiothon.

As the afternoon radio hosts, together with SickKids patient Madison Scott, 11, announced the final tally, more than \$3.1 million had been raised for SickKids Foundation with further donations from the SickKids Change Crusaders still to come. All told, these three radio stations have raised more than \$34 million for SickKids Foundation through 23 Annual SickKids Radiothons, and golf tournaments and corporate donations.

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“It’s important for people, both young and young-at-heart, to know that a little bit can go a long way and that, together, everyone’s donations can add up to a lot and make a significant impact,” Anderson said. “Philanthropy is of the utmost importance in helping to advance paediatric health. People may not have a large amount of money to donate but every dollar counts toward making a difference in the lives of the children and families who rely on SickKids.”

It wasn’t only Astral Media listeners who were moved by the 30-plus stories shared on air during this year’s SickKids Radiothon.

“Imagine small children and teens who have just been through the fight of their lives, walking up to these radio station booths to share their very personal stories about their illnesses and SickKids which has too often become a second home to them. It was powerful and motivating without a doubt,” said Rebecca Shropshire, Director of Branding and Communication at Astral Media Radio.

Through the combined efforts of Miracle Club members who signed up to give \$18 a month, just \$0.60/day, these children’s wishes have a chance of coming true. People can still continue to donate by calling 1-877-584-5437 or going online at [www.sickkidsradiothon.com](http://www.sickkidsradiothon.com).

#### About Foresters

Founded in 1874 as a fraternal benefit society, Foresters™ champions the well-being of families through quality life insurance, unique member benefits and inspiring community activities. Foresters shares its financial strength with more than 650,000 members in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Unity Life of Canada<sup>‡</sup>, a wholly owned subsidiary of Foresters, represents Foresters in Canada. Foresters is celebrating its 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. For more information, please visit [www.foresters.com](http://www.foresters.com).

Foresters™ is a trademark of The Independent Order of Foresters, a fraternal benefit society, 789 Don Mills Road, Toronto, Canada M3C 1T9. <sup>‡</sup> Unity Life of Canada, a Foresters company, is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Independent Order of Foresters.

#### About SickKids Foundation

SickKids Foundation is the largest non-governmental granting agency in children's health in Canada. Since 1972, the Foundation has generated more than a billion dollars towards children's health care and has granted more than \$70 million to researchers across the country. Our mission is to inspire our communities to invest in health and scientific advances to improve the health of children in Canada and around the world. Our vision is "Healthier Children. A Better World."™

In September 2005, SickKids Foundation launched the largest fundraising campaign for a hospital in Canada. The SickKids Believe fundraising campaign has a goal of \$500 million to be reached by 2011.

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