



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KATIE'S KIDZ BRINGS HOLIDAY SPIRIT TO DUKE CHILDREN'S

DURHAM, N.C. – December 21, 2011—“If I could give one of these toys to all the sick children, they’d feel better and they could have a happy Christmas,” said then six-year-old Katie Greene as she relayed this simple, yet touching thought to her father while out shopping one day. From that day forward, Katie and her parents established Katie’s Kidz, an organization that donates presents to children who are hospitalized. These gifts provide smiles, fun, joy and something to do while recovering from their medical challenges. Five years later, Katie’s Kidz, delivered 21 boxes, filled with about 650-700 presents to Duke Children’s Hospital & Health Center on Tuesday, Dec. 20.

“Children who stay at Duke Children’s through the holidays are unfortunately too sick to be able to go home,” shared Molly Bain, certified child life specialist, Duke Children’s. “With a huge donation like this one from Katie’s Kidz, we are able to really make the holiday season more fun and just as exciting and magical in the hospital as it is at home. Katie’s Kidz donates things that teen patients and even parents don’t normally get.” Katie’s Kidz provided gifts for children of all ages and included items like iPods, Amazon Kindles, art and craft sets, toy cars and more.

“What I love most about giving toys and gifts to the children in the hospitals is knowing that I’ve helped someone in my heart and that I make a difference,” said Katie. Katie’s Kidz raises money year-round to buy Christmas gifts for children in hospitals through handwritten letter fund-raising campaigns, public speaking events, raffles and by actively connecting to the media. Individuals, organizations and strangers who have been touched by Katie’s kindness and generosity have reached out to Katie’s Kidz to make donations or to provide sponsorships.



Katie Greene (front) of Katie’s Kidz and her parents, Dean and Elizabeth, unload a truck filled with boxes of gifts for children and parents at Duke Children’s.

From the initial year of raising \$162, Katie’s Kidz has exceeded its goal of raising \$20,000 in 2011. Now at the end of 2011, Katie’s Kidz has raised \$22,345, added more three locations to a total of 11 hospitals and expanded into S.C. All donations and money received are used to

– more –

purchase toys, gift cards and other items children can use as designated by the hospital staff. In addition to the many new additions to this year's giving, Katie's Kidz extended their donations to include toiletries for parents whose children come in for emergencies and have to stay at the hospital.

“So many families find themselves at the hospital unexpectedly and without basic things like toothpaste and toothbrushes,” said Katie. “I wanted to provide for their needs as well.” Katie's Kidz donated eight of boxes with toiletry items for parents.



Katie Greene (center) with Duke Children's Certified Child Life Specialists Molly Bain (left) and Katie Oches (right) among the 21 boxes of gifts donated by Katie's Kidz to Duke Children's

“When I learned of her story, I was enthralled by her big heart and motivation to help children at Duke Children's,” said Bain. “She is very determined and has a spirit that is ready to conquer the impossible.”

Katie's Kidz began as a six-year-old child's Christmas wish to encourage children in hospitals throughout the holiday season and has become an annual tradition of bringing smiles and joy to children across North Carolina.

To learn more about Katie's Kidz and how you can donate, visit www.katieskidz.org, email katieskidz@gmail.com, or call (704) GIFT-KIDZ (704-443-8543).

About Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center:

Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center, located in Durham, N.C., is nationally ranked among the best in pediatric health care programs. Caring for children is our number one priority, from routine check-ups and immunizations to the treatment of life-threatening injuries and illnesses. At Duke Children's, we provide hope and the most advanced health care available. We offer innovative procedures including stem cell and bone marrow transplants as well as a variety of support services for our patients and their families. For more information please visit www.dukechildrens.org.

Contact:

Jenna Tie
Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center
(919) 385-3147
jenna.tie@duke.edu

Elizabeth Greene
Katie's Kidz
(704) GIFT-KIDZ / (704) 443-8543
katieskidz@gmail.com

###