PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
(August 18, 2020)

McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival Rescheduling to 2021

Due to continued public safety concern regarding Coronavirus

(Houston, TX) The McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival has announced that they will not produce the Festival in 2020 due to their continued public safety concerns. The McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival is the Largest Children’s Festival in the United States and annually fills downtown Houston with family entertainment, activities and fun while benefitting Child Advocates.

“We are, of course, saddened to make this announcement. As we stated in our original postponement back in March, the safety and health of our festival patrons, staff, volunteers and community will always be our first priority. We have monitored the situation regarding this global pandemic over the past several months and realize it is in the best interest of everyone involved to look forward to continuing this very important Festival in 2021,” says Tony Terwilliger, McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival Executive Director.

"The Festival is always such a joyful weekend, and we are sad to see it canceled this year, however, in the light of current events, we know that this was the best decision. Our community's health and safety are of utmost importance," said Child Advocates CEO, Sonya Galvan. "The McDonald's Houston Children's Festival raised a lot of awareness for our organization, and it brought in critical funds to help us operate. We now have a void to fill in the coming months and hope those who could still support us this year, do so. We are looking forward to 2021 when we can gather once again for this event." Terwilliger also stated, "We will continue to monitor this global pandemic. We will announce new festival dates in 2021 when conditions are safe to produce this truly iconic, one-of-a-kind Festival that benefits the abused and neglected children served by Child Advocates."

The McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival has raised over $5.6 million during the past 31 years for Child Advocates (www.childadvocates.org) and has entertained over one million attendees during this time. We continue to thank the public, our sponsors and our volunteers for their understanding and cooperation during this unprecedented situation and their continued commitment to supporting Child Advocates and the McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival in the future.
About the McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival
The McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival was selected as “one of the world’s 300 unmissable events” by Frommer’s Travel Guides. Celebrating its 32nd year in 2020, it is one of Houston’s signature events and has a projected annual attendance of over 50,000. The Festival celebrates over three decades of proven success for sponsors, the community, participants – and most importantly, for the abused and neglected children helped by Child Advocates.

The Houston Children’s Festival was born in 1988 and was originally known as the “Children for Children Festival.” It attracted less than 5,000 people the first year, the goal was to create a family festival that would serve as the vehicle to educate the public about child abuse and Child Advocates’ mission. For the first few years, the festival was located across from the George R. Brown Convention Center, where Discovery Green Park is now located. When the festival continued to grow and needed a bigger home, it was moved to the Greenway Plaza area and occupied two large, then-vacant lots next to what is now Lakewood Church. After a two-year stint at Hermann Park, the festival found its current home in downtown Houston in 1999. It was during this time that Mayor Bob Lanier saw the exceptional value in this event and designated it “The Mayor’s Official Family Celebration.”

About Child Advocates
In 2018, there were 5,670 children in Harris County foster care. Children who were removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. These children will remain in the care of the overburdened system until a permanent, safe home can be found.

Child Advocates recruits, trains, and supports volunteer advocates assigned by a judge to these children's cases. Our advocates contact caseworkers, interview parents and ensure necessary medical care is being given. They also help with educational interests and make recommendations in court regarding the permanent placement of the child. Most importantly, they serve as a “constant” person for that child to count on during a very tumultuous time.

Child Advocates has served over 27,000 children since it began in 1984. In 2019, Child Advocates provided advocacy for 2,206 abused and neglected children with 846 advocates. These individuals in our community collectively gave over 50,000 hours of their time helping 1,224 families in 15 different Harris County courts — an impact that will last for generations.

The McDonald’s Houston Children’s Festival is a signature fundraising and community awareness event for Child Advocates. To date, this event has raised over 5.6 million dollars to assist Child Advocates in its mission.

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