



***For Immediate Release***

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**THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY OF JACKSONVILLE  
ANNOUNCES A CHANGE OF PLAN FOR DISTRIBUTING TOYS  
IN 2020**

Jacksonville, Fla – Oct. 6, 2020 – In response to the risk posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville today announced a change of plan for distributing toys to children in the Jacksonville area this December. Rather than hosting its traditional, in-person, community Christmas Party at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center, the non-profit organization will instead partner with several pre-selected non-profit organizations to distribute toys to the children-in-need who are currently enrolled in those organizations' programs.

"This is the 22<sup>nd</sup> year of the Christmas Party. More than ever, we are committed to fulfilling our mission by providing toys to children-in-need for Christmas, especially this year, when so many children come from families who are facing financial challenges because of the downturn in the economy," said Diane Halverson, executive director of The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville. "We are equally committed to protecting these children, their families, our volunteers and the community from risk to their health and safety during this pandemic.

"To achieve both of these goals and fulfill our mission, our Board made the best decision possible, which is to provide toys safely through the programs of several other non-profit organizations so the approximately 5,000 children-in-need who participate in those programs receive toys this year. We wish we could hold our event as usual with thousands of Jacksonville's good people coming together to celebrate Christmas, however, this new method of toy distribution by our charity was a needed compromise in a year experiencing a public health crisis."

"We are only able to provide these toys because of the very generous contributions of our donors and sponsors. It is this continued support, which we still need this year, that will enable us to give some great toys to many of Jacksonville's children this December."

"We look forward to hosting this very special event again – in person – in December 2021."

(continued)

***About The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville:***

*The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville, a non-profit organization, was founded in December, 1999, by Travis and Margaret Storey with the mission of providing toys for Jacksonville's children who otherwise might not receive toys for the holiday season. It is our hope in this, our 22<sup>nd</sup> year, to collect enough funds to purchase at least 15,000 toys and to give the toys to each of approximately 5,000 children in as safe a method as possible through selected programs in which the children currently participate.*

*In a normal year, our one day event is held just before Christmas on a first come, first serve basis with a long, in-person wait line. Last year, we gave several toys to each of the 4,000 children-in-need who attended the event at the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center in downtown Jacksonville. In all of our past 21 years, volunteer employees from our generous sponsors gave their time and effort to fill the convention center with toys and then hand them out on party day. During most years, there were up to 10,000 people who either attended or who were involved with the event during the three hour party.*

*For more information or to donate to The Children's Christmas Party of Jacksonville, visit the organization's Web site at [www.ccpoj.org](http://www.ccpoj.org) or send e-mail to: [christmaspartyofjax@comcast.net](mailto:christmaspartyofjax@comcast.net).*