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Local homeless children to benefit from community event proceeds

Monkey Joe's teams up with local non-profit Birthday Blessings to host Family Fun Friday

(Charlotte, NC, July 29, 2009) --This Friday, July 31, kids across Charlotte will be "bouncing for birthdays" at all four Monkey Joe's locations to help benefit local homeless children.

[Monkey Joe's](#) will host an area-wide Family Fun Friday event to kick off its new partnership with local non-profit [Birthday Blessings](#), a Charlotte-based organization that brings birthday joy and support to homeless children and their families.

Family Fun Friday will offer a discounted admission of just \$5 per child, along with \$2 pizza and nachos and lots of free giveaways throughout the day. 20% of the day's proceeds from each Monkey Joe's location will benefit Birthday Blessings. Event hours are 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Lake Norman, Matthews, Pineville, and University locations. To benefit the recent expansion of the Blessings Baskets Program, donations of baby care-essentials and gift cards will also be gladly accepted.

Monkey Joe's support for Birthday Blessings extends beyond Family Fun Friday. All area locations will also open their doors regularly as an offsite location for the non-profit's Shelter Party Program. *"Monkey Joe's has donated tens of thousands of dollars to local charities, schools, and organizations. We are dedicated to the community, and Monkey Joe's is very proud to be partnering with Birthday Blessings,"* says co-owner Michael Torcellini.

Birthday Blessings is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2005 by Charlotte couple Amy and John Cervantes. The organization currently serves seven area homeless facilities in Mecklenburg and Union counties, as well as homeless elementary students throughout Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. Birthday Blessings operates three core programs: Shelter Parties (monthly birthday celebrations at local housing facilities); Classroom Parties (birthday snack bags and treats provided anonymously for homeless elementary students); and Blessing Baskets (baby-care essentials and gift cards to welcome the arrival of homeless babies.)

"This new partnership with Monkey Joe's is a true blessing to our organization," says Birthday Blessings executive director and co-founder, Amy Cervantes. *"Not only will Family Fun Friday bring awareness and much-needed funding to Birthday Blessings, but the onsite parties give area homeless children a rare opportunity to experience a simple joy that many of us likely take for granted."*

To date, Birthday Blessings has provided birthday parties for more than 700 local homeless children, celebrating with thousands of needy youth across the greater Charlotte area. The organization continues to expand locally and will begin serving York County, South Carolina, this fall. In addition, Birthday Blessings recently launched a national expansion, with its first affiliate chapter now operating in northeast Indiana. Several more chapters are planned for multiple cities across the country.

For more information, please visit: www.birthdayblessings.org; and www.monkeyjoes.com.

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