

For Immediate Release
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**Dream Home Charities makes the holidays brighter
for children and families in central and southern Illinois**
Non-profit volunteer organization "adopts" 156 children in 17 counties

EAST ALTON, IL – The holidays will be brighter this year for 156 central and southern Illinois children living in foster care or whose parents are participating in the DCFS Intact Family Services Program thanks to a generous donation from Dream Home Charities of Wood River, Illinois.

On Saturday, December 7, while children had their pictures taken with Santa and enjoyed crafts, a petting zoo and refreshments at Dream Home Charities' 8th annual Winter Wonderland party, DCFS staff were busy loading a semi-truck with over 3500 pounds of donated food, coats, gifts and household items that will be delivered to 69 families in 17 central and southern Illinois counties just in time for holiday celebrations.

"I am very grateful to Dream Home Charities for their generosity during this season of giving," said DCFS Acting Director Marc Smith. "Their willingness to bring joy to our children living in foster care or whose parents are participating in our Intact Family Services Program is a wonderful example of the positive life-changing effect we can have on the children and families of Illinois when we work together."

"I want the children to feel cared for and loved after their world has been turned upside down," said Dream Home Charities Founder Sherry Gilleland. "If you ask me, foster parents are angels on earth and if I can lift some of their burden, it makes my heart happy. I want every family, whether it be biological or foster, to have a magical holiday season filled with love and hope."

About the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Founded in 1964, DCFS is responsible for protecting children from abuse or neglect by responding to calls received on the Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873). With the goal of keeping children safe, DCFS strengthens and supports families with a wide range of services. When keeping a child safe means removing them from the home, DCFS makes every effort to reunite them with their family. When the best interest of the child makes

this impossible, DCFS is committed to pursuing adoption by loving families to provide children with a safe and permanent home. DCFS is also responsible for licensing and monitoring of all Illinois child welfare agencies.

***The Illinois DCFS Intact Family Services Program** ensures the safety and well-being of children without the need for protective custody by providing families with needed in-home services. Emphasis is on child safety and keeping the family together. The program provides intensive in-home case management as well as 24-hour response to emergencies.*

***Dream Home Charities** is an all-volunteer 501C3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to help multiple local charity organizations help the less fortunate. 100% of all donations given to Dream Home Charities are given back to the local community where they are needed most.*

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