



Guideposts Outreach Services and the Florida Marlins Hit a Home Run for children at Holtz Children's Hospital in Miami, Florida!!!

On August 31, 2010 the team of players, Guideposts, Florida Marlins and Holtz staff hosted a "Kids Appreciation Day" to introduce Comfort Kits to children at the Holtz Children's Hospital. Over 35 children and parents participated in the festive day, along with several hospital staff, doctors, a chaplain and nurses passing through to enjoy the fun. The room was decorated with stars and baseball paraphernalia and included different stations where children could participate in arts and crafts, a Sparkle stress ball toss, spin the Marlin wheel for prizes and face painting. Children and parents alike enjoyed the different activities and received *Ideals* children's books and copies of *The Power of Positive Thinking*. The Marlins gave away backpacks that looked like a catcher's chest protector, key chains, pencils, pens, calendars and tattoos as mementos. Billy the Marlin, team mascot, was a hit bringing smiles and laughter to everyone who attended. Alex Morin, Coordinator Player Relations, Florida Marlins, said the team had such a great time with the children that they'd consider doing it again next year. A touching example was a little boy named Mathew who for most of the event sat in the corner with a sad long face. He was upset that his parents couldn't be with him. A young volunteer, Niema Riley, gave him some bubbles and he began to smile, talk and even laugh. Kelly Mangold, Senior Vice President, Guideposts, spoke with several parents and shared information about the items in the kit. Lindsey and Britney had such a great time that when they were asked if they were ready to go back to their rooms, they both said no; instead they helped take down decorations and escorted guests to the elevator.

If only for a day children and families who participated in the event were able to put aside their fears and worries of being sick or hurt. "When you see children that are suffering from diseases such as cancer having a good time, it makes you feel good about making a difference," said Jenny Justice, Child Life Specialist, Holtz Children's Hospital. The event underscored the power of human compassion and empathy that binds us together and in doing so created lasting memories in the hearts and minds of both the children and the staff.

Guideposts for Kids Comfort Kits were designed to alleviate a young child's fear of being in a hospital. 40,000 kits have been distributed to children in over 100 hospitals across the nation.