

MEDIA RELEASE

**DUST OFF YOUR BIKES AND GET READY TO PEDAL!
RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES NORTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES
HOSTS RIDE FOR SICK KIDS FUNDRAISER**

This September, Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Northern New South Wales will launch its 17th annual Ride for Sick Kids (RFSK) event, to raise vital funds for seriously ill and injured children and their families.

RMHC Northern NSW is calling on locals to dust off their bikes and sign up to be a part of this year's virtual Ride for Sick Kids, cycling in the comfort of their own home or local bike riding track, throughout the month of September.

River and his dad, Dave, spent over 270 nights at the Ronald McDonald House after tumours were discovered in the little 7 year old's body.

"Without the Ronald McDonald House we would have had to sell our family home to afford accommodation. It's been a god send, it really has – I don't know what I would have done without the place," said Dave.

Like many families who travel from regional areas to seek urgent medical treatment for their children, River and Dave now have a home away from home to return to when treatment continues, thanks to RMHC and the vital funds that are raised by the community to support its services.

Ross Bingham, CEO for RMHC Northern NSW, said, "Following another tough year due to the ongoing pandemic, we're thrilled to be bringing back one of our biggest and best fundraisers for 2021, during the charity's 30th anniversary year.

"Thanks to the ongoing support of the community over the past 30 years, we've provided much needed support to over 81,000 families from across Northern NSW.

"We're now calling on our wonderful communities to help us continue supporting families in need, by signing up for our virtual ride."

This year's Ride for Sick Kids fundraiser aims to raise \$200,000, or 1,418 nights of accommodation, so families can be near their seriously ill child in hospital.

For more information or to sign up to Ride for Sick Kids Northern NSW 2021, please visit www.rideforsickkids.org.au.

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For further information and/or to request interview opportunities, please contact Mango Communications:
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About RMHC Northern NSW:

All proceeds from the ride will be donated to the Northern NSW chapter which includes two Ronald McDonald Houses in Newcastle and Tamworth, Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in John Hunter Children's Hospital (Newcastle) and Gosford Hospital (Central Coast), as well the Ronald McDonald Family Retreat in Forster. These programs provide much-needed respite for parents caring for a seriously ill child and a friendly place where families can spend quality time together. The Ronald McDonald Learning program provides educational support for youngsters who miss out on schooling because of treatment.

About Ronald McDonald House Charities:

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) is an independent charity that helps 60,000 seriously ill children and their families each year.

The cornerstone program of RMHC, the Ronald McDonald House, provides a 'home away from home' for families of seriously ill and injured children being treated at nearby hospitals. The Houses keep families close by giving parents and siblings the opportunity to stay together to support their sick loved ones. RMHC currently has 18 Houses throughout Australia accommodating more than 10,000 families annually.

Other programs include the Ronald McDonald Family Room Program which provides a relaxing haven within hospitals giving families a break from the stress of many hours spent by their child's bedside, and The Ronald McDonald Learning Program which currently helps over 1,100 children on any given week catch up on missed schooling following a serious illness.

Additionally, The Ronald McDonald Family Retreat Program provides families with seriously ill children a week's free accommodation at one of five family retreats across Australia, enabling them to reconnect and enjoy a holiday when they most need it and can least afford it.

More information on RMHC, please visit rmhc.org.au.