



Celebrities 'Take Orders' on McHappy Day to Raise \$2.4M for Australia's Seriously ill Children

Rachael Finch, Kylie Gillies and Michael Slater Serve Up Smiles to McDonald's Customers

McHappy Day, one of Australia's longest running charity days raised over \$2.4million for Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) on Saturday 14 November. More than 800 celebrities and local VIPs donned aprons and took drive-thru orders at close to 800 McDonald's restaurants across Australia, including *Celebrity Masterchef* contestant Rachael Finch, *The Morning Show* host Kylie Gillies and *Home and Away* cast members who adopted a store on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

McHappy Day is the largest annual fundraising event for Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC), an independent charity that creates, finds and supports programs across Australia that help seriously ill children and their families.

"We are extremely thankful for the amazing turnout and community support this year," said Malcolm Coutts, CEO, Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC). "Because McDonald's Australia pays all administration and management costs for RMHC, every dollar donated goes directly to programs benefiting seriously ill children and their families. This year the Ronald McDonald Houses provided a home away from home for over 5,000 families. McHappy Day donations will enable us to help even more families in 2010."

Celebrities who worked in-restaurant on the day also included former Australian cricketer Michael Slater, *Bondi Vet* Dr Chris Brown, *Bondi Rescue* surf lifesavers, *Getaway* presenter Jason Dundas, Collingwood AFL player Tarkyn Lockyer, former Olympic swimmer Elka Graham, former Australian cricketer Justin Langer and even the cast of the hit musical *Wicked*.

"As a former McDonald's employee, it was great fun to be in the restaurant on McHappy Day! Although it felt strange to be autographing takeaway orders at the drive-thru – I've never been asked to do that before!," said Rachael Finch, McHappy Day Ambassador and *Celebrity Masterchef* contestant.

On McHappy Day, \$1 from every Big Mac, 10 cents from every Happy Meal, \$2 from every McCafé Byron Bay Cookie House box and profits from every \$3 Crazy Straw went directly to RMHC. Further contributions were made by the community via donation buckets in the restaurants and online donations www.mchappyday.com.au.

In the past 18 years, money raised on McHappy Day has gone towards RMHC programs such as building and maintaining 13 Ronald McDonald Houses across the country (which provide a home-away-from-home for the families of seriously ill children being treated at nearby hospitals); the establishment of the Ronald McDonald Learning Program which provides free tuition for children who have missed lengthy periods of schooling due to serious illness; the RMHC Cord Blood Bank program, which provides life-saving cord blood used mainly to treat childhood cancers; and the establishment of five Ronald McDonald Family Retreats.

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Fast Facts – McHappy Day and Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC):

In Australia:

- Ronald McDonald Houses are a home away from home and give families the opportunity to stay together to support their sick child.
- Today there are 13 Ronald McDonald Houses across Australia providing affordable accommodation for families with seriously ill children being treated in nearby major women's and children's hospitals in each state.
- Since 1981, Ronald McDonald Houses have provided over 62,300 families with more than 1.7 million bed nights.
- This year the Ronald McDonald Houses will provide a home away from home for over 5,000 families.