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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Spirit of Children Brings Funds and Fun to Levine Children's Hospital**

100% of local donations to support Child Life department

CHARLOTTE, NC, Oct. 15, 2019 — Volunteers from local Spirit Halloween stores, the largest Halloween retailer in North America, hosted a Halloween party today for pediatric patients and their families at Levine Children's Hospital, complete with costumes, games, music and crafts.

Through the *Spirit of Children* program, Spirit Halloween gives children the opportunity to enjoy the fun of Halloween celebrations, despite being in the hospital.

We're honored that this program continues to provide magic for children in hospitals through fun and play," said Steven Silverstein, President and CEO of Spirit Halloween. "Our mission is to support the Child Life departments in partner hospitals with funding raised mostly from the generosity of our customers."

To-date, the *Spirit of Children* program has raised more than \$297,639 for Levine Children's Hospital's Child Life program, which helps create a sense of normalcy for young patients and their families by providing all non-medical treatment and healing through play. Recently, their funds have assisted in hiring additional staff, extending Child Life hours of operation, purchasing special items used for distraction during procedures, and creating dedicated playrooms, teen lounges and separate family spaces for long hospital visits.

"*Spirit of Children* recognizes that healing a child's body, mind and spirit takes more than medicine," said Heather Silva, Director of Child Life at Levine Children's. "We are grateful for Spirit of Children's ongoing partnership, which helps provide the resources needed most by our Child Life team."

Funds for Spirit of Children are raised through donations from customers at Spirit Halloween stores and SpiritHalloween.com, in addition to contributions from vendors and business partners. The stores' new #MoreCowbell initiative encourages customers to take photos of themselves ringing a purple cowbell each time they make an in-store donation and then post on social media.

Since its inception in 2007, Spirit of Children has raised more than \$55 million for Child Life Departments across North America. This year, the program aims to raise a record \$10 million more to support young patients and their families.

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