



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Amigos For Kids and Ford Motor Company Fund Spread Christmas Cheer with 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Toy Drive**

***Granted over 2,500 holiday wishes of South Florida children***

**MIAMI, FL-** [Amigos For Kids](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect, and Ford Motor Company Fund joined forces, once again, to share in the spirit of giving with the Amigos For Kids 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Toy Drive.

As the organization's first major event in 1992, Amigos For Kids annual Holiday Toy Drive has grown into a gift-giving program that fulfills thousands of holiday wishes for underprivileged children. For 25 years, the effort has brought the community together to create awareness about child abuse and neglect, and to spread Holiday cheer by collecting and distributing toys for needy children.

"Amigos For Kids mission of child abuse prevention is one we are committed to every day of the year, but the Holiday Toy Drive always holds a special place in our hearts," **said Rosa Maria Plasencia, President and CEO of Amigos For Kids.** "The toy drive was the organization's first major event in 1992, and it has grown exponentially from serving 55 children to thousands of heartfelt wishes being granted every year. We thank the South Florida community for supporting our organization's efforts all year long. We thank all of our donors, corporate collaborators, volunteers, and especially Ford Motor Company Fund for their many years of support as presenting sponsor helping us spread Christmas cheer to the underprivileged in our community, but most of all for joining their voices to our cause."

On Sunday, December 11, the toy drive kicked off from El Dorado Furniture for a daylong caravan featuring Santa Claus, local celebrities, community leaders and volunteers making stops in Florida City and Little Havana. This year, Santa's celebrity helpers included: Maria Celeste Arraras, Maritza Bustamante, Ana Maria Canseco, Elizabeth Gutierrez, Rosita Hurtado, Abdiel Larralde, Carlos Mena, Carlos Navarro, Priscila Perales, Carlos Ponce, Pamela Silva Conde, Sonya Smith and Felipe Viel to name a few. These celebrities, along with over 200 Amigos volunteers, participated as the organization granted Christmas wishes such as a visit to a police station, a heartfelt momentum of a loved one who has passed, tickets to sporting events, Christmas trees and much, much more.

After distributing toys to over 300 children in Florida, the caravan continued to Jose Martí Park where 250 more kids received Christmas gifts. Toy distribution then continued in Broward on December 12, and is set to carry on until December 23 to ensure all children receive their

specific gifts and special requests. This year, kids identified to receive gifts are from organizations including: Amigos Strengthens Families and Communities Program, Branches of Love, Coordinated Victim Assistance Center, Our Kids, The Lodge in Miami-Dade and Westwood Elementary in Broward.

The Annual Holiday Toy Drive serves as a component of Ford Motor Company Fund's community relations program, "Operation Better World." Ford's nine-year partnership with Amigos For Kids highlights its commitment to enhance educational opportunities, automotive safety, human services, and quality of life to the South Florida area.

"Ford Motor Company Fund has been supporting the Amigos For Kids Annual Holiday Toy Drive for nine years now. It has been a great opportunity to help the community and grant the Christmas wishes of thousands of South Florida children. We look forward to our continued partnership and sharing in the spirit of giving to those that need it most," said Joe Avila, Manager of Community Relations, Ford Motor Company Fund. Ford Motor Company Fund is the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company.

Amigos For Kids would like to thank the following sponsors for another successful Holiday Toy Drive: Ford Motor Company Fund, Gus Machado Ford of Kendall and Hialeah, Metro Ford, Doral Lincoln, Academica Charter Schools, CASACUBA, Continental National Bank, El Dorado Furniture, FedEx, Gloria Estefan Foundation, La Carreta, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc. at The Falls, Y-100, Univision23, República and Versailles Restaurants.

For photos, please click on the following link: [Amigos For Kids 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Toy Drive](#).

**ABOUT AMIGOS FOR KIDS-** [Amigos For Kids](#) is a 501(C) 3 nonprofit corporation founded in 1991 to respond to the diverse needs of South Florida's abused, abandoned, neglected, and less-fortunate children and their families, through education, abuse prevention, and community involvement. To fulfill its mission, Amigos relies on the support of dedicated volunteers and donors throughout the community. Throughout the year, the organization creates awareness of its cause through public service campaigns, fundraising events, and community efforts such as the Amigos For Kids' There's NO Excuse for Child Abuse!® Campaign. @amigosforkids

**ABOUT FORD MOTOR COMPANY FUND AND COMMUNITY SERVICES-** Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services works with community partners to advance driving safety, education and community life. Ford Motor Company Fund has operated for more than 60 years with ongoing funding from Ford Motor Company. Ford Driving Skills for Life teaches new drivers through a variety of hands-on and interactive methods. Innovation in education is encouraged through programs that enhance high school learning and provide college scholarships and university grants. Through Ford Volunteer Corps, more than 25,000 Ford employees and retirees each year work on projects that better their communities in 30 countries. For more information, visit <http://community.ford.com>.

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