

Silver Dollar City Foundation's *Care For Kids* Adds Matching Funds for Sponsorship Programs

Business, Church Sponsors Partner with Schools to Meet Kids' Needs

(Branson, Mo 12/18/08) Families and kids struggling to make ends meet in a tough economy may find more help for physical needs, as the Silver Dollar City Foundation's *Care For Kids* program encourages school sponsorship programs and adds funds to match. In addition to the \$91,000 *Care For Kids* already gave to the 14 area school districts this year alone for physical needs, *Care For Kids* will donate up to \$56,000 more this school year to match private sponsorship efforts, all benefitting kids in need, said Silver Dollar City Foundation President John Baltes.

The schools start by setting up programs that meet physical needs they have identified, such as a "sports shoe" program to provide athletic shoes for kids who can't afford them, a "clothes closet" for emergency clothing supplies, or a "backpack" program for kids who don't get enough food to eat at home over the weekends. Backpack programs provide backpacks filled with food to kids to take home over the weekend and return to be refilled the next week. The school then enlists a church, business or group to sponsor the program, making a commitment of at least \$1,000 per year for a minimum of two years. *Care For Kids* will match \$1,000 per year for up to four sponsors, providing as much as \$4,000 in additional funds per year to the school.

"Since *Care For Kids* started meeting physical needs two years ago, we found that these funds can have a tremendous impact on the lives of kids in our area," Baltes said. "Now we're expanding the reach with others in the community who want to help too."

Programs are already in place at some of the schools, with businesses, churches, volunteers, school staff and administrators all working together to identify specific needs that will help kids during economic difficulties, Baltes said. Now community sponsors are needed to make a commitment to help with those programs, or to help get one started.

For more information on the sponsorship programs or to sign up, contact the Silver Dollar City Foundation at 417-336-7077. More information about the Foundation and the *Care For Kids* program is at www.silverdollarcityfoundation.com.