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Kate Brinkerhoff / The Fresh Air Fund / (900) 367-0003 ext. 8890

For Immediate Release

YOU CAN BECOME A FRESH AIR FUND HOST!

It doesn't take much to be a host family for The Fresh Air Fund - just a little room in your heart and your home – but the experience creates friendships and memories that last a lifetime! Since 1877, New York City children growing up in low-income neighborhoods have been able to experience simple summer pleasures in rural and suburban communities in 13 Northeastern states and Canada through The Fresh Air Fund's Friendly Town program. "You see different colours and places. I went to a farm...it was so much fun!" remarks seven-year-old Sidney from Queens.

Last year, close to 5,000 New York City children experienced the thrill of summer pastimes like roasting marshmallows over a campfire and flying kites in backyards and open fields. **The Fresh Air Fund is seeking more host families in the Niagara region to open their home to a New York City child for up to two weeks this summer.**

Fresh Air host families can choose the gender and approximate age of their visitor. First-time Fresh Air children are between the ages of six and twelve. Many families find their hosting experiences so rewarding that 65 percent of all children are re-invited to stay with the same host families year after year. In 2011, The Fund will be celebrating its 135th summer of serving children!

For more information on how you can share the simple joys of summer with a city child, please contact Laura-Ann Morris at 905-835-2896 or Laura_ann_morris@hotmail.com or Eileen Lucas at elucas@cogeco.ca. You can also call 800-367-0003 or visit The Fresh Air Fund's website at www.freshair.org.

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CREATE SUMMER MEMORIES: HOST A FRESH AIR CHILD!

Summer vacation, that special time of year for all children, is not far away, and you still have the chance to make it memorable for a child from New York City! Thanks to many families in the Niagara region and throughout 13 Northeastern states, more than 1.7 million New York City children from low-income neighbourhoods have experienced free summer vacations in suburban and small town communities through The Fresh Air Fund. The Fresh Air Fund is seeking more families in the Niagara region to give inner-city children a two-week vacation this summer. By volunteering as a host family for The Fund's Friendly Town program, you can help give a child a break from the heat and noise of the crowded city streets.

"I got to swim in a lake," exclaims Marquita, an 11-year-old girl from Brooklyn. "I felt the fish nibbling at my toes!" Last summer, 150 Fresh Air children visited volunteer hosts in the Niagara region.

This year, The Fund needs more host families to carry on its 135th summer tradition of sharing the joys of suburban and small town life, like picking fresh flowers, casting a fishing pole for the first time or hearing the crickets chirp. The friendships that develop between hosts and their Fresh Air visitors often last a lifetime.

There are no financial requirements for hosting a Fresh Air child. First-time visitors are six to 12 years old, and reinvited youngsters may participate in the Friendly Town program through age 18.

For more information on how you can share the simple joys of summer with a city child, please contact Laura-Ann Morris at 905-835-2896 or Laura_ann_morris@hotmail.com or Eileen Lucas at elucas@cogeco.ca. You can also call 800-367-0003 or visit The Fresh Air Fund's website at www.freshair.org.

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