



**Make-A-Wish Foundation[®]
of Mississippi**
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CHAPTER FACT SHEET

How did the Make-A-Wish Foundation[®] begin?

In 1980, a 7-year-old Phoenix, Arizona boy with leukemia inspired the founding of Make-A-Wish. He wanted to be a police officer. A group of officers from the Arizona Department of Public Safety granted his wish by giving him a custom-made uniform, helmet, badge and even a helicopter ride! The young boy's delight in having his wish granted inspired the group to form the organization that would grant the special wishes of other children.

What is the Foundation's mission statement?

The Foundation's mission is to grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength, and joy.

How is the organization structured?

The Make-A-Wish Foundation[®] of America was founded to charter local chapters throughout the United States and its territories. Today, there are 67 chapters within the states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. Make-A-Wish Foundation[®] International was formed in 1988. For the International affiliate and locations, please call the International office at 602-279-9474.

When did your chapter start?

The Make-A-Wish Foundation[®] of Mississippi was founded in 1984 in memory of a little girl who lived in Gulfport. After she was diagnosed with a terminal illness, a group of caring individuals raised funds to send her, along with her mother and grandmother, to Disney World. The family and others, moved by the generosity of those who contributed their time and money, felt compelled to reach out to other families facing similar circumstances. Through their efforts, the Make-A-Wish

Foundation[®] of Mississippi became the thirty-sixth chapter chartered by the Make-A-Wish Foundation[®] of America. In 1989, the chapter headquarters was moved from the Gulf Coast to Jackson in order to better serve the entire state. However, the need was still great in the southern part of the state. So, in 2001 the South Mississippi field office was established to better serve the children of the pine belt and coastal areas.

Where should I call to request a wish?

You can contact the Make-A-Wish Foundation[®] of Mississippi headquarters at 800-819-4072 or 601-366-9474. The South Mississippi Field Office can be reached at 228-392-7300.

Who makes a wish request?

Requests may be made by parents, legal guardians, the child, social workers, child life specialists, physicians, nurses or other medical professionals involved in the care of the child. If the initial call is made by someone other than those specified, we request that the child's family call directly on his/her behalf. To refer a child, please visit www.wish.org/refer.

How are wishes granted?

Volunteers from the local area form wish teams that coordinate the wish. During the initial telephone contact, the Make-A-Wish[®] representative explains the purpose of the organization and the child's medical eligibility. A wish team is then assigned to visit with the child and family to determine the wish. Upon approval by the Chapter's Board of Directors, the wish team goes to work creating the magic!

Are there any restrictions on a wish?

Usually the wish is limited only by the child's imagination. The Chapter does, however, have established policies and guidelines to assist in wish granting. These are necessary

to assure all children that qualify have a positive experience without the threat of danger. The policies also ensure the integrity of the Foundation.

Who is eligible for a wish?

Any child between the ages of 2 1/2 and 18 years who has been determined by a physician to have a life-threatening illness and who has not been granted a wish previously. Make-A-Wish® grants wishes to all eligible children regardless of race, religion or socio-economic status.

Does the family have to pay for the wish?

No! All wish expenses are fully covered, including any travel and spending money. Our objective is to provide the child and family with memories of joy that are not clouded with the worries of wish expenses.

How much does granting a wish cost?

The local average cost for granting a wish is \$5,000. However, wish costs vary and may be more or less expensive than this average.

What is the most requested wish?

Walt Disney World® Resort was the most requested wish for last year. However, computers were a very close second. Nationally, Disney theme park wishes make up almost half of the requests.

Most wish requests fall into four major categories: *"I wish to go..."*, *"I wish to be..."*, *"I wish to meet..."*, or *"I wish to have..."*

How many wishes have been granted?

On the average the Mississippi Chapter grants between 75 and 100 wishes per year.

How can I sponsor a wish?

Our chapter has an Adopt-A-Wish® program. Please call 1-800-819-4072 or 601-366-9474 for more information. Also, visit www.wishms.org for more details.

Do you need my help?

Yes! Volunteers are the foundation of our organization and the majority of our work is done by these dedicated individuals.

What would I do as a volunteer?

Volunteers assist us primarily in wish granting and fundraising. We also utilize volunteers for various other services such as clerical assistance.

What are your sources of funding?

We rely on the generous contributions of individuals, schools, civic organizations, and businesses! Make-A-Wish® does not solicit contributions by phone or door-to-door. We also host special events state-wide to raise money. Make-A-Wish® is not a member of the United Way.

Is my contribution tax-deductible?

Yes both the Make-A-Wish Foundation® of America and the Mississippi Chapter are 501(C) (3) tax-exempt organizations. As such, all contributions are deductible for income tax purposes. Our financial statements are audited locally and nationally by Grant Thornton LLP and are available upon request.

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to learn more!*

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of a **Wish**®

www.wishms.org