FACT SHEET

The Facts*

- Congenital heart defects (CHDs) are the most common birth defects in the United States, affecting approximately 1 in every 110 (about 40,000) babies each year.

- There are two to four million Americans living with congenital heart defects. Because there is no U.S. system to track congenital heart defects beyond early childhood, more precise estimates are not available.

- For many forms of CHD, surgery is not a cure. Congenital heart disease is a lifelong condition requiring specialized care, and often additional surgeries and medications are needed later in life.

- Most causes of congenital heart defects are unknown.

- About 25% of children born with CHD need heart surgery or other interventions to survive.

About Mended Little Hearts

- Mended Little Hearts (MLH) started in 2004 with 2 groups; it currently has 86 community support groups in 31 states and Washington DC. MLH is an independent program of The Mended Hearts, Inc., that has been providing hope and support to heart patients and their families since 1951.

- Mended Little Hearts’ mission is to empower families affected by congenital heart disease. Our vision is that all families affected by congenital heart disease are able to share experiences and resources as members of a nationwide peer-to-peer support network.

- Partnering with hospitals and other national CHD organizations, Mended Little Hearts connects families in crisis with other parents who have survived the shock of learning a child has a heart defect. Mended Little Hearts helps others through ongoing peer-to-peer support, educational programs, its Bravery Bag Program, accredited hospital visiting programs, creating awareness about CHD throughout the nation and advocating on issues that impact the lives of those with congenital heart disease.

- Mended Little Hearts understands that care for children with CHD doesn’t happen only in the hospital or in the doctor’s office, and it also understands that CHD is a lifelong chronic condition. Thus, MLH provides tools, tips and information to help families all throughout the life of the child both during their hospital stay and once the return home. MLH also has programs for families who have lost children to CHD understanding that they, too, need support from others who understand them.

Call to Action

If you are interested in learning more about Mended Little Hearts, receiving information on how to start a Mended Little Hearts program at your hospital, or learning about volunteer opportunities with Mended Little Hearts, please contact 1-888-HEART99 (1-888-432-7899) or info@mendedlittlehearts.org.