

News Release



**American
Red Cross**

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givebloodgivelife.org

7th Annual Holiday Blood Drive Honors Five-Year-Old Blood Recipient

Nebraska child regularly receives transfusions during treatment for leukemia

OMAHA, Neb. (Dec. 14, 2009) – While most children are pondering *what* presents Santa will leave under their tree this year, Danielle Matrisciano is wondering *where* Santa will deliver her presents – at home or at the hospital.

This year, the Holiday Blood Drive honors Danielle Matrisciano. The spunky five-year-old was diagnosed this past summer with Acute Myeloid Leukemia and has spent the majority of the last five months at Children's Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha. Throughout her treatment, she has received numerous blood and platelet transfusions. Thanks to dedicated blood donors, the kindergartner from the Grand Island area is able to continue treatments and is in remission.

Like Danielle, recipients of blood products are not able to take a holiday from needing lifesaving blood. They are in constant need of a healthy supply. This December, the American Red Cross, Children's Hospital & Medical Center and KETV are asking the community to make the time to give blood this holiday season and give hope to patients in need.

While the need for blood is ongoing, the supply isn't – especially around the holidays due to travel plans and inclement weather in some parts of the country. Give someone hope this holiday season; give blood at the 7th Annual Holiday Blood Drive on Tuesday, December 29, or at one of the many other blood drives held throughout the metro each day.

HOLIDAY BLOOD DRIVE:

Tuesday, December 29, 2009, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Millard North High School, Mustang Center

144th & Pacific Streets, Omaha

Free child care is available and the event will feature family friendly activities including face painting and storytelling.

Tuesday, December 29, 2009, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

American Red Cross Loess Hills Blood Donation Center

16th St & Avenue G, Council Bluffs

Both venues will feature great food catered by Hy-Vee and dessert from Village Inn. All presenting donors will receive a free T-shirt and can enter for a chance to win great raffle prizes, including a Splash and Stay package from CoCo Key Water Resort and gift cards to local dining and entertainment venues.

Eligible donors are encouraged to **call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit givebloodgivelife.org to schedule an appointment to donate blood on December 29.**

The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™

How to Donate Blood

Simply call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit givebloodgivelife.org to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors younger than 19 years also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

About the American Red Cross

Governed by volunteers and supported by giving individuals and communities, the American Red Cross is the single largest supplier of blood products to hospitals throughout the United States. While local hospital needs are always met first, the Red Cross also helps ensure no patient goes without blood no matter where or when they need it. In addition to providing nearly half of the nation's blood supply, the Red Cross provides relief to victims of disaster, trains millions in lifesaving skills, serves as a communication link between U.S. military members and their families, and assists victims of international disasters or conflicts.

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