

MIGHTY STRIDES START WITH YOU



presented to
AUXILIARY TO BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Vancouver, with a dense urban area in the foreground and a range of mountains in the background under a hazy sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL FOUNDATION
ACKNOWLEDGES WITH GRATITUDE
THAT IT IS SITUATED ON THE UNCEDED
TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE
x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (MUSQUEAM),
Skwxwú7mesh (SQUAMISH), &
səlilwətał (TSLEIL-WAUTUTH) NATIONS
WHO HAVE NURTURED & CARED FOR
THE LANDS & WATERS AROUND US
FOR ALL TIME.**

A MIGHTY THANK YOU

“THE AUXILIARY TOUCHES THE LIVES AND HEARTS OF SO MANY KIDS AND YOUTH AT BC CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL EVERY SINGLE DAY. FROM SUPPORTING PROGRAMS THAT GIVE KIDS THE BIGGEST BELLY LAUGHS WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST, TO ENSURING YOUTH AND FAMILIES ARE NOT ALONE, I HOPE YOU KNOW HOW DEEPLY YOU ARE VALUED AND HOW FAR YOUR GENEROSITY GOES TO IMPROVING LIVES. FROM EVERYONE WHO BENEFITS FROM YOUR KINDNESS AND COMMITMENT, THANK YOU.”

– MALCOLM BERRY, PRESIDENT & CEO, BC CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL FOUNDATION



"Our time together allowed her to safely express those feelings."

ART THERAPY

Thanks to you, the Multi-Organ Transplant (MOT) care team has been able to launch its first art therapy program, and welcome Nicola Elischer as their dedicated art therapist.

The MOT program at BC Children's cares for 120-140 children per year, leading up to and after transplantation. These kids have often already lived through a traumatic and frightening time with chronic disease—with long hospital stays and multiple tests and procedures. They can feel powerless and isolated, and may also be hesitant to speak to another health care team member. "Art therapy offers a new path for kids and families," Nicola explained. "It is an active, trauma-informed approach that values one's unique way of expressing themselves, and their innate ability to heal."

Since joining the MOT team in September 2024, Nicola has seen more than 40 children and youth in clinic sessions, received more than 20 referrals, and organized multiple group sessions for different age groups and families. "It has been so impressive to see how thoughtfully Nicola has approached beginning the program," said Dr. Tom Blydt-Hansen, Medical Director, Multi-Organ Transplant Program. "From understanding the importance of both virtual and in-person sessions, to introducing kids and families to the value of art therapy as a form of care, Nicola has made an enormous impact, and I am immensely grateful to donors, including the Auxiliary, for helping to make this possible."



ART CREATED BY KIDS IN ART THERAPY SESSIONS

ART THERAPY STORIES FROM NICOLA

ART THERAPIST, MOT PROGRAM AT
BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



Creating a Safe Space

I recently spent time with a 5-year-old boy who was an inpatient at BC Children's over the holidays. I brought markers, crayons, clay animal figurines, and small cardboard boxes for him to choose from. I asked him how we might build a safe space for the animal figurines, to explore feeling safe in a place like the hospital. The boy decided to make the box into a house for all the animals, using clay and tape to secure it as much as he could. He then surprised me by explaining how there would now be a series of natural disasters. He created earthquakes by throwing the house-box on the ground, added lightning with string, and spun the house in a whirlwind. He was amazed that the house and the animals stayed safe in the box he had made. It was a powerful way for him to work through his feelings, expressing his fears and frustrations by creating natural disasters, but also seeing how making a safe space is possible.

Creating Connection

An online meeting with a 17-year-old girl demonstrated how effective virtual art therapy sessions can be. I was told that she felt intense anxiety coming to the clinic, so it was wonderful to see her at home in her own environment, relaxed and smiling. We had an art therapy session, with her cat on her lap and her stuffy beside her. I asked her to make a self-portrait, which is a good way to begin a conversation. Her portrait was of her as an animal, standing alongside her cat and stuffy. As she drew, she began to explain how her stuffy was with her when she was five and first admitted to hospital after experiencing kidney failure. Her stuffy was especially important to her now, because she was about to transition into adult care. This can be an incredibly overwhelming time, and our session together allowed her to safely express those feelings and connect with the 5-year-old inside her.

An organ transplant can be a long and traumatic medical journey for a child, but thanks to your generosity, Nicola and the MOT team are helping ensure that every child receiving care, and their families, have opportunities to address trauma, anxiety, and difficulty coping, and to enhance their resilience and overall quality of life. Thank you.

"He was a natural on the drums."

MUSIC THERAPY

At BC Children's, the healing power of music and the talent and training of a music therapist can be brought right to a child's bedside, inviting personal expression, creativity, and a way to process difficult emotions. Thank you for bringing the gift of music to kids across the hospital.

Six music therapists and a music therapy intern at BC Children's offer sessions to kids and families, ranging from improvisation and instrument playing to song writing and composition. Each year, music therapists provide care in approximately **4,600 patient visits** across the hospital.

Music therapy touched the life of 16-year-old Channing during his time at BC Children's, where he showed his family how much music helps him with self expression. Channing's journey in hospital was one of extended stays in different units, including oncology. Thankfully, music therapists were on-hand to give Channing consistent understanding and support. "Music therapy influenced his healing in such a positive way," Brenda, Channing's mom, said. "We started out on the oncology unit with one of the music therapists Erin, and we were blessed for Channing to continue with Carol in the music room."

"Once Channing was able to leave his room, it was a big goal for him to come to the music room and try out the drum kit for the first time," said Carol Wiedemann, music therapist. "He was a natural on the drums, singing and playing along to his favourite songs." Through these songs he sang and the films he quoted, Channing was able to share his feelings with Carol and his family, finding connection, humour, and a drum load of joy.



CHANNING, AGED 16, PLAYS THE DRUMS WITH MUSIC THERAPIST CAROL WIEDEMANN



"Families know this is a place just for them."

THE FAMILY LIBRARY

Your long-term support of the Family Library has created a home away from home for kids and families at BC Children's, and a source of trusted resources accessible to families living throughout the province. Your most recent generosity enabled a refurbishment that has made the library available and welcome to all.

"We wanted to make the library as accessible as possible," Pamela Harrison, health literacy information specialist said. "We now have moveable shelves, different types of seating, and tables with adjustable heights, all to help kids and families make the library their own." Walking into the Family Library, the impact of the refurbishment is immediate. The room is bright, colourful, open, and full of books, just like stepping into a children's local library.

While we were speaking with Pamela, a family walked into the library, led by their little boy. They said a quick hello, before finding a comfy chair together. The boy went to the shelves and picked up an enormous book on dinosaurs, carrying it over to the sofa where they began to read. "This is what we wanted to happen," Pamela said. "Before the refurbishment, families would walk in nervously, uncertain and asking if they were allowed in here. This was because of the narrow space when you first entered. Now, the library speaks for itself. Its openness lets families know that this is a place just for them."

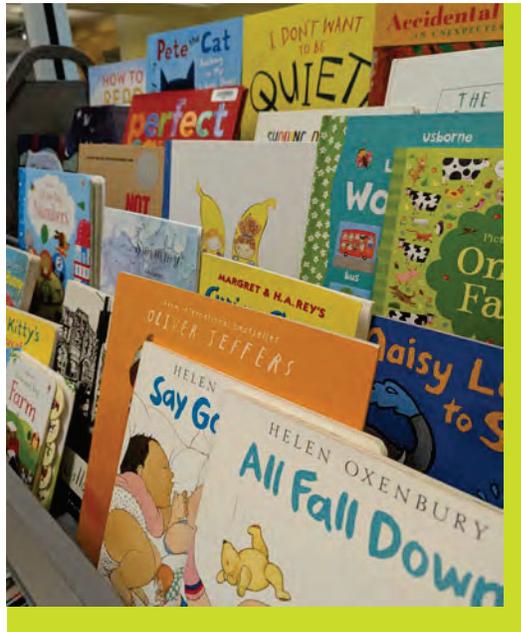


PAMELA HARRISON WITH SELECTIONS FROM THE FAMILY LIBRARY





THE FAMILY LIBRARY
AT BC CHILDREN'S



The refurbishment is also creating new opportunities for kids at the library. “We are now using the space to run Multi-Organ Transplant art therapy sessions with Nicola Elischer,” Pamela said. “The new furniture, supported by the generosity of the Auxiliary, meant that we could shorten the tables to a child’s level so they felt engaged and welcome. We also display the books we have on transplants, which families find incredibly valuable. The library is now a place for events like these, able to support families and provide community in a way that was never possible before.”

When we asked Pamela what she would like to tell the Auxiliary, she was happy to share. “The Family Library is a rare place where families can take time away from the buzz of units and clinics, and make a place for themselves. The trusted information and comfort we can offer is why the Auxiliary’s support of the library has been so important over these years. Thank you.”

"We can greatly improve a child's quality of life."

ORTHOPEDIC SURGICAL SETS AND INPATIENT COMFORT AND CARE

Thank you for helping hundreds of children receive the gift of mobility and freedom by supporting critical orthopedic equipment, and caring about the well-being of kids and families staying as inpatients.

The Orthopedics Clinic is the busiest at BC Children's, diagnosing and treating children during more than 18,500 visits every year. Dedicated surgeons perform **more than 1,200 procedures** annually for kids who may be affected by conditions, including limb differences, and hip dysplasia, or kids who have suffered a serious injury. Orthopedic surgical sets are essential tools in many procedures, aiding medical teams in treating **more than 100 kids and youth each year**, many of whom receive multiple surgeries.

"By correcting a misalignment, relieving pain and improving mobility, we can greatly improve a child's quality of life," said Dr. Anthony Cooper, head of the department of pediatric orthopedics. "I am deeply grateful and touched by your gift to ensure we have what we need to do this. On behalf of my department and the kids we treat, thank you."

Many treatment journeys, including orthopedic surgeries, may require a child to stay in hospital for long periods. During these weeks and months, where a child's family may be dealing with challenges they might have never faced

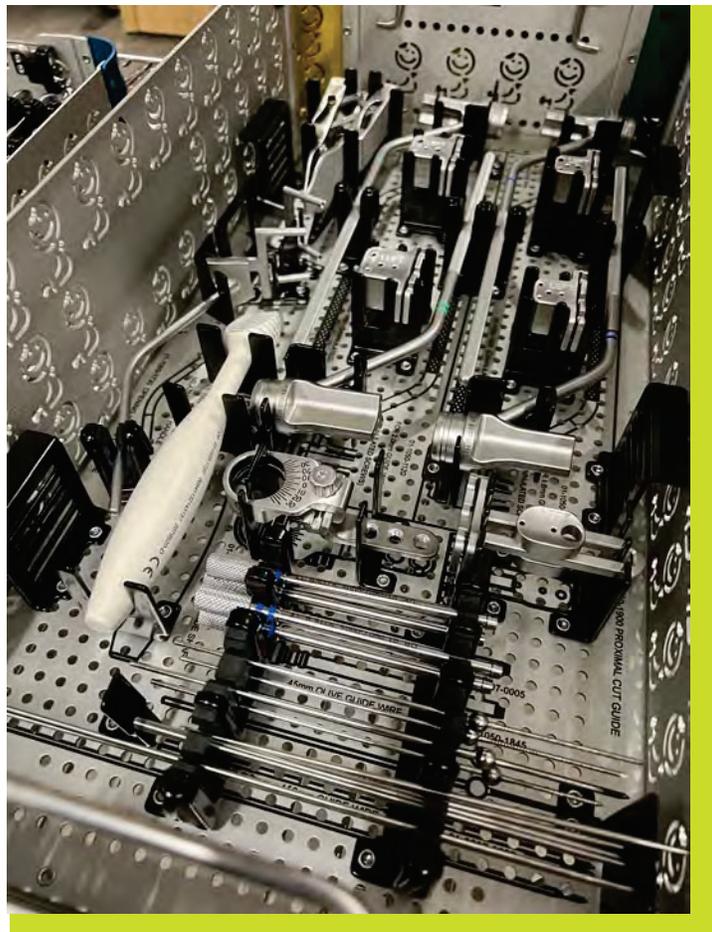
before, simple acts of kindness can go a long way. Thank you for giving care teams the ability to offer families precious moments of comfort and self-care.

"The Auxiliary has been incredibly valuable in supporting families who need assistance finding a good meal while they are at the hospital," Mark Ramsey, program manager for medical inpatients said. "For example, we often care for children from families who have just arrived in Canada. They often do not have the financial means to purchase meals while at the hospital. It may seem like a small thing, but the gratitude shown by these families is very heartwarming and I am so thankful that we are able to support them in this way."

Thank you for giving families the helping hand they may need to better care for themselves and their children.



PATIENT BEING EXAMINED BY DR. ANTHONY COOPER, HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRIC ORTHOPEDICS, BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



ORTHOPEDIC SETS THE AUXILIARY HAVE SUPPORTED

"The biggest belly laugh he's had in months."

THERAPEUTIC CLOWNING

BC Children's wouldn't be the same without the clowning around of McFluff, Fizzie, and Cosmo. With pockets full of magic tricks and ukuleles and bubble wands in hand, these therapeutic clowns bring light-hearted kindness and silliness where it's needed most.

Last year, the MIRTH (medically incorporated remedies that tickle the heart) unit met more kids than ever before. With more than **3,450 visits**, the therapeutic clown team has made an extraordinary difference.

"The substantial increase in patient visit numbers was due in part to a generous one-time budget bump provided by the Auxiliary. "Thank you," said Sand Northrup (AKA Fizzie). "That support allowed us to schedule additional clown days in 2024. We gratefully acknowledge and fully appreciate the generosity of the Auxiliary to our program. We are here because of you."

**"THAT IS THE BIGGEST BELLY
LAUGH HE'S HAD IN MONTHS"**
- MOM OF DENZIL

**"THANK YOU FOR MAKING MY
SISTER HAPPY."**
- YOUNG PATIENT'S BIG BROTHER

**"THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE
SEEN HER SMILE."**
- REGISTERED NURSE



PATIENTS ENTERTAINED BY THERAPEUTIC CLOWNS FROM THE MIRTH UNIT AT BC CHILDREN'S

"We ensure kids and youth are not alone."

MENTAL HEALTH

Thank you for supporting BC Children's in responding to the individual needs of a child or youth.

With 70% of mental health issues beginning in childhood, early intervention, treatment and care is crucial in preventing a life filled with emergency room visits and ongoing struggles through youth and adulthood. "It is our goal for every child and youth in BC experiencing a mental health illness or challenge to receive the support they need, whether this is in their home community or through programs available at BC Children's," explained Sharlyne Burke, provincial executive director of the Child, Youth & Young Adult Mental Health & Substance Use Program. Thanks to your support, dedicated teams in the Healthy Minds Centre at BC Children's have the resources they need to help kids and youth living with mental health conditions.



Outpatient Mental Health Programs

BC Children's outpatient mental health services provide assessment, treatment and consultation for children and youth in BC with complex mental health and substance use conditions. These include mood disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, neurodevelopmental conditions, self-injury behaviour, and gender dysphoria.

Many care and treatment sessions are offered in group settings, enabling kids and youth to build relationships, reduce isolation, and learn together. Your generosity has supported snacks and supplies needed to run these crucial sessions. You also provided therapeutic engagement supplies such as a sensory toolbox to aid patients who may dysregulate during their appointments and need additional support. With more than **6,000 outpatient visits in group sessions** over the past year, your impact on kids and youth has been extraordinary.

Child Inpatient Psychiatry

At times when a child or youth needs help most for acute mental health challenges, the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Emergency (CAPE) Unit at BC Children's is here to provide specialist, short-stay crisis care. Over the last year, approximately 410 children and families were provided care in the acute inpatient psychiatric units. You are supporting this critical program by providing supplies that can make a profound difference. "Along with our supplies for families, we have been able to add in some just-for-fun gifts that have helped some of the kids feel seen and special," said a health care professional in CAPE. "One youth was crying happy tears as they opened a gift selected specifically for them."

You have also given to youth who have difficulty with some of the restrictions of being in hospital, such as food options. "By providing treats and special activities to incorporate as part of a young person's care, you are brightening their day. Thank you."

The Provincial Specialized Eating Disorders Programs

Thank you for your commitment to the well-being of kids and young people in BC living with eating disorders. Your generosity has continued to support group expressive arts therapy sessions for both the Eating Disorders Day Treatment Program and the Inpatient Eating Disorders Unit. "Expressive arts therapy emphasizes the process of creation rather than the final product," Kim Williams, program director of the Provincial Specialized Eating Disorders Services explained. "The patients have told us how it can help them process thoughts and emotions, and offer a time of calm and relaxation."

You have also supported restaurant activities in the Day Treatment Program, which have proven to be extremely helpful for young people seeking care. "Although it is a challenging experience, the aim is to normalize eating in a public and social space which many youths have not experienced in a very long time," Kim said. "After the experience, patients report that they feel empowered to be able to go back to the restaurant and order the same thing again on their own." More than 80 kids and youth a year benefit from your support of the Provincial Specialized Eating Disorders Programs. Thank you.

"He gave me the biggest smile."

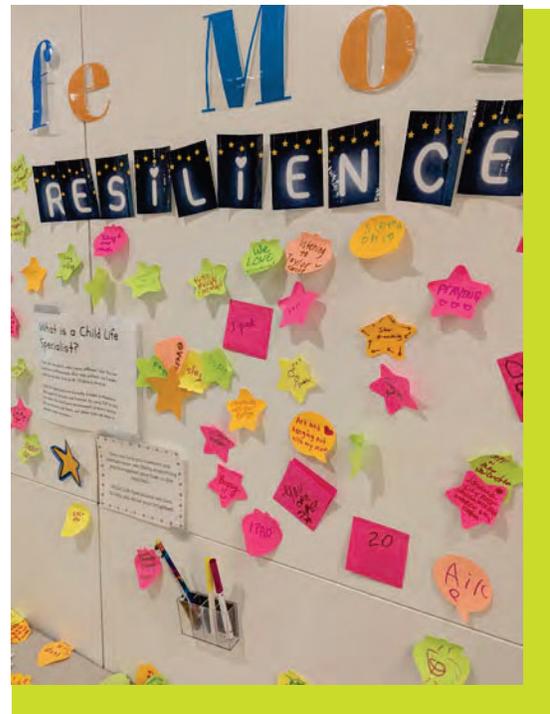
WEEKEND CHILD LIFE PROGRAM

Thank you for ensuring children receive the comfort and understanding of a child life specialist any day of the week.

The world looks different to a child, and many things we take for granted may seem strange and scary. Thankfully child life specialists are on hand to help children, and their families, cope with the hospital experience. But a child's need for support and understanding doesn't vanish after Friday. Kids visiting or staying at BC Children's also need support over the weekends, which is why your support of the weekend child life program is so important.

Shannie Harvey, one of four weekend child life specialists, explained why the program is so valuable. "Many children will undergo procedures during the weekend," Shannie said. "These can include a dressing change, blood work and IV insertions. On the weekend, I make sure the child and family are well prepared and offer guidance on how to reduce anxiety." Weekends offer unique challenges for families and child life specialists. "Weekends are busy because it's often when siblings, friends, and extended family members will visit," Shannie said. "The weekend child life program provides opportunities for play during these get-togethers, opening-up communal spaces like the playroom and teen lounge, and bringing fun activities and games to the child's room."

Shannie was eager to express her thanks to the Auxiliary for making this happen. "By supporting the weekend child life program, the Auxiliary is giving children the opportunity to be children—to play and enjoy themselves. I'm very grateful that I get to accompany the families on this special part of their healing journey."



CHILDREN ACROSS THE HOSPITAL WERE ASKED WHAT THEY LOVE MOST ABOUT THEIR TIME WITH CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS

CHILD LIFE STORIES FROM SHANNIE



Familiarity That Brings a Smile

I recently worked with a family, whose 4-year-old son was admitted on the weekend for a transplant surgery. The little boy was quite familiar with child life, because he attends the outpatient clinic in the hospital on a weekly basis, so when he knew I was a child life specialist, he gave me the biggest smile.

He invited me to stay and play, where I was able to build trust and resilience through play. I offered support during daily blood draws, and with challenging interventions, such as post-surgery dressing changes. This is a good example of how having a child life program on the weekend provides families with that special continuity of care.

A Teen Lounge Hangout

A month ago, a 14-year-old teenager who has muscular dystrophy was admitted to the unit for several weeks. He wanted to have some of his friends visit him on the weekend and hang out in the teen lounge. I set up the space so they could all play video games together. Having the opportunity to socialize with peers is something that is so important for youth, and I was glad that our weekend child life program was able to make this possible for him.

"Through outings we shared together, these kids helped each other."

RECREATION THERAPY PROGRAM

Thank you for enabling kids to get back to the activities that they love.

Rehabilitation can be a new chapter in a child's health journey, with new challenges. At Sunny Hill Health Centre, highly trained care teams are dedicated to helping kids develop the skills they need when they return home, but some rehabilitation is only possible by going out into the community. The recreation therapy program gives kids and their families a unique opportunity to engage in everyday activities out in the world. A recreation therapist guides the child towards their therapeutic goals, whether that is practicing walking or using a wheelchair, engaging in a busy environment, or talking with new people.

"I recently saw the value of group outings when I took a group of three children bowling and to a custom car showroom," said Andrew Lui, recreation therapist. "It was wonderful to see how they encouraged each other as they each worked on their therapeutic goals, including practicing to stand, walking a few steps, and working through their anxiety. These kids helped each other and built a camaraderie and confidence that was only possible by sharing outings like these."

Thank you for continuing to support kids who need this level of care to confidently and safely return to their communities.



PARENT WITH BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ORTHOPEDIC PATIENT

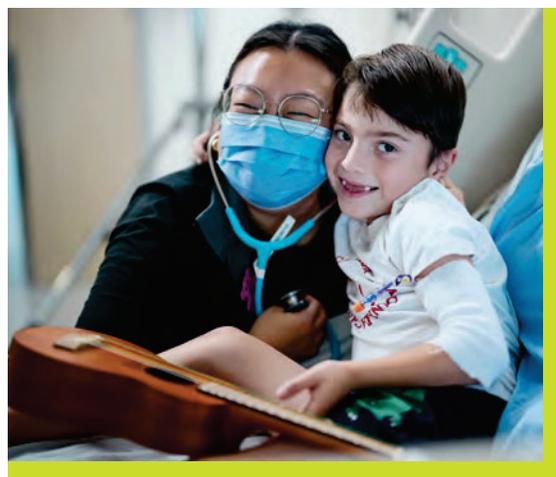
ENDOWMENTS

The long-term, guaranteed support of an endowment can be invaluable to making change possible.

The Auxiliary Endowment for Education provides financial assistance to encourage volunteers and non-physician health care staff to pursue educational opportunities that will enhance care for children and families at BC Children's.

The Judi Bowden Memorial Endowment for Pediatric Asthma Research was created in 2010 to honour Judi who for 25 years was an outstanding volunteer at BC Children's. Judi served as an Auxiliary board member, a member of the Red Cross Family Support Program, Special Events Chair, Gift Shop volunteer, and fundraiser.

We look forward to sharing the 2024/25 endowment financial reports with you separately.



ALI, AGE 8, WITH ANI, PEDIATRIC NURSE, BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



THANK YOU

The Auxiliary is part of the heart and soul of BC Children's, ensuring it is a place where kids and families can find comfort, support, and truly exceptional care. Because of you, children have moments of connection through music, giggles with Cosmo the clown, and benefit from the specialized care of well-equipped and supported medical teams. Thank you for making BC Children's Hospital mighty.

RITA THODOS, CFRE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, PHILANTHROPY
BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

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