


HOW YOU MADE KIDS MIGHTY



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.**

WITH GRATITUDE

Your dedication to the health and well-being of kids and youth can be seen throughout BC Children's Hospital. We are proud to share updates on the programs you supported last year and the incredible impact you have on the health of kids across the province. Thank you.

“SO MUCH OF THE JOY FOUND AT BC CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL IS BECAUSE OF THE AUXILIARY. THE STILL FABULOUS THRIFT SHOP, GIFT SHOP, HOLIDAY CARDS AND CLOTHING DRIVES ARE A SOURCE OF SO MUCH POSITIVITY AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT FELT THROUGHOUT THE HOSPITAL. THIS MAGIC IS ALSO MADE THROUGH THE CRUCIAL PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORT EACH YEAR, HELPING THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. YOU HAVE MADE THE HOSPITAL WHAT IT IS TODAY, AND I CAN’T BE MORE PROUD OR GRATEFUL FOR OUR PARTNERSHIP. FROM ALL OF US, THANK YOU.”

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



THE HEALING POWER OF LAUGHTER

Why did the clown go to the doctor? It could be because they were feeling funny (haha!), or it could be because they're one of the amazing therapeutic clowns your generosity is helping to support.

THERAPEUTIC CLOWNING

This year will mark the 30th anniversary of the MIRTH (Medicine Incorporating Remedies that Tickle the Heart) unit, with therapeutic clowns Fizzie, Cosmo, and McFluff bringing laughter and lightheartedness to patients and families. "Our aim is simple," said Sand Northrup (Fizzie). "We aim to make the hospital less stressful and more fun by humanizing the child's stay in the hospital."

Over the last year, the MIRTH unit made **more than 2,600 connections** with kids and teens at BC Children's, visiting kids in patient rooms, clinics, playrooms, lobbies—everywhere children may be spending time at hospital. Fizzie, Cosmo and McFluff often make special appearances at events like the Teddy Bear Clinic, the holidays caroling Zoom party, and Halloween hospital trick or treating. Thank you for supporting these three wonderful people, and helping ensure BC Children's always puts the comfort and care of kids first.

"YOU BROUGHT UP THE VIBES IN THE ROOM. THANKS!"
— A PATIENT'S FAMILY MEMBER

"YOU ARE SO GOOD WITH THE TEENS AND LITTLE ONES. THAT'S TALENT!"
— A PATIENT'S FAMILY MEMBER

Following their incredible success and the long-term support of donors, the MIRTH team is able to recruit a fourth clown. They certainly have some big shoes to fill.



HOLIDAY JAM WITH MCLUFF IN ANTLERS AND FIZZIE ON GUITAR.

“I RECENTLY VISITED A BOY WHO WAS EXPERIENCING ANXIETY AND WAS UNCERTAIN ABOUT THE CARE TEAM AROUND HIM. I BROUGHT IN A LITTLE TOY BIRD, WHICH I BALANCED ON HIS FINGER. HE IMMEDIATELY OPENED UP AND TOLD A STORY OF HIS OWN BIRD AT HOME AND ALL OF HIS ANIMALS. ON THE WAY OUT, HIS NURSE THANKED ME, TELLING ME IT WAS THE FIRST TIME SHE HAD EVER SEEN HIM SMILE.”

– MELISSA ASTON (AKA COSMO)

THE MAGIC OF MUSIC THERAPY

When kids find themselves in an unfamiliar place, or staying in hospital for weeks or months at a time, the music therapy team can make an enormous difference to a child's experience.

Music therapists are integral members of health care teams at BC Children's Hospital bringing connection, and reducing anxiety and pain to kids through thoughtful and compassionate therapeutic intervention. By establishing a trusting relationship with a child, and understanding their unique needs, a music therapist can help create a supportive space, and meaningfully contribute to their well-being and care.

Therapy sessions can range from improvisation and instrument playing to song writing and technology assisted composition. The music therapy team helps more than 80 children a week at BC Children's, connecting with kids in all inpatient areas at the hospital.

Thank you for helping comfort **more than 4,600 kids each year** at BC Children's with the healing power of music.

NAVY'S STORY

“It was during music therapy that we saw Navy smile and laugh for the first time since getting sick,” said Charlene, Navy’s mom. “Brooke, our music therapist, spent so much time with us. She was even there for one of Navy’s echos—playing guitar, singing and dancing with Navy throughout the entire appointment.”

In the summer of 2023, medical teams at BC Children’s Hospital worked around the clock to support Navy, a 2-year-old with a serious infection in her liver. After a battery of tests, they discovered the cause: a rare genetic disorder called chronic granulomatous disease. Her compromised immune system couldn’t fight the bacterial infection.

An extensive recovery lay ahead. BC Children’s became Navy’s new home, and her family went through the exhausting but necessary process of shifting their life around her treatment and care. Music therapy helped make the hospital more homelike for Navy and her family.

At BC Children’s, music therapists use evidence-based interventions that are customized to meet the needs of each individual patient based on their preferences, and physical and emotional state.

For Navy, music therapy involved many songs from her favourite movie, Frozen, with Brooke using Navy’s name in the lyrics to make her smile. “Brooke would also play Old MacDonald, and she’d ask Navy what animal was at the farm. One time Navy gave her a weird one—an octopus. Brooke made the perfect octopus sound,” Charlene said with a laugh. While Navy’s condition has improved, her journey to recovery isn’t over yet. As Navy takes the next steps in her treatment journey, the family remains truly grateful for programs like music therapy that have such a positive impact on their daughter.



NAVY HAVING FUN DURING A VISIT FROM THE MUSIC THERAPY TEAM.

BECAUSE IT'S ALWAYS TIME TO BE A KID

Across BC Children's, child life specialists help children understand and cope with their treatment. Thank you for ensuring kids receive the care and support they need on any day of the week.

CHILD LIFE WEEKEND PROGRAM

A child's need to process their hospital experience doesn't stop over the weekend, which is why the child life weekend program, which you kindly support, is so crucial.

Your long-time support and dedication towards the child life weekend program has helped pave the way for this extraordinary expansion. Thank you.

The child life weekend program has expanded enormously in recent years. It has grown from one to four child life specialists who with their team of volunteers **help 120 kids** and their families in the inpatient units every Saturday and Sunday. "This makes an enormous difference," said Amanda Lascelle, who has been a part of the child life weekend program for 19 years. "It means we can manage more volunteers and help more kids, and give more attention, time and care to each individual child. We're able to have meaningful conversations with siblings, spend time with families, and give the quality interaction kids and families need to feel more able to cope during their time at the hospital."



CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST BERNADETTE SHARING HER DISTRACTION TOYS WITH A PATIENT.

“CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS AND VOLUNTEERS TRULY BECOME THE BUDDIES OF MANY CHILDREN HERE. WE PLAY BOARD GAMES WITH THEM, READ BOOKS, AND OFFER A SAFE SPACE WHERE THEY CAN SHARE AND EXPLORE THEIR FEELINGS DURING HARD TIMES. NOW WITH FOUR CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS, I AM SO PROUD AND GRATEFUL THAT OUR WEEKEND PROGRAM IS ABLE TO MAKE EVEN MORE OF A DIFFERENCE.”

**– AMANDA LASCELLE, CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST, WEEKEND PROGRAM,
BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

“CHILD LIFE WOULD STOP IN EVERY DAY AND OFFER NEW TOYS. THEY'D ASK WHAT SHE LIKED TO PLAY WITH, AND IF NAVY SAID DINOSAURS, BLOCKS, OR MONSTER TRUCKS, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THEY'D COME BACK WITH. YOU DON'T REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO SEE YOUR CHILD PLAY, UNTIL YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THEM PLAY FOR TOO LONG.”

– CHARLENE, NAVY'S MOM

SUPPORTING THE WHOLE FAMILY

Thank you for being among the first and most constant supporters of the Sibling Support Centre.

We know that when a child is sick, everyone in the family is affected. The Sibling Support Centre continues to offer a safe and fun place for kids to spend time while their siblings are receiving care.

The Sibling Support Centre is giving comfort and care to more kids and teens than ever before. In 2023-24, nearly **1,500 visits** were booked at the Centre—a 118 per cent increase from last year. Volunteer support also more than doubled from the previous year, with more than 3,400 hours generously provided by 76 volunteers.

This expansion has helped the Centre offer new ways to support kids and their families. Last year the Centre began its full service to care for children under 3 years old. Following a successful pilot, the program can now accept same day requests from families during the week, meaning the Centre is there to care for the youngest siblings whenever their help is needed.

The Sibling Support Centre is also continuing its famous Movie Nights, held every month, which always includes making movie-themed crafts that kids can take home. Other events last year included its Halloween celebration, which involved pumpkin decorating and a scavenger bone hunt, and its monthly sibling recognition event. We are happy to share messages from families, who wanted to express their love and gratitude towards the Sibling Support Centre and its passionate care teams.



“AS A PARENT, YOU FEEL TORN BECAUSE YOU WANT TO FOCUS ON YOUR SICK CHILD, BUT ALSO WANT TO MAKE SURE YOUR OTHER KIDS FEEL SEEN. THE SIBLING SUPPORT CENTRE ALLOWED ME TO STAY WITH MY SICK KID FOR TWO HOURS, KNOWING THAT THEIR SIBLING WOULD HAVE THE CARE AND ATTENTION THEY NEEDED.”

– PARENT OF CHILD CARED FOR AT SIBLING SUPPORT CENTRE

“THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST THINGS ABOUT BC CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL. WE HAVE THREE CHILDREN, AND WE BRING OUR YOUNGER TWO GIRLS WITH US WHEN WE GO FOR OUR SON’S APPOINTMENTS. THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF OUR DAUGHTERS.”

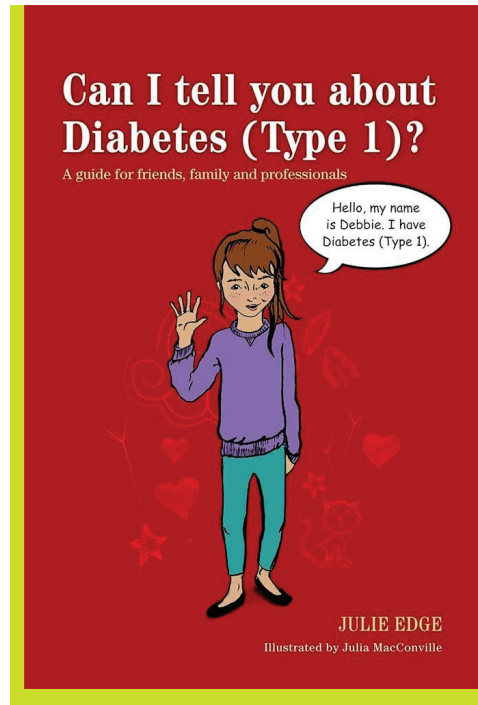
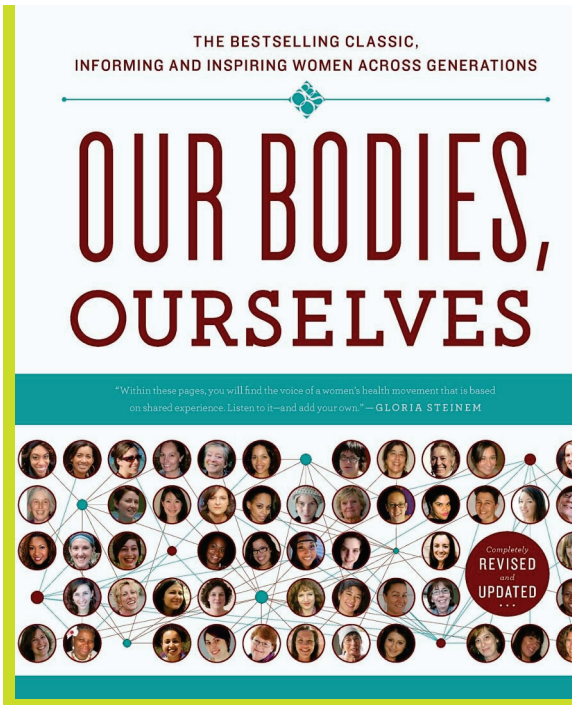
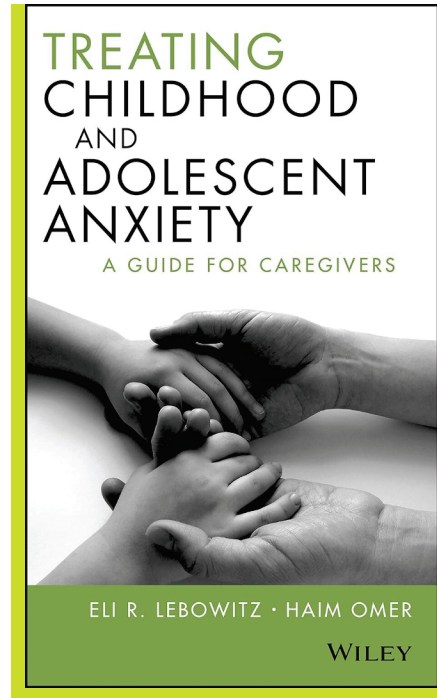
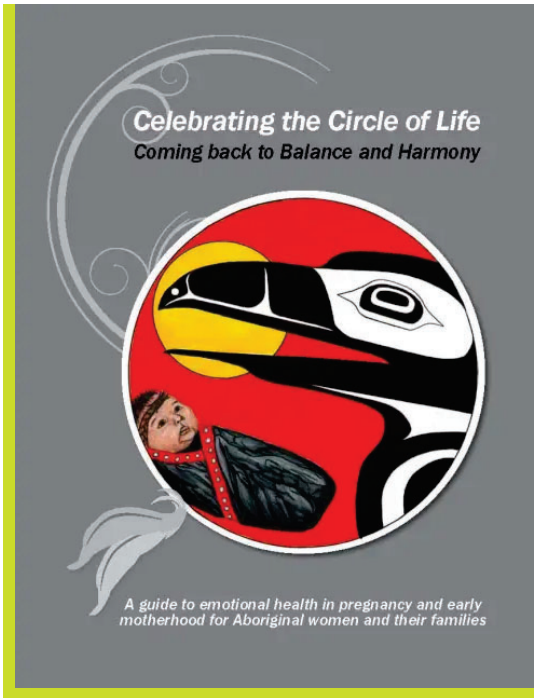
– PARENT OF CHILD CARED FOR AT SIBLING SUPPORT CENTRE

KEEPING FAMILIES INFORMED

Thank you for giving families a way to access free, trusted, evidence-based information to best care for their child.

FAMILY LIBRARY

When a family is navigating their child's health, it's important for them to have access to resources that are vetted, free and accessible from anywhere. The BC Children's Family Library exists for just this reason. The Family Library (formerly known as the Family Support and Resource Centre) provides a collection of reliable health information including books, ebooks, games and teaching tools, and loaned **more than 1,000 resources** last year. Thank you for helping ensure families in BC and the Yukon have access to the information they need to make informed health care decisions for their kids.



Examples of educational tools from the Family Library.

SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH

It has never been more crucial to care for a child or youth's mental health. Thank you for helping BC Children's be adaptive and able to respond to the individual needs of a child or youth.

SUPPORTING KIDS AND TEENS LIVING WITH EATING DISORDERS

More than 70 per cent of mental health challenges begin in adolescence. Every day, teams from the eating disorders program at BC Children's care for the physical and emotional health and well-being of young people, helping them feel more heard, understood and empowered. Your gift has supported art therapy sessions for both the Eating Disorders Day Treatment Program and the Inpatient Eating Disorders Unit. "Art therapy offers individuals an alternative form of communication through drawing, painting, music and sculpture," said Kim Williams, program director of the Provincial Specialized Eating Disorders Services. "Patients have explained that focusing on the process of creation rather than the final product helps them process difficult thoughts and emotions."

Your generosity is also supporting monthly restaurant challenges in the Day Treatment Program. "Although it can be a difficult experience," Kim said, "the aim of the challenges is to help normalize eating in public, which many youths have not experienced in a very long time. After the experience, patients tell us they feel empowered to be able to go back to the restaurant and order the same thing again on their own."

By giving to these crucial programs, you are helping support **more than 100 kids and teens per year** in the eating disorders program. Thank you.

OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Your gifts to outpatient mental health programs at BC Children's have been instrumental in helping care teams best engage with kids and teens, and giving emotional support to families. To explain it best, we share messages from the mental health outpatient program teams:

“WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE ARE ABLE TO ENSURE WE ARE CONSTANTLY STOCKED WITH SNACKS AND REFRESHMENTS, WHICH CAN REALLY MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE FOR A CHILD WHO IS TAKING PART IN AN ESPECIALLY LONG APPOINTMENT, OR WHO MIGHT BE TRAVELLING FROM FAR AWAY.”

– OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CARE TEAM MEMBER

“BECAUSE OF YOUR HELP, WE RUN ACTIVITIES WITH OUR PATIENTS AND GIVE BOOSTS SUCH AS SNACKS OR SMALL TOYS. THESE GAMES AND GIFTS HELP US BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH A CHILD OR TEEN, AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO KEEP THEIR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS AND REMAIN ENGAGED WITH US AND THEIR CARE.”

– OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CARE TEAM MEMBER

CARING FOR KIDS IN CRISIS

The Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Emergency (CAPE) Unit at BC Children's provides short-stay crisis care for children and youth who are experiencing acute mental health challenges. Its dedicated care team, including psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists and social workers, conducts emergency psychiatric assessments, stabilizes kids in immediate danger and manages diagnoses and treatment planning.

More than **200 kids and youth** received care through the CAPE Unit last year. Cynara Radley, program director of the CAPE Unit, wanted to share this message with you:

“THERE ARE MANY THERAPEUTIC GROUPS THAT SUPPORT LIFE SKILLS, EMOTION REGULATION AND OTHER IMPORTANT, FUN EXPERIENCES FOR KIDS AND YOUTH THAT CAN RUN BECAUSE OF DONOR SUPPORT. HAVING THE FLEXIBILITY TO ENGAGE YOUTH IN DIFFERENT WAYS IS SO PRECIOUS, AND I'M HUGELY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR HELPING MAKE WHAT WE DO POSSIBLE.”

– CYNARA RADLEY

EQUIPPED FOR EXCELLENT CARE

When talented health care teams are paired with the very best in technologies and equipment, amazing things are possible.

NEUROSURGICAL DRILLS

The right tool in the hands of a specialist can mean a child may be able to get back to playing with friends because of a quicker diagnosis, or a kid who can start their recovery and go home sooner. Thank you for helping kids receive even better care by supporting neurosurgery equipment.

BC Children's has some of the world's leading pediatric neurosurgeons who treat brain and spinal conditions and injuries. Each year, these specialists perform more than 300 neurological procedures, all of which require tremendous care and precision, within millimetres.

Neurosurgery might be the best route to treat a child who is experiencing hundreds of seizures a day, or part of a range of treatments to cure their brain cancer. A neurosurgical drill is crucial for many of these surgeries and is used weekly. Your generosity is helping **more than 150 kids per year**. On behalf of them and their families, thank you.

“WE CAN ONLY TREAT KIDS NEEDING COMPLEX NEUROSURGERIES WITH EQUIPMENT LIKE THIS. WE ARE SO GRATEFUL.”

**– CORINNA OMAE, CLINICAL RESOURCE NURSE,
OTOLARYNGOLOGY AND NEUROSUREGERY,
BC CHILDREN'S OPERATING ROOM**

ENDOWMENTS

The Auxiliary to BC Children's Hospital Endowment for Education and the Judi Bowden Memorial Endowment for Pediatric Asthma Research are continuing to make mighty things possible. These gifts provide ongoing support that help non-physician health care team members pursue educational opportunities, and also develop research in pediatric asthma.

We look forward to sending you the 2023/24 financial reports separately.





Small is
MIGHTY.

small is
MIGHTY

THANK YOU

The Auxiliary truly plays a central role in making BC Children's a world-class pediatric hospital. Your lasting generosity and awareness towards the needs of children and youth in BC and the Yukon is ensuring that BC Children's is a place where kids and young people feel safe, understood, and heard, and where families can find the very best care for their loved ones. On behalf of everyone who benefits from your partnership with BC Children's, thank you.

RITA THODOS, CFRE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, PHILANTHROPY
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