



Ronald
McDonald
House®
New York



Season of Gratitude

2022 Q4 NEWSLETTER

We couldn't do what we do without you!

This holiday season, we are especially grateful towards the philanthropists who make it possible for us to fulfill our mission to *keep families close* as they battle devastating pediatric illnesses. Receiving news that your child has a complex disease, such as cancer, is difficult for any parent and needing to travel to a New York City hospital for treatment adds unimaginable stress. Because of you, Ronald McDonald House New York can step in to offer wrap-around support to those families and a place to call home this holiday season and beyond. Thank You.

Made possible by the support of compassionate people like you, we offer more than just four walls and a roof to families going through the most difficult times of their life. Today, we provide wrap-around support with the goal to allow families to focus solely on their child's treatment by alleviating financial barriers and stressors that our families experience. We do this by providing medically-tailored transportation to and from hospital appointments; offering breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day; organizing enrichment activities and events for children of all ages; hosting emotional support groups for caregivers and siblings; and much more.

We have significantly expanded the number of families we serve by leveraging our resources and expertise to provide our services directly in NICU, PICU, and Pediatric Departments in hospitals throughout NYC. Because of you, for the first time in our history, we are able to impact hundreds of underserved New York families who are staying beyond our walls at the House and are also battling pediatric illnesses.

In this newsletter, you will see the impact your investment has on our mission, meet a staff member who works in the Ronald McDonald Family Room at Elmhurst Hospital, hear from Raymond Pezzoli of the Bruce G. Geary Foundation which makes the Therapy Dog Program possible, and have a chance to review opportunities to invest in our initiatives that make life easier for our families.

We are grateful that you are part of our journey in supporting the families we serve. The wrap-around support we provide to make life easier for families battling pediatric illnesses is only possible because of the compassion of people like you. Thank you —we couldn't do what we do without you.



Kai's Performance at RMH-NY's 30th Annual Gala

Ronald McDonald House New York hosted its 30th Annual Gala on Monday, October 3rd. Amongst the many incredible moments through the night, Kai Brown, a 9-year-old boy with brain cancer, gave a moving performance. His musical talent caught the hearts, ears and eyes of everyone in the room.

Kai was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of brain cancer at just six-years old, and was unable to get the treatment and care he needed back home in Panama. Kai and his family flew to New York City for treatment at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital and stayed at Ronald McDonald House New York. Before being diagnosed, Kai had just started piano lessons that had to be cut short. Once at RMH-NY, he began playing the piano in the House and received lessons from a volunteer. After long days at the hospital, his mom describes playing the piano as his form of therapy and joy.

Kai has continued to play the piano and gone on to compose numerous original pieces, two of which he performed during RMH-NY's Gala.



Therapy Dog Program

The Therapy Dog Program at Ronald McDonald House New York offers families daily opportunities to spend time with a furry friend, which has been proven to alleviate stress and increase joy. This would not be possible without Bruce G. Geary Foundation and our partnership with New York Therapy Animals.

Donor Spotlight

BRUCE G. GEARY FOUNDATION | WHY I GIVE:

"The Bruce G. Geary foundation is inspired by the Therapy Dog Program sponsored and run by Ronald McDonald House New York. I have personally experienced the operation of this program on numerous visits to the House and was thrilled by the activities of the staff and volunteers in their use of the Therapy Dogs in relation to the resident children."

— **Raymond J. Pezzoli, President.**



**Ronald
McDonald
House®
New York**

At the House...

Our team has been working hard at making sure families are benefiting from our wrap-around services. Since January:

638 Unique Family Stays

14,574 Nights Provided

8,021 Meals Distributed

7,500 Rides Provided

**200+ Caregiver Support
Group Sessions Held**

And Around the City

Ronald McDonald House New York is committed to providing a full circle of support to families with children receiving treatment for complex illnesses in New York City. We have deepened this commitment by launching a series of initiatives that expand on our mission by addressing social determinants of health because, while cancer and other serious illnesses do not discriminate based on income, being able to receive help, navigate hospital systems, and locate supportive resources can depend heavily on a family's socioeconomic status. We want to remove barriers underserved New York families face as they seek to improve health and happiness while battling pediatric illnesses.

Ronald McDonald Family Rooms

Because of our compassionate supporters, families with children being treated at Kings County Hospital and Elmhurst Hospital can find relaxation, wellness services and support at Ronald McDonald Family Rooms located and operated directly in pediatric departments—allowing families to stay close to their child.

September 9th was Care Bears National Share Your Care Day. To celebrate, Care Bears partnered with the Born This Way Foundation to bring giant-sized Care Bears to the Ronald McDonald Family Rooms at Kings County and Elmhurst Hospital. Kids were treated with some bear-y awesome care packages including their very own care bear.



Staff Spotlight: JEN WIENER (they/them) Family Room Coordinator

What inspires you to work at the Ronald McDonald Family Rooms?

I have been given the opportunity to help people for a living. To me, that's an incredible gift. In my role as Family Room Coordinator, I try to be a warm, welcoming presence for parents and guardians who are going through a difficult time with their child being in the hospital. If I can bring any small amount of comfort or feeling of normalcy to those families during that time, I know it makes a world of difference.

Can you share a story that emphasizes the need for RMH Family Rooms?

The Ronald McDonald Family Room provides a safe, comfortable, non-clinical space for parents and caregivers that is only a few steps to their child's bed in the hospital. I have seen how support can mean so many things—a customized hot latte, a soft recliner with a view of a clear blue sky, a meal for a dad who rushed straight from work to see his baby before the end of visiting hours, a ten minute massage, a friendly ear if someone decides to open up, a book in another language for a sibling to sit and read. The list goes on. I'm learning that the support needed is unique to each individual. It's my job to create as many options for support as I can in order to be able to meet their need in that specific moment.

What is your favorite thing to help families with?

I personally love when I can help families use art as a form of relaxation and healing. I had one mother who spent about an hour painting a magnet. She chose one with three hearts on it and explained to me that each heart represented a member of her family. She said afterward that it had really helped her relax after getting some bad news. I helped two parents sit and paint together with their child. We didn't speak the same language, but it didn't matter. It allowed them the freedom to make something beautiful out of a painful time and gave them a lovely moment together as a family. It's a privilege to be able to facilitate that.

2 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms operated directly in NYC Hospitals

10 Hospitals partnering with RMH-NY to receive our "To-Go" services

Over 7,000 Hospitality and Activity Packages Delivered



Celebrating the life of our Founder

This Fall, we celebrated the life of our inspiring co-founder, Dr. Audrey Evans, who passed peacefully in her home in Philadelphia. She insightfully knew that "a sick child is a sick family," and built a care model around this strongly held belief. This philosophy is what led her to create a place for parents to stay close to the hospital while their seriously ill children were being treated and on October 15, 1974, the first Ronald McDonald House opened its doors to families. Forty-eight years later, there are now 380 House programs in 45 countries and regions. We are honored to continue her legacy of caring for children and families here in New York City.

Current Investment Opportunities



Share a Night

It costs \$365 per night to house, provide meals, and offer programs to each family. Because of your donations, families can stay with us without incurring any expenses. Please consider sponsoring a family's stay because the last thing a family with an ill child should have to worry about is where to sleep. **\$10,950 will give a family a month-long stay** at the House and access to all of our wrap-around services.



Sponsor-A-Ride

The Sponsor a Ride program provides on-demand transportation to our families and alleviates the stress of missing crucial medical appointments, covering transport costs, and exposing immunocompromised children to alternative transportation. On average, we provide 40 rides to and from the hospital each day, and **\$25,000 would sponsor a week of transportation** for families staying at the House.



Three-Season Activity Center Initiative

Our Jon Shevell Terrace is a place where our families and staff come together to cook, eat, retreat, relax and enjoy a bit of nature. The Three-Season Activity Center Initiative will add a retractable awning with walls **allowing families to benefit from the terrace space throughout the year.** With a multi-year pledge, of \$60,000, you will be recognized on a plaque within the Center.

We Want to Hear from You

Please take a moment to fill out and send back the enclosed survey and for more information on the best ways to support our mission, please contact:

Denean Paulik,
DIRECTOR OF MAJOR GIFTS

E: DPAULIK@RMH-NEWYORK.ORG
T: (212) 639-0215

