

# celebrations!

You made amazing things happen to improve children's care.

Spring 2020



## Moving Forward



Callen's life changed when he became paralyzed. **You** have helped him move again.

*Callen and his family faced many dark days after a rare condition threatened his life and his mobility. His mom, Jenn, shares how you gave her family comfort and support when they needed it most.*

Our family's world crumbled in a matter of hours.

It was the middle of October 2018 when my son, Callen, developed a fever. He was prescribed antibiotics for what appeared to be a routine ear infection. But, Callen still seemed "off" the next day.

Our bright, cheerful and curious boy was strangely lethargic. He told us light was hurting his eyes.

Worried that we were facing something more serious, we took him to the ER. They admitted him with meningitis – inflammation around the brain.

No mom ever wants to hear that kind of news.

But, we at least had a plan. Doctors told us Callen would be home within a couple of weeks.

When he began struggling to swallow, we weren't too alarmed. We knew the medications he had to take came with side effects.

Then one day Callen asked for my help to visit the washroom. As I picked up my son, his body hung limp from my arms.

Callen couldn't stand. He couldn't sit. He couldn't hold up his own head.

He was paralyzed.

**(Continued inside)**



## Because of You...

- Judy can escape hospital life and enjoy herself
  - Baby Riley is growing up strong
  - Samuel is confident and thriving
- ...and so much more!



*Callen's life changed when a complication from the common cold robbed him of his mobility. You helped him smile, laugh and have fun, keeping his spirits high to get better.*

## Moving Forward (Continued)

### CALLEN COULDN'T WALK

We were transferred to the Paediatric Critical Care Unit at Children's Hospital the very next day. It was there we discovered Callen had contracted acute flaccid myelitis, a complication from the common cold.

A simple childhood illness had robbed our toddler of the things he loved most: climbing in the park, racing his toy cars and jumping in puddles.

Because he couldn't swallow, Callen required a feeding tube. **Doctors told us they didn't know if Callen would ever walk again.** Broken, devastated and confused, I knew my role as a mother had forever changed. It had always been my job to protect and comfort Callen, but now he would need me more than ever.

We spent a little over a month and a half at Children's in late 2018. Our whole family was terrified – and Callen knew what he had lost. He remembered what it was to run and jump and move freely. But there he was, unable to move in a hospital bed.

### YOU HELPED HIM SMILE ON HARD DAYS

**I am grateful for the care-enhancing programming you make possible!** So many wonderful people brought Callen joy on those really dark days when his heart was so discouraged.

He particularly loved hanging out in the Smile Room with Ollie, the Therapeutic Clown. It was amazing as his mom to watch him transform in those moments, right back to the goofy kid we had known before all of this happened.

Ollie gave Callen the chance to just be a kid again, instead of a patient with this rare and complicated disease. He'd show Callen this ball full of holes and joke that it was his brain. When he went to get his feeding tube put in, Ollie drew him pictures on the hospital room window. All of those sweet, seemingly small things added up to such a huge difference.



Much to our surprise, Callen also took joyfully to Music Therapy. He's a pretty shy and quiet kid at first, but the Music Therapist Karina really drew him out of his shell. He loved to play with all the different musical instruments and hear the sounds they could make.

I joke that we should have installed a GPS tracker on Dr. Beary Goode, the Children's Health Foundation mascot. Callen always wanted to go searching for the giant teddy bear in the hallways. It gave him another thing to look forward to during those really long and often boring days.

**Above:** Jenn smiles with her son, Callen. The family has faced a difficult health care journey.  
**Right:** Callen has started to stand on his own thanks to programs and care you help support.

## ROAD TO RECOVERY

After our time at Children's we spent seven months in Toronto, where Callen received intensive inpatient therapy and multiple nerve-related surgeries. We returned home to London this past June, and Callen began therapy as part of the Spinal Cord Injury Program at Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC).

Even after all the poking and prodding he endured during his stay at Children's, Callen was excited to be back. He wanted to see Ollie, Dr. Beary Goode, and all his other friends from the hospital!

Callen visits TVCC four times a week for therapy appointments, and is making progress with the help of his Children's team. They are so wonderfully dedicated to learning more about his condition, and incorporating his interests in everything they do.

## THANK YOU!

We couldn't be more grateful for the care we've received at Children's. And as a mom, I want to say thank you for the programming you make possible through your generosity – Child Life, Ollie and Music Therapy. **You have given Callen a reason to smile even on the hardest days.**



## Why We Give

Donors like you share what inspires them to help strengthen children's health care in our community.



*Like you, Zoe gives to support the expert care that is provided at Children's Hospital.*

“Raising money is fun and nice! I raised \$1,628.00. I donated \$6 from my allowance and my brother Max donated \$2. My family and friends donated money too. I raise money for Miracle Mission because Children's Hospital saved me when I was born three months premature! The money I raise will help save other kids too.”

– Zoe Puddy



**Share Your Giving Story!** If you are interested in being featured in “Why We Give,” please email [info@childhealth.ca](mailto:info@childhealth.ca).

# You Helped **Save** Sick Babies

Medical professionals can provide the best possible care to sick babies because you helped purchase cutting-edge equipment.

You are responsible for so many firsts.

Riley's first smile.

Calvin and Katharina's first laughs.

Rylee's first wave hello.

You, our caring donors, gave generously to help save the lives of these beautiful babies and more.

Riley, Calvin, Katharina and Rylee were all born too early and faced many health complications.

They needed care at Children's Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to help them become strong enough to go home with their loving families.

Our NICU has faced a growing need for services, and babies are requiring care for longer periods of time.

Your support to purchase life-saving equipment ensured that our NICU can provide the best possible care to fragile patients.

Thank you! Your donations go a long way for kids and families.

## Your gifts have helped buy, for the NICU, more state-of-the-art:

- Ventilators
- Portable monitors
- B. Braun syringe pumps
- Joey beds
- A Giraffe OmniBed



*Riley weighed little more than a pound at birth. Today he is a healthy boy thanks to your generous support.*



*Calvin and Katharina relied on the exceptional care at Children's Hospital, which you help make possible.*



*Rylee's future was uncertain but thanks to your donations, life-saving equipment in the NICU was there to save her life.*

# Living Life to the Fullest

To an outsider, the odds might have seemed stacked against Samuel. But, thanks to your support, today he is *thriving*.

Samuel was born with spina bifida, a birth defect where the spine and the membranes around the spinal cord don't close completely during early pregnancy. He also entered the world with hydrocephalus (the accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid in the brain) and chiari malformation (a condition where brain tissue extends into your spinal canal).

After a series of surgeries early in his life, Samuel was able to get involved with a variety of programs through Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC).

At a young age, his mom, Heather, brought him into TVCC's donor funded Adapted Fitness Centre to learn exercises they could replicate at home. This helped with Samuel's development and he still benefits from those services today. He continues to work on his fitness goals, training at the Adapted Fitness Centre one to two times a week. This helps him stay strong as he plays wheelchair basketball, skis, bikes and swims. He was even able to zip line with his family at Boler Mountain!

In addition to strengthening his physical health, TVCC has helped Samuel foster connections and friendships. He's an active member of Youth for Youth, an interactive group that brings together Children's patients for fun activities like Art in The Park and going out for dinner.



*Thank you for helping Samuel build his strength and confidence to reach his full potential.*

He also joined Ability Connections, a program that gives him the opportunity to share his story. Samuel prepares speeches and presents on his experiences with spina bifida throughout the community.

With the confidence he's gained through TVCC programs, Samuel is now a member of his high school's student council. He is proud of his near-perfect grades in both math and gym. When he dreams about his future, Samuel hopes to do something creative – like being a movie producer.

**Your support of TVCC helps give kids like Samuel life-shaping and life-changing opportunities to reach their fullest potential.**



## Are You Celebrating a Birthday in 2020?

**Of course you are!** You can share the magic of your birthday with a sick child at Children's Hospital. Donations received in honour of your big day will help ensure the best possible care for kids!

**Sign up today at:**  
**[childhealth.ca/birthdayclub](http://childhealth.ca/birthdayclub)**

## YOU Help Kids Smile in Hospital

### Music Therapy Expanded to Support More Kids

Your generosity has helped ensure patients, like Judy, are receiving the emotional support and relief they need.

You have helped Judy in her fight against cancer.

Judy loves the Music Therapy Program at Children's Hospital. She loves playing the instruments and singing familiar tunes.

It helps her escape from her hospital room. The melodies take her away from the needles and the treatments and let her enjoy being a kid.

Donors, like you, helped launch the Music Therapy Program in 2015. It's become so highly regarded that it's bursting at the seams. More and more patients need the service and as a result a wait list was forming.

Fortunately, your generosity helped make it possible for the hospital to hire a second certified Music Therapist this year.

Kim Allred is working part-time alongside Karina Charczuk. Kim has her Master of Music Therapy and a passion for the profession.



*Judy is receiving treatment for cancer. She loves Music Therapy and the new guitar she got from the Toy Drive in December.*

"Music has been a strong support for my own mental health. I want to be able to share its power with others," says Kim.

Thank you for helping to expand the Music Therapy Program to ensure all patients, including Judy, get the emotional support and relief they need when facing serious health issues!



### Community Events

Unfortunately due to the COVID-19 outbreak, many fundraising events in support of Children's Health Foundation have been rescheduled, postponed or cancelled.

For the most up to date information on community events, please visit our website or social media pages.

[www.childhealth.ca/events](http://www.childhealth.ca/events)



### Meet Teaghan Our CMN Champion Child

Every other Monday Teaghan spends the day at Children's Hospital to receive life-saving medication for a rare, metabolic liver disorder.

She has a lot of friends there to make her stays easier, like her Child Life Specialist, Art Therapist, and Ollie the Therapeutic Clown.

She will continue these appointments until there is a cure for her disorder. Despite all that she goes through, Teaghan is a happy 13-year-old thanks to your generous support!