

celebrations!

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



Care for the Whole Family

When the world shut down, **you** helped support Caleb and his family.

Caleb was fighting a life-threatening illness when COVID-19 changed everything. His dad Chris shares how you and other donors helped their family thrive when they were in their darkest moments.

There was snow on the ground, holiday music in every department store and instead of celebrating the joy of the season with our family, we were in the hospital.

My wife Bobbi and I sat there on Boxing Day, waiting for our son Caleb's first emergency brain surgery to end.

Little did we know, there would be many more to come.

On Christmas Day, Caleb was walking and talking but had a nasty headache, and the next day, he collapsed.

We were rushed by ambulance to Children's Hospital's Paediatric Critical Care Unit (PCCU). That's where

we started hearing about strokes and brain damage.

It turns out that the flu Bobbi and I thought Caleb had was actually meningitis.

The infection spread to his brain, spiked the pressure in his head, and caused significant damage.

That was Boxing Day, two years and one pandemic ago.

It's never easy to have a sick kid during the holidays, but this was something else.

(Continued inside)



Because of You...

- Trip can use devices at TVCC that help him move
- Calvin continues to receive amazing care
- Community events are a success



Caleb and his family received the best possible care at Children's Hospital thanks to your generous support.

Care for the Whole Family

(Continued)

A STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEM

For all of January, Caleb wrestled with this illness in the PCCU. He needed about nine brain surgeries in that one month alone.

Fortunately, when Caleb was first admitted to the hospital, we had access to every incredible amenity they could offer.

Thanks to your generous gifts, we had the kitchenette to prep meals, the PCCU common room to hang out in with family, a quiet room to decompress and gather our thoughts or even get some much needed sleep.

Children's Hospital allowed so many visitors, we had a whole entourage of people who kept our spirits up every day.

It eased our minds knowing we had so much support around us despite so many unknowns with Caleb.

And then in March, the global pandemic hit Canada.

EVERYTHING CHANGED OVERNIGHT

It felt surreal. One minute, we were walking down the halls and the next minute we were stuck in our room.

They closed the kitchenette and all common spaces. Masks became common place and Bobbi and I faced a new challenge: visitor restrictions.

We went from this revolving door of visitors who took care of us, to no one. Not even each other.

Throughout most of COVID only one parent was allowed to be in the hospital and stay bedside. We had to do a 10-minute switch-off every 24 hours.

Because Caleb needed such complex care, we were constantly learning how to operate new machines and mobility devices. What new training did each of us have to learn? What was the pressure on Caleb's brain today? Imagine trying to relay all this information in just 10 minutes. All the medical jargon had to come first before we even had a chance to check on each other.

There we were, living in the hospital without family and without the incredible amenities. We were suddenly trying to figure out where to eat and where to sleep every day.

A LIFE-CHANGING RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES

The only thing that kept me sane was the staff at the Paediatric Family Resource Centre (PFRC) and their family resource facilitators.

Thanks to your support, the PFRC staff like Darren, Becky and Ann Marie, were able to bring me coffee, sit with me for a little while and let me vent about everything going on. This was exceptionally helpful on weekends when Children's Hospital was really quiet.

The staff there really made such a difference for our family, I don't know how we could have made it through without them.

From little tips about the hospital, like how to order

After almost 11 months in hospital and separation due to the pandemic, Caleb and his family are reunited at home and enjoying their time together. Thank you for caring for our families!

food, to figuring out paperwork for the family caregiver benefits we used to help cover our expenses, the PFRC facilitators made it possible for us to have everything we needed, even when our whole world was shut down.

They made taking care of all the business stuff easy, so that the only thing we had to focus on was Caleb.

Having a critically sick child in hospital is a crazy experience. It is such a life-altering, life-changing thing, and we couldn't have done it without the support of the PFRC and donors like you.

BRINGING CALEB BACK FROM THE BRINK

Caleb's journey was a long one. He had to relearn everything. He couldn't stick out his tongue, talk, sit up, use the bathroom by himself. His entire brain had been attacked by meningitis. We needed so much help and so much support and you helped us receive it. Thank you!

As Caleb saw therapist after therapist and had surgery after surgery, everyone was blown away by his improvement. The staff at Children's Hospital were incredible. They worked around the clock for him every day.

He began making huge strides, from being infection free to sitting up on his own. There were a lot of milestones being met and they're still coming. Every day there's a new one to celebrate.

After nearly 11 months of separation during COVID, Caleb is finally home and thriving. All four of us are back under the same roof and it's the greatest feeling in the world.

You truly helped provide care for my whole family in unprecedented times and we cannot thank you enough.



Why We Give

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

Young Philanthropists Give Back



Jenna Hong

"When COVID hit, I realized I couldn't volunteer at the cancer clinic or the OR waiting room, so I joined the new Youth Philanthropy Group (YPG). It was our goal to plan a fundraising event for Children's Health Foundation.

"I loved collaborating with local businesses to garner sponsorships, collect auction items and raise awareness. My family has their own business, *Ah-So Sushi*, so I've known these families and businesses for a long time. It was amazing to see how the London community supported one another, especially during COVID!

"In our inaugural year, the YPG successfully planned and hosted the virtual movie event, *Drive-In for Thrive-In Kids*. Despite the difficulties of the pandemic and lockdowns, we surpassed our fundraising target, raising \$8,000!

"We decided to direct the funds to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Program at Children's Hospital. It felt very fitting to the world we were in and to the age of our group. We knew it was an important time to support other youth's mental health."



Tonya and Firmino Goncalves

Leaving a Legacy for Future Generations

“We feel it is crucial to help sick and injured children by donating and volunteering. Children and their families deserve the best possible care, and the community is integral to helping provide it.

“We began supporting Children’s as monthly donors. Soon after, we decided to leave a legacy gift through our life insurance policy. Taking part in something meaningful, by leaving a gift after we are gone, helps us set a powerful example for our community.

“It was such a simple process; anyone can do it. By making Children’s Health Foundation a beneficiary of our policy, we are helping transform and advance children’s health care - now and for future generations to come.”

A Grateful Family Gives Back

“The love and support our family was shown from day one of our stay in the NICU, and then the PCCU, inspired us to do something. We had many hard days where Brooks and his quality of life were in question but Children’s staff helped us through.

“To show our gratitude, we hosted *Calves for a Cause*, an online cattle sale. It got a lot of exposure from Consignors and Dairy Media outlets, which generated a ton of excitement. Between sales commissions, sponsorships and individual gifts, we were able to donate \$71,000!

“Amazing communities have supported us on our journey: our church, our children’s school and the dairy community. We are incredibly humbled and excited to have their support.”



The Markus family with their calf, named after Brooks



Ruthe Anne and John Conyngham

Inspired by the Families They Love

“The Magical Winter Ball first drew us to Children’s Health Foundation, but we were really inspired to give when sweet children of our dear friends needed treatment at Children’s Hospital.

“Overwhelmed by their experiences, we made gifts in each child’s honour. It was our way of supporting those families as well as acknowledging the tremendous care they received.

“During COVID, that support has taken on new meaning. Everything can change in a moment, and our health is so precious. Each gift benefits future families.

“Together, we can support the extraordinary care that all of us are grateful to have when we need it.”

Trip, The Stunt Man

Thanks to your generosity, mobility aids at TVCC help kids express themselves!

Kirston loves spending time watching her children ride their bikes in front of their home. The wind in their hair, sun on their faces and sounds of laughter echo in the warm summer air.

Zooming alongside them is her youngest, Trip, AKA “The Stunt Man.”

Trip has cerebral palsy, which means he participates in activities with lots of support from mobility aids like supported seating, wheelchairs and standing devices.

He’s able to zip along after his siblings (or over their toes) in an *Explorer Mini*, a special device made available thanks to your support!



“We had been wanting to try an Explorer Mini for a very long time but trying to get one in our rural community was challenging.”

Imagine Kirston’s surprise when she walked into TVCC for Trip’s first seating appointment and saw an Explorer Mini! “I immediately asked if we could try it.”

The independence she saw in that moment was amazing: “Seeing that autonomous movement, his curiosity spark, and that little smirk on his face... I was fighting back tears. Those are things you never know if you’ll see your kid do.”

That experience is possible because of donors like you! Access to the Explorer Mini at TVCC is 100% donor funded.

Your generosity helps TVCC provide families like Trip’s with new opportunities. From experimenting with new devices like the Explorer Mini, to getting customized devices that express their personality and help them achieve their goals.

TVCC loves to show off each child’s personality, like Trip’s playful attitude: “They put a little lightning bolt on the side of his custom chair. Those little extra touches feel so nice.”

Fun customization isn’t just a cherry-on-top, but also an important acknowledgement of who Trip is.

Your support helps TVCC to recognize and enable each client’s unique goals. Devices to help Trip swim are coming next.

Thank you for your life-changing gifts!



Are you a grateful parent or grandparent?

Is there someone who made your family’s health care journey at Children’s Hospital better? Perhaps they were there when you needed it most or provided excellent, compassionate care for a child you love.

When you make a special gift in their honour, you will let them know how much their care and support means to your family.

Donate Today at childhealth.ca/grateful



You Are Crucial for Care at Every Age

Half of Charlotte and Corey's hearts stayed at Children's Hospital the day their baby girl was discharged from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Both Katharina and her twin brother Calvin were born at 26 weeks, weighing less than two pounds.

While Katharina was in the NICU for 3 months, Calvin needed a little extra help along the way. For over 10 months he persevered through hernia surgeries, intubation, and other critical complications.

Medically complex children like Calvin often spend their first year in hospital. The *Help Me Thrive Program* ensures that these kids meet their development, growth and well-being goals in that crucial first year.

This program is 100% donor funded. It simply would not exist without you.

Today, Calvin is three and living with cerebral palsy, which means he uses technology like wheelchairs, feeding tubes and respiratory devices to make sure he can do everything he wants to!

Charlotte and Calvin are also in-and-out of the hospital for appointments, a difficult feat during COVID-19.

"I need someone to travel in the backseat with Calvin while I drive, and the care helpers used to learn a lot from attending appointments. Without them, our visits



You help young patients like Calvin meet their development, growth and well-being goals in their crucial first year!

and care training take a lot more preparation and planning."

Charlotte is patiently waiting for the moment when masks come off and the whole family can visit the hospital together!

"I never would have imagined when I was pregnant that the hospital would become a second home, but that has very much become true. I want Calvin's sisters to be exposed to the positive relationships and experiences we have with Children's Hospital."

Thank you for supporting families like Calvin's through their whole journey, from that crucial first year, to appointments during a pandemic.

Your generosity makes it possible for the hospital to wrap families in quality care and make it feel like a second home, even in the most uncertain times.

Community Events

September 13 to 19 - Tim Horton's Smile Cookie Week

September 15 - Estate Planning Presentation

October 16 and 17 - RBC Race for the Kids

October 28 - Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day

December 3 - Bring Home the Magic

March 4 - Corus Radiothon for Children's

Stand By Our Kids Merchandise

Show your community you stand by sick kids at Children's Hospital.

Purchase sweaters, onesies, sweatpants, blankets, teddy bears and more!

They make perfect gifts and all proceeds will support programs and equipment families rely on at Children's Hospital.

