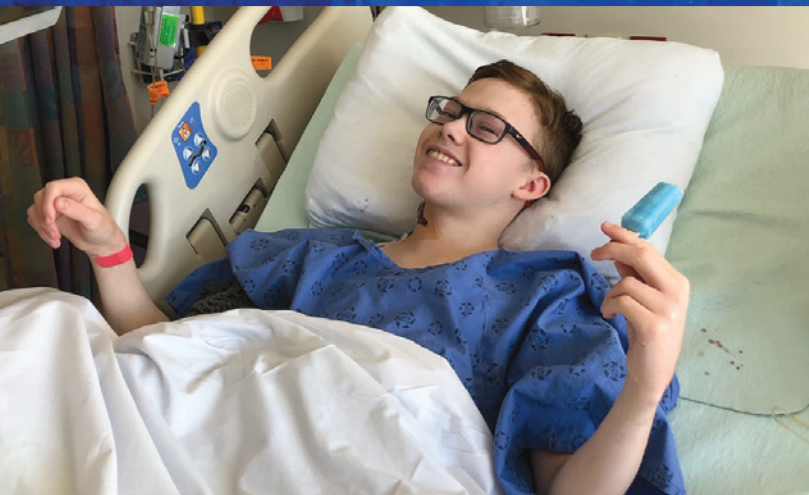


# celebrations!

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



*Brennan in hospital after his kidney transplant*

## You Gave The Gift of Health



*A father will do anything for his precious son. But Mark Bell was able to do more than most when he donated a kidney to save his son's life.*

Mark speaks about the vital role that Children's Hospital and generous supporters, like you, played in helping bring Brennan back to health.

*"It's very stressful to have a kid with a chronic condition. But because we've gotten such great care at the hospital, it's helped take away some of the stress and fear."*

Brennan first came to Children's in 2017, when he was 11-years-old. Tests and a biopsy revealed that he had kidney disease – and his kidneys were already down to just 60% function.

He was put on blood pressure medication and monitoring. But his kidneys kept declining. He was going to need a transplant as quickly as possible.

Mark started the process to see if he was a match. At the same time, Brennan began home peritoneal dialysis where he was connected to the machine every night for 12 hours. It was painful and he was exhausted.

The whole family vividly remembers the day when



*Brennan celebrating his first year post-kidney transplant.*

the call came saying that Mark's kidney would be a viable match.

*"We all cried, and it was just the best feeling ever knowing that I was going to be able to help him."*

The COVID-19 pandemic threw an extra curveball at the family with delays and extra protocols. But finally, the day of the transplant arrived – and Brennan's transformation after the transplant was amazing.

Brennan explains,

*"It's like before was black and white, like everything just looks grey. But then after the transplant, even when I first woke up, it's like everything just burst with colour."*

Now, a year later, Brennan has gained nearly 45 pounds and grown six inches – any day now he'll be as tall as his dad!

Brennan and his parents want Children's Hospital supporters to know how much their gifts mean. Our donors funded 100% of the medical equipment at Children's Hospital last year – including vital pieces of equipment used to care for Brennan and more kids just like him.

Donors' gifts also supported the life-enhancing programs that help children like Brennan to cope with

*Continued on Page 2...*

**Continued from Page 1...** difficult procedures and keep their spirits up during long days in hospital.

To make sure his kidneys stay healthy, Brennan's health care team will be right by his side to provide long-term care, like routine check-ups. His parents have this message for our supporters:

*"We all know somebody who has needed the hospital for their children, whether it's their niece or nephew or friends. These kids are just starting out – and you want to have the best possible outcome for them for the rest of their lives."*

With wisdom beyond his years, Brennan wants you to know that...

*"I'm telling this story to give back – for everything that you've done for me and my family."*

*Hope is a big one.*

*Maybe someone will read*

*this story if they're waiting for a transplant, and see that at some point, they'll be well again."*



Brennan (right) with sister Caitlin, mom Tina and father Mark



## You Help Sienna Shine

*Sienna's mom, Kim, is dedicated to helping her daughter be the best person she can be. And the amazing staff at TVCC (formerly Thames Valley Children's Centre) are supporting them both. Every step of the way.*

Sienna was born premature – weighing just 1 pound 9 ounces. She is deaf and has cerebral palsy.

Kim adopted Sienna at age four. Before that, health professionals had told her foster parents to have few expectations for Sienna's development. But Kim knew in her heart Sienna was capable of so much more than people expected.

That's what brought Kim and Sienna to the doors of TVCC, where they serve around 11,000 children and youth with disabilities every year.

*Sienna is thriving thanks to donors like you.*



As soon as TVCC got involved in Sienna's care, everything changed. Sienna saw physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and speech experts.

As Kim says, everything changes when there's a team who believes in a child. And that team has the resources they need because of your generosity.

*"The things we have been able to accomplish since coming here have been unreal. The communication device changed everything for Sienna. It's both a computer, and a speech generator that helps her communicate. She controls it with her eyes."*

*Now Sienna is really pushing to be as independent as possible. And with this communication device, she can be. The last years have been so exciting – she can read books, she can answer questions at home school, she can do math and write sentences."*

Donors like you help fund the equipment that therapists used to help Sienna. You believed in her just like they did. As Kim says,

*"It took someone seeing that although Sienna is physically disabled, she is very smart and capable of achieving so much more with access to technology that helps her learn and grow. It took the professionals at TVCC and Children's Hospital – and many others – to see what she could do. And now she's done amazing things with it."*

Way to go, Sienna. We love watching you shine!





## What Makes a Hero?

*Alan Mckinnon thinks about his daughter's doctors every single day.*

Six years ago, when Ruby was 17, she was diagnosed with stage three ovarian cancer. The diagnosis came out of nowhere – a complete and devastating shock for this family.

Alan is thankful that Ruby could still be cared for as a paediatric patient at Children's Hospital, where doctors discovered her tumour was growing so fast that they operated within a week.

*"I often think about what a hero is.*

*Is it an athlete, a pop star, a social activist?*

*To me, it's Dr. Sugimoto and Dr. Gibson.*

*Every day of their lives they take on the task of using their talents to do this incredibly difficult, demanding work.*

*They saved Ruby's life, and I think about them with gratitude every single day."*

Surgeon Dr. Sugimoto took the time to get to know the whole family – and even brought his own daughter in to visit Ruby. Even after she was done as his patient and admitted for chemo, he would come in and sit with her. Alan knows this dedication was key to keeping Ruby calm and optimistic.



*Ruby in hospital with Dr. Sugimoto.*



*Alan Mckinnon and his daughter Ruby today.*

Ruby is now 23 years old, and just graduated from university. Just a month after that milestone, she signed a record deal with a major label. (Tip: you can find her wonderful music on Spotify under the name "Flower Face.")

To support the hospital that cared for his family so well, Alan decided to become a monthly donor. Giving monthly is a fantastic way to show your caring heart and ensure that Children's Hospital has the priority funds available to upgrade equipment, support research, or fund the patient-family centred programs that help provide the best possible care for children and their families.

If you are interested in joining the Children's Caring Hearts Monthly Giving program, please get in touch with Sara Steers at 548-689-9249 or [ssteers@childhealth.ca](mailto:ssteers@childhealth.ca).

*Children's Hospital saved my life, there is no doubt. The incredible skill, commitment and engaged compassion of Dr Sugimoto and Dr Gibson, and every last person who works at Children's Hospital, they are gifts I am grateful for every day of my life.*

*-Ruby*

## Meet Tia

### Our 2022 Children's Miracle Network Champion Child

For 11 years now, doctors at Children's Hospital have kept a close eye on Tia, who had heart surgery for multiple congenital heart defects when she was only two-years-old. Tia has a complete cardiology check-up once a year, and our doctors are careful to

monitor for any change in her heart function. Tia's family is grateful that this exceptional care is available so close to home. Thanks to the paediatric cardiac team and your generous support, this karate-loving kid's heart is just as strong as the rest of her!



## Thanks to You, The Music Played On

*We are so grateful for our donors' support of the Music Therapy program – which brings emotional and psychological healing for our young patients and their families in so many ways.*

Kayleigh has spent much of the last two years in rounds of chemotherapy to remove benign tumours on her spine. You helped make sure that our music therapist Karina was there to support her all the way.

Once a week, for three weeks out of every month, this brave little girl has been coming to the hospital for

chemo treatments. She became fast friends with Karina.

Kayleigh loves Karina and spent her time during chemo singing songs and listening to music together.

And thanks to the best possible treatment and care at Children's, the tumours on her spine are gone!

Our deep gratitude goes to all the donors who understand that keeping children calm and their spirits lifted is an essential part of healing and helping them overcome serious health issues.



## Community Events

**Lowes Campaign** | March 28 to May 1

**Bowling for Miracles** | April 24

**Million Reasons Run** | May 1 to 31

**Month of Miracles  
Walmart Campaign** | May 2 to June 12

**Wine, Women & Shoes** | June 2

**Miracle Treat Day** | August 11

## Leave a Lasting Legacy for the Future

For the last hundred years, Children's Hospital has been caring for the children we love. A gift in your Will can help us support our community's children for the next century, too.

To speak to someone about this wonderful way of giving, contact **Vicki Hayter** at [vhayter@childhealth.ca](mailto:vhayter@childhealth.ca), or call **548-689-9252**.

Your legacy can be a child's future.

