

Le Children Newsletter

June 2023



" It is comforting to know that you are there, with The Children's, to help us get through difficult times. "

la fondation
de l'hôpital
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I was helping my little Marguerite get dressed for school when I heard a piercing scream. I raced down the stairs and found Henri sitting there, frozen in place, soaked from his torso to his thighs. A kettle full of scalding water spilled on him while making his oatmeal.

Henri had burns on 30% of his body. His twin brother, Renaud, had burns on his arms. At The Children's, Henri was plunged into an artificial coma to avoid going into shock. He had deep second-degree burns; every layer of his skin was affected. He underwent three surgeries to detach the layers of dead skin, as well as several skin grafts. The pain was unbearable, and, to make matters worse, poor Henri did not tolerate morphine well.

Bedridden for three weeks with his body wrapped in bandages, his muscles atrophied to the point that he had to learn how to walk again with the help of a physiotherapist. Back at home, we had to change his bandages, massage the wounds daily to help keep the skin more supple, and Henri had to wear compression garments to smooth his scars. It was difficult for him, and it all seemed so unfair.

My heart broke when I heard Henri, mischievous and silly by nature, say: "I don't really like life."

That's when I understood the importance and value of being surrounded by caring people like you and the nurses and psychologists at The Children's who helped my son recover physically and mentally. I can never thank you enough for your support.

Through your donations you allow the Hospital and its specialized personnel to provide the best care possible to children and families like mine when they need it most.

Luckily for my son, only one scar remains visible. While he still wears compression garments, he's bursting with energy and has found his little bratty side again.

How will his skin react as he grows? Will he need more surgeries? Only time will tell. **But we know we're in good hands. Thanks to the team at the Children's. Thanks to your donations.**

Marie Maude Lafleur
Marie Maude, mom of Henri, Renaud and Marguerite

Your Generosity Goes Straight to the Heart

In 2021, Stephanie was getting ready to go home with James, her third child, when the doctors observed that his little heart's oxygen saturation levels were too low. He was quickly transferred to The Children's, where specialists confirmed he had an anomaly causing a mechanical problem in his heart function. He underwent surgery at 5 days old and left the Hospital a few days later. Everything had worked out.

One year later, James' state deteriorated to the point he had to be force-fed through a tube; when he drank, the milk went directly into his lungs. At 13 months old, he underwent another surgery. Dr. Christo Tchervenkov, Division Head of Pediatric Cardiovascular Surgery, detected another very rare heart anomaly and corrected it. James was hospitalized for two months, which felt like an eternity to his family.



A Feel-Good Visit

When James came out of his second open-heart surgery, a visit from Charlotte Cardin at The Children's on November 14th brought joy to the hearts of James and his family.

Meanwhile, genetic testing revealed James had Williams-Beuren syndrome, a condition causing heart defects, as well as cognitive and physical developmental delays. Right now, if one thing is for certain, it's that James loves music. During his stay at the Hospital, he enjoyed a few music therapy sessions that engaged and stimulated him and made him happy. This program, entirely funded by donors like you, helps patients and families get through difficult times.

His family is so grateful to The Children's personnel, doctors, and specialists taking care of James. He is now seen by the multidisciplinary team in complex care and cardiology, and he's doing well. They also thank the music therapists at Child Life Services for those soothing moments and the positive impact music had on James.

IT'S FUNNY HOW OUR FIRST TANNANT D'AVRIL GOT NOTICED



April Fool's Day is a day for playing pranks and getting pranked as well. It's the brattiest day of the year.

The perfect day to celebrate the mischief of children. So we

declared April 1st the *Tannant d'avril*, the world day for little brats. Why? To remind Quebecers how lucky we are to have our little brats and to highlight the Hospital's constant efforts to get its young patients back on their feet. Because everyone knows that a bratty kid is a healthy kid.

Guaranteed smiles

The Tannant d'avril took the city by storm, on billboards, the web, social media, and even at the grocery store. Check out this video of our little pranksters up to no good.



[Watch the video →](#)

AURIKA AND HER TWO DAUGHTERS FLEE UKRAINE TO START A NEW LIFE IN QUEBEC

In March 2022, Russian bombs pummeled the city of Mariupol, Ukraine, leaving nothing behind but rubble.

During the siege, Aurika and her daughters Vladyslava (Vlada) and Kristina took refuge at a friend's. In the middle of the night, a bomb sailed through the roof and exploded. Aurika crawled through the smoke-filled darkness and over broken glass to find Vlada, age 8, under the rubble.

Aurika started to dig. A piece of the bomb, the size of a large egg, had pierced Vlada's leg. Mom tied a tourniquet above the gaping hole and called an ambulance but with bombs falling, it took hours for help to arrive. The ambulance didn't have room for everyone; Aurika had to leave Kristina, age 16, behind.

The hospital was in chaos, with the wounded everywhere. There was no anesthesia so Vlada was held down while the surgeon removed shrapnel from her leg.

Aurika vividly recalls the horrors she witnessed. The doctors had few supplies, were forced to use gasoline to sterilize instruments and garden implements to perform amputations. Aurika and Vlada sheltered in the basement of the hospital for weeks. Kristina's whereabouts were unknown.

When finally reunited, the trio headed to a Polish refugee camp. When asked where she wanted to relocate, Aurika replied, "I want to get as far away from the war as possible."

Last July, the family arrived in Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville and turned to The Children's for help. Vlada was in tremendous pain and had a pronounced limp.



Clutching a teddy bear, the girl arrived at the Edwards Family Interdisciplinary Centre, for Complex Pain. Dr. Pablo Ingelmo, Director of the Centre and Dr. Justine Turmel-Roy, a Fellow, assessed the child and realized she had an invisible wound – psychological distress. Vlada's terrifying experience in the Ukrainian Hospital left her with post-surgical traumatic stress disorder. The team had to gain her trust to help her overcome her fear and heal.

It didn't take long, about four visits, before Vlada happily arrived for appointments and, thanks to physiotherapy, her limp vanished.

NEW HOME, NEW LIFE, AND A FUTURE

Mom says they are happy in Quebec. Aurika says, "In Canada, my daughters have a future!"

Child refugees like Vlada can endure unimaginable hardships before arriving in Quebec. Many have witnessed war atrocities or spent months in refugee camps. They have lost or left loved ones behind. Everything familiar has vanished. Many also arrive with neglected chronic illnesses, developmental delays, post-traumatic stress and other ailments.

But thanks to your generous donations, The Children's can offer a wide range of highly-specialized services to refugee children, whose healthcare needs are often extremely complex, and help to provide a safe haven and new hope for the future.



A new addition to the pet therapy team

The Children's pet therapy team is proud to present Kitchi. This big cuddly dog is joining Maya, the experienced Maltese who has already been with us for 10 years. Thanks to your donations, more children will be able to enjoy their soothing and playful visits.

The Children's Foundation thanks you from the bottom of its heart.



Name: Kitchi
Age: 2 years old.
Weight: 36 kg of love.
Breed: Goldendoodle.
Specializations: Calming, spreading joy, and helping to heal.
Assignment: Hemato-oncology, hemodialysis, psychiatry, and more.
Work schedule: One visit per week.
Favorite food: Treats.
Activity or sport: Kitchi loves being scratched and playing catch.



50 YEARS AND STILL AS BRATTY AS EVER

The Children's Foundation is blowing out 50 candles this year and hopes to continue to count on your generosity. Thank you for the countless young patients who are now healthy and enjoying life because of your support. Thank you for the spectacular medical and scientific breakthroughs that would have been impossible without your help.

Since its creation in 1973, The Children's Foundation has raised more than \$600 million to help sick children in Montreal and throughout Quebec get back on their feet. This success is your success!

But our story has just begun. We are deeply proud of the accomplishments of the past 50 years. We are deeply proud of YOU for your endless compassion and support. We cannot wait to see what comes next! With your help, our expert medical teams will continue to find Unexpected Ways to Heal so that sick children in Quebec can get back on their feet and return to their mischievous selves.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for the past 50 years and for all that is yet to come.



Players with big hearts

P.K. Subban and Carey Price each scored points with young patients and their families with their recent, and separate, surprise visits to The Children's. P.K. always makes it a priority to stop by The Children's when he's in Montreal and it's always very appreciated.

Carey took the pass from P.K. and came to say goodbye to our young patients before he leaves for out West this summer. He will be missed and we look forward to seeing him in the future.

