

Robert Nelson Foundation  
1055 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1710  
Los Angeles, CA 90017-5671

Dear Robert Nelson Foundation Board of Trustees,

The Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Child Life team is dedicated to providing quality psychosocial support to children—through preparation, education, support and distraction, our Child Life specialists are an essential part of the medical care provided. Our team turns fear into fun through positive play. None of this would be possible without philanthropy and supporters like you. Thank you!

Your support of the Child Life program this year is appreciated and has been a lifeline during the COVID-19 pandemic due which caused even greater isolation and anxiety for our patients.



Our nimble Child Life school education team adapted quickly, shifting to a digital platform without missing a beat. Because of you, we continued hands-on learning with single-use supplies to keep our kids safe. From mid-March through the first of June, we had 100 WIZkids (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade 'classroom' style lesson) participants in the group setting and 150 who joined us from the bedside. The last week

of the school year brought a (virtual) trip around the world—including Ireland, Spain, India and New Zealand. Students were given a WIZkids' passport to log the sights, sounds, currency, landmarks, and languages of our destinations.



You also helped us create meaningful moments, including an 8th grade graduation for a patient who had to miss the “drive through” ceremony at their school. Team members rallied together to create a ceremony filled with pomp, circumstance, and confetti! The parent shared how much this meant to their family, and it was a great reminder of the importance of honoring these educational milestones even when children are in the hospital.

They also held a very unique event of a ‘pizza making challenge’ in the Children’s Hospital’s Café using their own ideas for ingredients. They had everything from S’more pizza to Cheetos pizza!

The Child Life team has done a great job of pivoting to utilize increased technology too, giving them the ability to have an even farther reach.

Technology such as Microsoft Teams has given them the ability to support more children through tele-health visits. The virtual visits include:

- Sibling support for kids who have a brother or sister in the NICU or in-patient
- Psychosocial preparation for procedures and surgeries prior to their hospital visit connecting families with their loved ones who were inpatient
- Worked with hundreds of families this year in our Pediatric and Infant Intensive Feeding Program
- Bereavement support for children of adult patients and pediatric patients who are on their end-of-life journey

And technology is becoming more and more important for the Child Life team, especially with the teen population. The Children’s Hospital’s Blue Glass Studios, an in-house ‘television’ studio, has proven to be incredibly helpful, especially in the time of COVID. They have been using the studio to provide an opportunity for teen patients to host staff interviews, Bingo and other games, and learn about how to use the audio/visual equipment.



The Child Life staff also has been able to have a 12-month fellowship program that includes a research component. There are only 20 of these fellowships in the country.

Thank you again for your incredibly generous support. We could not have a program that impacts thousands of families each year *without you!*

If there is any additional information you need or questions you may have, please feel free to reach out to me by email [Kris.palosaari@spectrumhealth.org](mailto:Kris.palosaari@spectrumhealth.org) or phone (616) 970-7105.



Kindest regards,

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