

Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Foundation Annual Case for Support

What makes Helen DeVos Children's Hospital a unique resource of healing for children and families of West Michigan?

As the region's largest children's hospital, serving children from 37 counties, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital has an unmatched scope of more than 150 pediatric specialist physicians in 40 pediatric specialty programs dedicated to "caring for children and families with compassion, excellence and innovation."

Many of the important programs that make a difference and touch the lives of our children are possible only through gifts to the annual support.

Charitable gifts help launch or sustain programs that otherwise could not be funded out of normal operating budgets, but are integral to the environment of caring at the children's hospital.

Funding emerging needs as Helen DeVos Children's Hospital continues to grow and add new clinical capability are also made possible through charitable gifts through annual support.

Building an endowment that will help launch and nurture new clinical program initiatives, support research and sustain the unique caring services that make a children's hospital a special place for children is a major new focus.

Examples of programs supported through annual gifts are covered in the following categories:

- **Unique Specialty Care:** Helen DeVos Children's Hospital has more than 150 pediatric specialists caring for children in 40 pediatric specialty programs including neurosurgery, cardiology and cardiac surgery, and orthopaedics. Donor support has helped establish new services in nephrology, (kidney disease) bone marrow transplantation, sedation and pain management. It funds an oral cleft program that coordinates care and treatment for children with cleft lip and palate. The Midwest Regional Bone Dysplasia Clinic serves children with disorders of bone growth or development. The Child Protection Team coordinates care for victims of child abuse and neglect, provides counseling and advocates for children and families exposed to violence.

- **Special Support Services for Children and Families:** only a children's hospital can provide specially trained staff in child development in the Child Life program to help normalize and explain the hospital experience to children. Whether it's using medical play to prepare children for surgery or teaching positive coping skills, Child Life helps increase child and parent understanding of the hospital experience in a way that reduces anxiety and fear. Pastoral Care and Bereavement brings spiritual and emotional nurturing to children and families in the midst of health crisis, trauma and loss. The Pediatric Oncology Resource Team, PORT, supports families of children with cancer. Families at Heart supports parents whose child is undergoing treatment for complex heart problems.
- **Initiatives that Keep Kids Safe:** childhood injuries are the leading cause of death in children. Preventing injuries through education, infant car seat installation and bicycle helmet distribution is supported by gifts to the annual campaign. The community-based Safe Kids programs in Greater Grand Rapids and on the Lakeshore teach safety on the road, on the water and in the home in partnership with local law enforcement and safety officials. Preventing death or illness caused by poisoning is the mission of the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Regional Poison Center which handles more than 100 calls for help every day.
- **Medically Staffed Camps and Retreats for Children:** these programs for seriously ill and injured children bring a specialized camp experience that otherwise would not be possible for children with burns, asthma or other chronic diseases. Children who have suffered the loss of a sibling, or experienced a physical or emotional trauma have a special camp to guide them and their families through grief.
- **Specialized equipment to meet the unique needs of hospitalized children:** the range of sizes of children, from one pound premature newborns, to adult sized teenagers demand high technology equipment uniquely designed to fit children of all shapes and sizes. The Giraffe Omni Bed provides a special warming environment for premature babies who can't regulate their body temperature. High frequency oscillatory ventilators help children breathe easier while being treated for acute respiratory distress syndrome.
- **Emerging Needs:** Philanthropy expands our capability to provide care "close to home". For example, it has supported the launch of new therapies such as kidney transplantation and bone marrow transplants. In 2007, Helen DeVos Children's Hospital launched a new "intensive feeding program" and will be one of only five in the country designed to help children with the inability to eat normally learn how through highly structured treatment.
- **Endowment:** Building endowment resources that will help launch and build new clinical program initiatives, support research and sustain unique children's hospital services is an important goal. Helen DeVos Children's Hospital is dedicated to providing care close to home for the children and families of West Michigan.