



RONALD McDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES
AUSTRALIA



HEROES HAPPEN EVERY DAY

2015 RMHC® ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



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RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES: FUNDAMENTAL TO THE MEDICAL LANDSCAPE

“Over the last three decades the role of Ronald McDonald Houses in the ‘total care’ of children and families has become increasingly recognised and appreciated across Australia. The fact that expert paediatric facilities and specialty teams are highly centralised is an international reality. Consequently, children and families may need to travel great distances to receive care in a Children’s Hospital, often for long periods and/or over multiple occasions. This is particularly true for Australian rural or regional families. It then follows that, because we firmly believe that families need to be with their child as much as possible, a ‘home away from home’ is a critical part of total care. Ronald McDonald Houses meet the needs of children and their families in an adaptable, nurturing and supportive environment. They provide comfort, reassurance and deal with many of the practical obstacles to optimal care. The family can then better focus on the treatment program and devote their attention to the physical and emotional needs of their child. Care is able to be both comprehensive and more effective.”

Professor Les White AM DSc
MBBS FRACP MHA AFACHSM
NSW Chief Paediatrician



MALCOLM COUTTS

It was 20 years ago that I came into Ronald McDonald House Charities as the first full-time national staff member. I believe was first full time employee of RMHC outside of the USA. Of course there were local House managers, but nobody was running RMHC. I had joined the navy earlier in my career and had a strong sense of service, and an enjoyment of independence. So this job ticked many boxes.

When I first came on board there were six Ronald McDonald Houses. We didn't have any Family Retreats, or any Family Rooms or the Learning Program, just had six great Houses. We are now finishing the building of building our 17th. Plus, we have relocations and almost every House has had an extension or a re-build since then. It's not always appreciated that the Learning Program and the Family Retreats were Australian originals. The Family Rooms idea came out of the USA but we were early adopters and have really got on with it.

Because of this and so much more, I have loved the variety and meaning of the work that we do at RMHC. I have always known how lucky I am to have a job that has real personal meaning. To be able to come to work and create programs that are vitally important to our community (just check some of the testimonials from senior medical experts in this annual report) has been very special. I have also benefited from the passion and support that McDonalds Australia has always had for the Charity. We have been fortunate to be underpinned by its financial strength and long term passion of its franchisees.

It is a very good time to hand over the reins of the organisation. It is in great shape and we are still growing and facing new challenges. A new team can go ahead and try new things.

The new CEO Barbara Ryan is the perfect leader for this organisation, but she will never tell you that. She is too modest. From her clinical experience as a physiotherapist, to being a hospital policy expert, to her experience with the Royal Flying Doctors and, of course, her eight years with RMHC, she is an excellent fit for this role. Barbara is very clever, very open and is going to do great things.

Farewell, and thank you to all of the RMHC staff, volunteers, Board members, McDonald's staff, sponsors and donors. With your continued support Ronald McDonald House Charities will continue to grow its vital offer of support to families with seriously ill children.

OUTGOING CEO



INCOMING CEO

BARBARA RYAN

For two decades of growth, inspiration, leadership and advocacy, we salute you Malcolm Coutts. The shoes that must be filled in your absence are almost as large as Ronald McDonald's, but I will do my best.

This is a truly exciting opportunity and I am buoyed by the support I have already received across the system. As well as continuing to manage and fund the massive growth that Ronald McDonald House Charities has been experiencing over the last few years, we will be creating a new level of collaboration across the Charity. What can the national office do for the House Chapters and Programs? What can we do less of and what can we do more of?

My goal is to develop a new understanding of the Charity in its entirety, then work out how we need to grow as we head into the future. This will be done in full consultation with every part of the Charity and with all of our supporters. We look forward to greater engagement between the House Chapters and RMHC as our partnership with McDonald's Australia goes from strength to strength and we will continue to remain relevant and an integral part of the Australian medical landscape.

From all of us at RMHC we thank you for your donations and ongoing support. With our much needed growth your help is more important than ever before.



EVERY DAY IS A CELEBRATION FOR OUR LITTLE HEROES.

OUR PROGRAMS

Ronald McDonald Houses

There are now 16 Ronald McDonald Houses in Australia accommodating over 8000 families annually.

Ronald McDonald Learning Programs

Australia's leading educational catch-up program helps over 1200 families and their children every week. Over 20,000 health and education professionals have benefited from the EDMed Professional Development Program since 2009.

Ronald McDonald Family Rooms

Over 230,000 visits to the 15 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in Australian hospitals every year allowing families to take a break and relax in a homely environment.

Ronald McDonald Family Retreats

When a family needs time to recover and re-connect, Ronald McDonald Family Retreats offer them the special family holiday time they need. Over 1600 nights of holiday accommodation are provided each year.

Ronald McDonald Care Mobiles

The clinical specialists coordinated by Royal Far West have been busier than ever in 2015, serving 1685 children in remote regions of NSW. The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile's many services include hearing and dental screenings and speech assessments.

RMHC Grants

Over the life of RMHC more than \$4.8 million in grants has been provided to services that help seriously ill children and their families. Australia's three public Cord Blood Banks have RMHC as their major private funder. Eleven Charlie Bell Scholarships of \$5000 are awarded each year to deserving young people who have recovered from serious illness.



CHILDREN MAKE HEROES AND BECOME HEROES!



Independent academic research has proven the power, effectiveness and necessity of the Ronald McDonald House Charities programs. Throughout this Annual Impact Report we illustrate specific research by referencing real-life experiences, from families with seriously ill children to RMHC staff and volunteers working to help those families, and from businesses supporting the Charity to the medical establishment itself. Along the way we discover the breadth of Ronald McDonald House Charities, which has helped over 200,000 families since 1981.

RMHC HELPS FAMILIES BY REDUCING STRESS AND FINANCIAL BURDENS

Two peer-reviewed research articles revealed that Ronald McDonald Houses support a family's ability to stay together when their sick child requires medical treatment and, in doing so, reduces family's stress and anxiety. RMHC does this by providing safe, clean and comfortable accommodation, close to or within the hospital, for families during their greatest time of need. We also offer short breaks away from the ward with our Ronald McDonald Family Rooms, time to recover and bond with our Ronald McDonald Family Retreats (see below) and much more.



HOLIDAY OF A LIFETIME

How many times have you said, "I need a holiday"? Imagine how real this need would be if your child had just been through a battle with a serious illness. Sydney dad Mick, whose son Leo suffers from a rare and severe lung condition and who has been a frequent user of the Ronald McDonald Family Room in Randwick's Sydney Children's Hospital, recently enjoyed his first week away with his family at the Ronald McDonald Family Retreat in Batemans Bay.

Q. After such a long time in hospital, how did it feel to be away from it all?

A. It was amazing, like paradise. We were very ready for a break. We were drained mentally, emotionally and financially. Without the Family Retreat we never could have afforded a break.

Q. Did the time away make a difference to your family?

A. It made an enormous difference. After the first day we were all just very chilled for the first time in a long time. There were no schedules and no alarm clocks. We ate when we were hungry and went to the beach when we were hot. Most importantly, we had time together as a family without distractions. And believe it or not, Leo seemed to improve while we were away.

Q. What if the Family Retreat didn't exist?

A. There's only so much you can do in Sydney when you have no money. You're stuck at home, and the kids get bored and grumpy. The break just helped us all to relax and be together. We actually had tears in our eyes as we began driving home.



This place truly has been unbelievable,” says Andrew, a dad who stayed at Ronald McDonald House Townsville when his partner gave birth prematurely. “The staff and volunteers and other people staying in the House really are there for you. Without it I would have been living on a couch at my partner’s hospital bedside or in a tent in the scrub somewhere nearby.



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE



reduces stress & financial burden

& FOR FAMILIES

when they are far from home



and accessing medical care for their child.*

*Daniel et al. Rural and Remote Health (2013)





Less than 12 months after the crippling loss of their one-year-old son Cash, Jodi and her husband were back at Ronald McDonald House Townsville looking after their daughter Kennedy, born 15 weeks premature. “Near the end of our five-month stay and 100 days in hospital, we know this time we have our happy ending ... we will be taking our baby home,” Jodi said. “We will never forget Ronald McDonald House, our home away from home.”

FAMILY PROXIMITY TO THE HOSPITAL PROVIDES IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS

Research results published in *Family, Systems & Health* (2013) concluded that families staying close to the hospital are provided important benefits for the family experience, for their psychological well-being and for their perceptions of child recovery. A Ronald McDonald House enables these benefits for families.



“There was a 48-hour period where the medical staff were preparing us for things to go either way,” says Madeline, a mum who stayed at Ronald McDonald House Randwick when one of her twin boys was diagnosed with a potentially fatal illness. “Had those been our last moments with Harry, I would have been horrified to think that (Harry’s twin brother) Patrick could not have been there with us. What Ronald McDonald House gave us was the space to be a family during what could have been the last moments of what we knew was our family. You can’t really put a price on what they provided.”



A STUDY OF OVER

2000



FAMILY MEMBERS

CONFIRMED THAT STAYING CLOSE TO THE HOSPITAL

reported benefits for the *family experience,*



for their psychological *well-being*

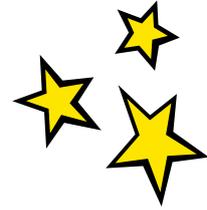
and for their perceptions of *child recovery.**



*Franck et al., *Families, Systems, & Health* (2013)

OUR NEW BUILDS

In 2015 two new Ronald McDonald Houses opened their doors after being custom-built from scratch to house our little superheroes and their families. Welcome to the Houses that love built.



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE PERTH



First opening its doors on December 9 in 2015, the new Ronald McDonald House Perth welcomed 71 families in the three weeks before the end of the year.

Having increased in size from 18 rooms in the old House to 47 rooms in the new building, the House can accommodate a total of 220 people each night. Where other Houses typically supply a cooked dinner once or twice each week, Ronald McDonald House Perth aims to have volunteers cooking up a feast for families in need every single night of the week.

It takes 180 volunteers to keep the House running smoothly. Those volunteers have been grouped into various new roles including:

- 'FABS' - Family ambassadors
- 'Fabbie Cabbies' - Shuttle bus drivers
- 'Domestic Gods & Goddesses' - Cleaning team
- 'Team Rise n Shine' - Laundry
- 'Ed Heads' - Educational assistance
- 'Dinner Squad' - Dinner service
- 'Movie Mates' - Movie night volunteers
- 'FRoomies' - Family Room volunteers

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE ORANGE

The first family stayed at Ronald McDonald House Orange on April 24 and since then over 100 families have found comfort under our roof. Around 20% of families stay for between 31 to 90 days. This is what one of those families had to say:

“ I was in the process of making up a bed in the back of my car when I received a call from Alison at Ronald McDonald House asking me what time I would be checking in. The relief I felt was enormous knowing that I would have somewhere safe and warm to sleep but still be able to be close to my son. I cried for close to ten minutes when I got off the phone ...

Ronald McDonald House is so much more than a safe place to stay. It’s a home where tired and exhausted parents can find refuge, comfort and the strength to face another day.

Orange House - Stats & Facts

- Volunteers - 146
- Volunteer hours in 2015 - 8692
- Projected volunteer hours in 2016 - 14604
- Average length of stay for families with children in the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Unit - 3 weeks
- Families accommodated so far - 57



RMHC HELPS IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND CAREGIVERS

In a survey of 250 families, researchers found that children and their parents who stayed at a Ronald McDonald House had a better perceived quality of life than expected for children with chronic diseases.

VIEW FROM THE FRONT LINE

Tamara Angus, Guest Services Coordinator at Ronald McDonald House South-East Queensland, has been with the Charity for almost five years. Every day she sees first-hand the difference that Ronald McDonald House makes to the lives of families.

Q. How do families react to the support they receive at the House?

A. Families often arrive in pyjamas and barefoot having experienced a traumatic event, from an accident to a diagnosis, to a baby who couldn't wait to arrive. We give them a bed, a shower, toiletries and food. Families are constantly surprised that we can provide so much for them. Perhaps most importantly, our onsite staff and volunteers are able to offer a smile and some hope when things appear bleak.

Q. Is the emotional support as important as the physical?

A. Our Guest Services area offers support for both emotional and financial needs. Many a tear has been shed in the office while a parent relays their experiences, and we're a shoulder to cry on. Once, three years after a family's initial visit, they returned and thanked me for being there for them when their baby had passed away. Sometimes we have no idea of the impact we have on people's lives.

Q. What do the families value the most?

A. The reduction in stress is often commented on. After spending yet another day at the hospital, to be able to come back to a home-cooked meal, a comfortable bed and a place where they know people understand what they're going through, families say is of immeasurable value.

Q. How is the House important for the quality of life of the siblings of the seriously ill child?

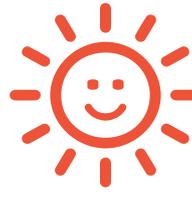
A. Keeping families together when they face months away from home makes such a difference. Siblings could get lost in this process. They miss home, friends and school. We offer lots of activities for children and the opportunity for the siblings to do creative and fun things away from the hospitals. One little boy whose family were guests when he was born returned to the house two years later when his sibling was born. His mum commented on how much he had come out of his shell while he was here. He was talking more and interacting with the staff. She couldn't thank us enough for taking the time to interact with him and make him comfortable enough to grow.



IN A SURVEY OF

250 
families

researchers found that
children who stayed at a
Ronald McDonald House

had a better perceived
 *quality of
Life**

*Archivos Argentinos de Pediatría (2014).



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSES HELP STRENGTHEN FAMILY COPING ABILITIES

Staying at a Ronald McDonald House and utilising its programs supports families to cope. In a research study, 'support from family and friends' was identified as the most important ingredient in the development of a positive coping strategy.



“Amelia and Sam were able to come to the hospital after school and spend time with their sister Sofia in her room, then they happily went off to the Family Room to do their homework,” says Kath, a mum whose daughter was injured during an accident and who utilised the Ronald McDonald Family Room at Sydney’s Royal North Shore Hospital. “Later on we would eat dinner together in the Family Room, rather than being separated due to our situation. This meant our family could be together the whole time. And when Sofia was finally allowed out of bed after six days, we wheeled her into the Family Room for dinner. That was the first time I saw her smile since the accident.”

Families are able to
cope better

& focus on the needs of the
sick child

when they
have support

from family members
and other families



*Nabors et al., *Families, Systems, & Health* (2013)



“The girls never coped well when we were apart,” says Carla, a mum who stayed at Ronald McDonald House Perth, with three daughters aged six, five and three, as well as her seriously ill two-year-old boy. “They worried a lot and originally I didn’t understand why. It has been especially difficult for our six-year-old because she is old enough to understand how serious things are. Her brother is in a high-risk category for sudden death. She is scared for her brother, and she sees her mum and dad being scared, too. I realised she is scared of not being around to say goodbye to her brother if he died.”



IMPACT ACROSS

16
HOUSES



& 349 ROOMS HOSTED
8,134 families



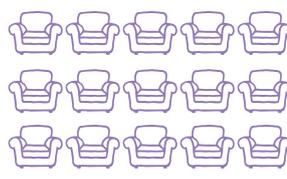
A TOTAL OF

2,943,516

NIGHTLY GUESTS SINCE COMMENCEMENT



15
FAMILY ROOMS



18,879
UNIQUE FAMILIES



HAVE DROPPED IN FOR
231,240 VISITS



5
FAMILY RETREATS



ALL MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO

203 STAFF
& 155 BOARD MEMBERS

HOSTED
306 FAMILIES



2009
REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

12,716 NIGHTS OF HOLIDAYS SINCE COMMENCEMENT



#keepingfamiliesclose

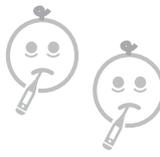


AUSTRALIA - 2015

1 
CARE MOBILE

TREATED
1,685

CHILDREN

AND HELD
50 
CLINICS

1200 
STUDENTS
USING THE LEARNING PROGRAM

48,000

EDMED DELIVERED TO

 **2,615**
EDUCATION
PROFESSIONALS

TUTORING
SESSIONS



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE PROVIDES A SUPPORTIVE, HOME AWAY FROM HOME ENVIRONMENT TO HELP FAMILY MEMBERS COPE WITH THE STRESS AND ANXIETY ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE.



PARENTS OF HOSPITALISED CHILDREN EXPERIENCE HIGH LEVELS OF STRESS AND ANXIETY DURING, AND LONG AFTER, THEIR CHILD'S HOSPITAL STAY

Research conducted in the UK highlighted the extreme level of emotional stress and anxiety that parents experience when their child is hospitalised. Further research published in 2014 found that more than 25% of parents of hospitalised children experienced significant post-traumatic stress symptoms three months after the child's discharge. This demonstrates the importance of a Ronald McDonald House, which provides a supportive, home away from home environment to help family members cope with the stress and anxiety associated with the hospital experience.

“ I was in the Newcastle House for just over two weeks, once I was out of hospital and my husband and our two other children were able to come and stay,” says Lisa, a mum from rural NSW who stayed at Ronald McDonald Houses in Newcastle and Tamworth. “When I was flown to Tamworth for another five weeks my husband went back to work and my kids back to school. But (my husband) Andrew had peace of mind because he knew I was in a safe place in the House, and the kids could come and stay on the weekend and spend time with their new sister. Life would have been terribly difficult without Ronald McDonald House. Having the House right there at the hospital makes you feel much more secure. It takes away some of the stress at a time when your entire life is filled with worry.”

MORE THAN

25% OF PARENTS
OF HOSPITALISED CHILDREN

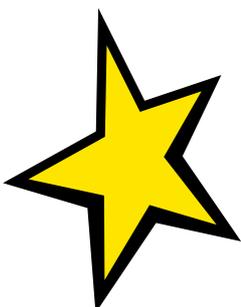


experienced significant post-traumatic stress symptoms three months after the child's discharge.*



A Ronald McDonald House, and ongoing support programs, can help parents cope with stress and anxiety.

*Wray et al., *Journal of Child Health Care* (2011)



“Over the last two years we have spent more time at Ronald McDonald House Perth than in our own home,” says WA mum, Carla. “In fact we often say Ronald McDonald House is our real house. The kids love it here because there are other kids to play with who understand what they’re going through. And while we’re here they feel that their brother will be okay.”



RMHC’s supporter Sealy is donating new beds to every single bedroom in every single Ronald McDonald House, Ronald McDonald Family Retreat and Ronald McDonald Family Room, current or new, across Australia. Thank you, Sealy!

PARENTS GET BETTER SLEEP, AND CHILDREN COPE WITH MEDICAL TRAUMA THROUGH PLAY, AT RONALD MCDONALD HOUSES

Research published in Behavioural Sleep Medicine Journal found parents who slept at a Ronald McDonald House had better sleep quality than those sleeping at their child's bedside. This better sleep is likely to help parents participate more thoroughly in their child's care. A separate published research report indicated that medical play was an important vehicle for children to express their emotions, to experience a sense of normalcy, and to feel hope for their recovery in the face of medical trauma. Ronald McDonald Houses have play areas that help children cope by connecting with others in similarly challenging situations.

“My husband drove up to Sydney after I took an emergency flight to the hospital with my little girl when she was diagnosed with cancer,” says Nicole, a mum who stayed at Ronald McDonald House Randwick. “The fact that he was able to have a good sleep in the House overnight meant he was able to support our daughter and myself after a truly traumatic night. I hear about people sleeping on the ward and in their cars. Thank God for Ronald McDonald House.”

CHILDREN PLAYING AT A RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE



will allow themselves to *express their emotions*

and therefore experience *a sense of normalcy*



in the face of stress and medical trauma.*



*Nabors et al., *Issues in Comprehensive Pediatric Nursing* (2013)

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE IS A SAFE AND COST-EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO HOSPITALISATION

Results of research studies undertaken in New York demonstrate that a Ronald McDonald House stay for high-risk pregnant women is a safe and cost-effective alternative to hospitalisation that allows patients necessary access to specialty hospital care in a more comfortable and comforting environment.

MORE THAN

40%



OF FAMILIES SERVED

at Ronald
McDonald
Houses



have children in the



*neonatal
intensive
care unit* (NICU).



I was flown to
Townsville
Hospital and

put on bed rest in the hospital, but when I was there I wasn't getting any sleep," says Mackay mum KJ, who was 29 weeks pregnant when we spoke. KJ had suffered a bleed at 23 weeks that caused complications doctors feared could lead to a premature birth. "Being around women with their babies made it very difficult and stressful because I was living with the knowledge that I could lose my baby at any time."

"After four weeks in hospital they allowed me to stay instead at Ronald McDonald House. Now, when my partner Ben comes to stay, I get to spend quality time with him. In the hospital we wouldn't be able to do simple things like lie on a bed and cuddle each other. Those little things mean a lot. And the staff here feel like my family. They really look after me."





In 2015 the team at Ronald McDonald House Westmead, whose services are in greater demand than ever, announced their 'Building Love Campaign'. A \$31 million fundraising campaign for a new, 60-room House (the current House offers 23 rooms), was launched on Valentine's Day and has so far raised around \$21 million. Clearing of the land began in December 2015.



HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL LEADERS BELIEVE RMHC MAKES A SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARE SYSTEM

A study of hospital leaders worldwide showed they believe their partnership with Ronald McDonald House enhances the patient experience, hospital marketing and reach, and reduces staff and economic burdens on the hospital associated with assisting patient families with affordable lodging and other accommodations.



JANINE SAWFORD

**Nurse Unit Manager Paediatric Services
Women's, Adolescent and Children's Services
Tasmanian Health Service - Southern Region**

“Ronald McDonald House Charities is an essential part of the medical landscape in Australia. In the Paediatric setting Ronald McDonald Houses across Australia provide a home away from home for thousands of families each year. Without Ronald McDonald House families would be staying in hotels and would not be receiving wonderful support from dedicated staff and volunteers.”

“In my 25 years working in Paediatric Nursing I have seen first-hand what it is like for families both with and without Ronald McDonald House. Support and services for families are so much more enriched since Ronald McDonald House opened in Hobart in 1998. Families are so supported by everyone involved in RMHC and I know families appreciate being able to return to the House after a long day at the hospital and be greeted by friendly and supportive staff.”

“Being so close to the hospital is a godsend and means families can be involved in their child's care. The value of being in a supportive environment with other families that understand their plight is something we often hear expressed by those who stay at Ronald McDonald House.”





ADJUNCT ASSOCIATE
PROFESSOR
NAOMI DWYER
Chief Executive Officer
Women's and Children's Health
Network, South Australia

“The wonderful team at Ronald McDonald House Adelaide are much loved members of the extended family at Women's and Children's Hospital. The positive impact that keeping families close together makes when they are struggling with the serious illness of their child is palpable. We don't underestimate the therapeutic benefit it also has for a child's experience of care and recovery, having their loved ones close by. Our families and the WCHN team are very grateful for the home away from home they provide, and the especially thoughtful way they go about meeting their needs.”

MORE THAN

90%

of hospital administrators across the world



BELIEVE THAT A RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

reduces parents' stress



the overall *cost to families*

when they have a child with a serious illness.

*Lantz, et al., *Journal of Health Organization and Management* (2015)

THAT'S HOW WE ROLL



Launched in 2011, the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile had a productive year in 2015 having provided medical screening and assessment services to 1685 children.

A large percentage of the children who visit the Care Mobile are referred on to specialists, encouraging early prevention of what could otherwise become serious issues.

The purpose of the custom built, two room clinic-on-wheels, a partnership between RMHC Australia, Royal Far West and Ronald McDonald House Orange, is to deliver care to rural and remote areas of NSW that might not otherwise offer specialist services.

Teams of clinicians offer paediatrics, speech therapy, dietetics, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychiatry and social work.

THE RONALD MCDONALD LEARNING PROGRAM BENEFITS A CHILD'S KNOWLEDGE, SELF CONCEPT, BEHAVIOUR AND HAPPINESS

A research study in WA concluded that after just 40 weeks of weekly tutoring, children who had previously suffered long periods of hospitalisation improved their levels of reading, comprehension, mathematical reasoning, numerical operations, oral expression and more. The same tutoring improved the children's total self concept, behaviour, physical appearance and gave them freedom from anxiety.



Q&A WITH BRAD'S MUM ABOUT THE LEARNING PROGRAM

Having cared for her son Brad, who has been in and out of hospital his entire life due to a debilitating illness causing ulceration of his bowel and oesophagus, Suzanne was overwhelmed with pride when he made it through Year 12 and into university with a little help from his RMHC friends.

Q. What was it that led to you utilising the Ronald McDonald Learning Program?

A. One day with Brad at John Hunter Hospital, when I was a bit of a wreck, I was introduced to a social worker who asked me about my main fears. I told her that falling behind at school causes Brad great anxiety. She introduced us to the Learning Program via Ronald McDonald House Newcastle and Brad ended up having tutoring.

Q. What differences did you notice in Brad once tutoring began?

A. Firstly, without that immense support he would have failed his HSC. In terms of the way he felt about himself, it was as if he'd been drowning and suddenly he'd been dragged aboard a life raft. He wasn't sinking any more. Someone cared enough about him to bring him back to the surface. That thrilled and inspired him.

Q. What did the Learning Program mean to you?

A. It not only saved my son, but it was powerful in terms of advocacy. Brad's school was not aware of how they could support him better so a representative of the Learning Program came with me to a meeting with the school. As a result of that we finally got the support we needed.

Q. Brad was also awarded a RMHC Charlie Bell Scholarship. How will that be used?

A. He hasn't used it yet but he will need it to help pay for university. It is very nice for him to know it's there. I am a widow with three children, all of whom have special needs. So Brad understands how much the RMHC Charlie Bell Scholarship means to us as a family.



NOT JUST
A HOUSE...

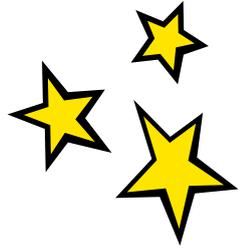
ALSO A LEARNING CENTRE!

The first dedicated Learning Centre in a Ronald McDonald House in Australia opened in Perth's new Ronald McDonald House in mid December. It hosts a range of appealing curriculum-based activities and programs throughout the year, including school holidays. It is known as the 'Work of Heart' program.

A total of 26 different, engaging sessions are delivered by visiting specialists and volunteer teachers known as Ed Heads, including art therapy, music therapy, science activities and many more. The Centre is open to students from 3-5pm Monday to Friday during term time, and at the advertised times throughout the day during the school holidays.

The Work of Heart program is open to all children living at RMH Perth, including siblings. Its goal is to support children with their homework and education, and to use education to empower children so they can look positively to the future.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS



MORTGAGE CHOICE RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

For four years the Mortgage Choice franchisees and staff from across Australia have been enormous supporters of RMHC. They have helped us to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars. In Victoria, Mortgage Choice has staged an annual Charity Challenge fun run. This event raises money and awareness of Ronald McDonald House programs nationwide. It also helps to cement the ever-strengthening relationship between RMHC and Mortgage Choice.

In 2015 over 80 runners took to the track in Carlton, keenly supported and cheered on by friends, family, Ronald McDonald House staff and Egan, the Ronald McDonald House Parkville black labrador.

This is just one example of the many occasions on which our organisations have come together. Every day Ronald McDonald House staff are able to see and show the impact of Mortgage Choice's support on families caring for a seriously ill child. To date, Mortgage Choice's generous fundraising has equated to a night of accommodation for over 4327 families.



THE FIT AND FABULOUS MORTGAGE CHOICE CREW SWEATED IT OUT FOR RMHC

STEGGLES BRINGING FAMILIES BACK TO THE TABLE

One of the simplest, most basic and effective ways that families bond is by sitting down to a meal at the dining table each evening. It's a chance to catch up with each other, share the day's events, reconnect and focus on the most important thing in life - each other.

However, when families are touched by childhood illness, stress and anxiety can often make the family unit vulnerable. During these times it is vital to offer support to families. One partner helping to make that support a reality is Steggles, whose relationship with RMHC has grown, deepened and solidified over the last several years.

Steggles offers support in the form of delicious meals cooked by their wonderful staff, along with well stocked freezers full of 'go to' nutritious meal options ready to be devoured at a moment's notice.

In 2015, Steggles continued to be RMHC's Premium House Partner, donating significant funds as well as Steggles products that were enjoyed by the 8000 families who stayed at one of our 16 Ronald McDonald Houses. It is thanks to Steggles that families, at the end of a long day at the bedside of their seriously ill child, can come back to the House, share a wholesome meal together and recharge their batteries before tomorrow begins.

SUPER AMART TRANSFORMING HOUSES INTO HOMES

'Transforming houses into homes' is the mission of Super Amart and that has certainly been the case since confirming their partnership with RMHC in late 2015. Super Amart knows the importance of making a house a home.

For Super Amart this partnership is about working in the communities in which their business operates. With RMHC they are now sharing their skills, funding and know-how across Australia as they visit our Houses and provide Australian families with all the comforts of home.

In November, Super Amart visited the South East Queensland Chapter and refurbished the outdoor terrace and balcony area. They created a warm and inviting oasis to which families can retreat, share their experiences and support one another as they go through similar journeys.

Super Amart's commitment to helping seriously ill children and their families by contributing substantial funds and furniture to create a home away from home is tremendous. It will be appreciated by over 8000 families this year alone.



THE SUPER AMART TEAM IS TRANSFORMING
FAMILIES' LIVES ONE ROOM AT A TIME

OUR SUPPORTERS

Our generous supporters have made a measurable difference to the lives of families with seriously ill children by helping us to grow our programs. For that we offer our most heartfelt gratitude. In giving, you have helped a small idea to grow large, offering great comfort when it is needed most. It is humbling and exciting to work with organisations and individuals that share our commitment.

We would like to make special mention of our volunteer event committees, including the various state RMHC Gala Ball and RMHC Ride for Sick Kids

committees, who work tirelessly to put on amazing events that raise much-needed funds.

Our appreciation can never be expressed strongly enough to our longest standing partner, McDonald's Australia, including its staff and the wonderful McDonald's Licensees and their crews, who continue to support RMHC every day in many ways.

We look forward to watching the positive impact that your generosity – each and every one of you – makes possible.

RMHC Mission Partner



National Partners



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 Metroll
 Mig
 Michael Hill
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 Radio 2GB
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 Toxfree
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RMHC Foundation Contributors

AT&T Foundation
 The Bell Family Foundation

DIRECTORY

RMHC Australia Office, Thornleigh, NSW

Ronald McDonald House locations:

Adelaide SA

The Centenary Hospital for Women and Children Canberra ACT

Herston QLD

Hobart TAS

Lady Cilento Children's Hospital QLD

Mater QLD

Monash VIC

Newcastle NSW

Orange NSW

Parkville VIC

Perth WA

Randwick NSW

Tamworth NSW

Townsville QLD

Wagga Wagga NSW

Westmead NSW

Ronald McDonald Family Rooms are located in the following hospitals:

The Centenary Hospital for Women and Children Canberra ACT

Gosford Hospital NSW

Gold Coast University Hospital – NICU QLD

Gold Coast University Hospital – Paediatrics QLD

John Hunter Children's Hospital NSW

Lady Cilento Children's Hospital QLD

Monash Medical Centre VIC

Nepean Hospital NSW

The Northern Hospital VIC

Peel Health Campus WA

Princess Margaret Hospital for Children WA

Royal North Shore Hospital NSW

Sydney Children's Hospital NSW

Sunshine Hospital VIC

Wodonga Hospital VIC

Ronald McDonald Family Retreats are at the following locations:

Batemans Bay, NSW

Bunbury, WA

Forster, NSW

Jurien Bay, WA

Palm Cove, QLD

For more information on any RMHC program:

Website: www.rmhc.org.au/

Email: rmhc@rmhc.org.au

Tel: 02 9875 6666
1300 307 642

Ronald McDonald Learning Program

Ronald McDonald Learning Program Westmead, NSW & ACT

Ronald McDonald Learning Program Parkville, VIC & TAS

Ronald McDonald Learning Program Herston, QLD & NT

Ronald McDonald Learning Program Perth, WA

Ronald McDonald Learning Program Adelaide, SA

RMHC Cord Blood Banks

BMDI Cord Blood Bank Melbourne, VIC

The Mater Hospital Brisbane, QLD

Sydney Children’s Hospital Randwick, NSW



THE FUTURE IS YOURS

As we grow and adapt and become an ever more vital piece of the public health puzzle, Ronald McDonald House Charities requires your support more now than at any other time in our history. Please consider what you, your business, your family or your friends might be able to offer and get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.

On behalf of all of the superheroes - the mums and dads, the seriously ill children and their siblings, the RMHC volunteers and staff, the McDonald's Australia staff and licensees and our individual and corporate supporters - thank you.

Contact Information:

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**RONALD McDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES®
AUSTRALIA**

To find out more about RMHC or to make a donation
please visit www.rmhc.org.au, find us on Facebook

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