

# The Therapeutic Power Of Water

## Hydrotherapy



Holly experiences the power of water

## GET THE FACTS!

- Warm water facilitates muscle relaxation and increases peripheral circulation.
- Viscosity of water can provide resistance to improve strength and muscle tone.
- Warm water stimulates body awareness and helps to improve balance and stability.
- The reduction of gravitational forces in the pool allows the child to move within the water more freely, and without causing damage to joints.
- Warm water and buoyancy can result in less sensitivity to pain.

*“Hydrotherapy is one of the activities that is loved by both the kids and their parents. Parents are always thrilled to learn that hydrotherapy will be included in their stay. It is a very important part of their stay at The Darling Home for Kids.”*

-Laurie LeBlanc, Registered Practical Nurse- Team Leader, The Darling Home for Kids

## HOLLY'S STORY

*Born with schizencephaly, or clefts on the cerebral hemispheres of her brain, Holly has developmental delays, nausea, vomiting, and is fed four times a day through a gastrointestinal tube. She is not taking any medications, but is given an Advil if she cries from any pain.*

*The combined effects of Holly's conditions make her muscles stiff, as a result, one of her favourite activities is to take a break from her wheelchair and spend some time in the hydrotherapy pool. While being held up in the water, Holly's arms and legs are therapeutically stretched out followed by a relaxing massage, an activity she enjoys very much. Holly certainly reminds everyone around her how fun and soothing hydrotherapy can be.*

**Hydrotherapy** is the use of water-based exercises and treatments to promote health and wellness. Our hydrotherapy pool is a stimulating and enjoyable way for children to participate in therapy which helps condition muscles, increases range of motion, and improves mobility, thus increasing their health and assisting with pain and symptom management. The pool offers an opportunity to engage in recreation and exercise in the comfort of a controlled water environment. Assistance with temperature control, lessening the body's sensitivity to pain, stress reduction, improving circulation, and encouraging blood flow, all speak to the broad therapeutic powers of hydrotherapy.

At **The Darling Home for Kids**, many of our children have severe physical disabilities and use a wheelchair for mobility. Our hydrotherapy program gives them the opportunity to experience the power and freedom of movement through the sensation of water. This newfound mobility can have a life changing impact as children feel a sense of weightlessness while in the pool. The hydrotherapy jets in the pool create a massage-like feeling, which increases blood circulation and can help to release spastic or tight muscles. Our staff use the pool to help create a sense of tranquility for our children, as well as to relax tight muscles, relieve stress and anxiety, and improve joint, muscle, and nerve problems. This program is used for relaxation, and to help maintain our children's state of health. However as with many children, the pool can also be a place of stimulation and fun - a place where giggles, laughter and splashing abound.

Our hydrotherapy pool room is a dynamic therapeutic space that combines the benefits of hydrotherapy with multi-sensory therapy. The room can be darkened to create a magical space with bubble tubes, water features, and fibre optic lights that drape into the pool and make the water glow with soft colours. An underwater oasis is projected with light onto the ceiling with fish that captivate children as they float on their backs, and a ceiling track lift makes the pool room an accessible therapy which children of all abilities can enjoy.

To learn more please visit us at  
[www.darlinghomeforkids.ca](http://www.darlinghomeforkids.ca)



The Darling Home for Kids hydrotherapy pool



Chris enjoys freedom of movement in water