

# Play to Your Heart's Content

## Recreation Therapy



Rheanne enjoys a nature walk outside

## GET THE FACTS!

### Benefits of Recreation Therapy include:

- Improving physical and cognitive abilities.
- Increasing confidence and self-esteem.
- Providing a greater sense of involvement in the community.
- Strengthening interpersonal skills and relationships.
- Improving coping and adaptation skills, related to stress and anxiety.
- Enhancing well-being and a sense of accomplishment.

*"On my very first day at The Darling Home for Kids, I had planned some sensory play with a big bin of 'cloud dough' made out of flour and baby oil. It was also Meagan's first respite stay and we spent an hour together as we made a HUGE mess playing with the cloud dough. Meagan was showing us who she was - a bit mischievous and a lot of fun! Even better, no one was upset about the mess, as the focus was on providing an awesome experience for Meagan."*

- Sarah Bourbonniere, Recreation Therapist, The Darling Home for Kids

## RHEANNE'S STORY

*Rheanne has been going to The Darling Home for Kids since they opened their doors. After getting sick at the age of one, Rheanne was nonverbal, but that didn't stop her from developing her own way of communicating, including making noise and drawing her eyes towards things she likes.*

*The Recreation Therapy program at The Darling Home for Kids has many of the activities that Rheanne responds well to. She loves the hydrotherapy pool and she enjoys music. With hand-over-hand help, she participates in crafts where she has the opportunity to take home her artwork, and she likes her time in the snoezelen room at the Home. Rheanne loves all things sweet, and after a taste test in baking, she has brought home cookies for her two brothers to enjoy. Whether participating or watching, Rheanne loves interacting with others and being in the center of it all, both of which are made possible through Recreation Therapy.*

**Recreation Therapy** is a process that utilizes participation in recreation to enable people with physical, cognitive, emotional and social limitations to acquire and maintain the skills, knowledge and behaviours that will allow them to enjoy activities and function as independently as possible. Therapeutic recreation is provided by trained professionals. (Therapeutic Recreation Ontario, 2015)

At **The Darling Home for Kids**, through play activities, our Recreation Therapy program

is designed to help engage children in unique experiences that will have a positive impact on their physical, mental and emotional well-being, thus improving their overall quality of life. Our program is inclusive and interactive; it includes activities such as arts and crafts, sensory activities, adaptive swimming, music, games, baking and nature walks.

The Recreation Therapist at The Darling Home for Kids has a very important goal to help make each day a day filled with fun and laughter for our children. As part of our program, various activities are planned and executed, which are selected based on each child's therapeutic goals.

Recreation Therapy results in a profound learning experience for children and positively influences their functional capabilities and quality of life. But all of those therapeutic benefits are disguised in fun interactive activities, which is the best part of all.

Therapy sessions at the Home include one-on-one sessions as well as group sessions, all of which are provided by our trained Recreation Therapist. Each year, The Darling Home for Kids strives to provide over 168 hours of Recreation Therapy across 42 sessions, as we engage children across all of our core programs - respite, palliative and residential care. Each session allows kids to just be kids; to laugh, have fun and play to their hearts' content!

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



Matt enjoys going for a ride on the swing at the playground

Meagan gets messy playing with cloud dough