



The Darling Home for Kids
The Cedarbrook Society
www.darlinghomeforkids.ca

5657 15th Side Road, Milton, ON L9E 0C8
Phone: 905.878.7673 Fax: 905.878.9886
Toll Free: 1.877.406.7673
Charitable No. 88852 4840 RR0001

April 19th 2021

Dear Friends,

As a valued member of The Darling Home for Kids family, we want to keep you apprised of our organization's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on our community and families.

As you know, at The Darling Home for Kids we provide care to children with medical complexities, many of whom have compromised immune systems, underlying health conditions, and are vulnerable to illness. Providing the best care possible for our clients, and protecting the health and well-being of our staff, volunteers, and visitors is of paramount importance.

Over the past year we have been actively monitoring pandemic developments and responding to ever changing guidelines and recommendations for congregate care settings, such as ours, from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. We've implemented enhanced screening processes, and additional personal protective equipment requirements for all staff and visitors. We are limiting the number of non-essential visitors and volunteers entering the Home, and our fundraising and administrative team members are working remotely. Enhanced cleaning and sanitization protocols are also being adhered to as we remain committed to providing a safe space for our children and on-site staff.

Our Programs:

Our long-term Residential Program continues to operate, with additional precautions implemented as we focus on the safety and well-being of our residential clients. Our children are doing well and receiving lots of care and attention from our dedicated team. Several residents transitioned to home-based schooling and we transformed one of our palliative suites into an interim classroom to accommodate distanced learning.

We know the immense toll the pandemic is taking on families who use our respite and hospice palliative services. We continue to offer respite to those who may be in crisis, and have taken additional precautions when these children are admitted alongside our residents. We look forward to a day when we can safely reopen for routine respite and invite all our children back into our Home.

Our Family Support Programs continue to be offered online, through Parents Connect and Siblings Connect. Our Social Worker maintains contact with families through individual counselling sessions held by phone or web conference. When our family events were cancelled, we looked for creative ways to bring some of the magic of The Darling Home for Kids directly to our children. This included launching a virtual little library, online visits with our volunteers, a Willy Wonka trail walk, our Holly Jolly Days in December, and recreational programming held virtually with our wonderful peer volunteers.



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We have truly missed our volunteers this past year, as we had to suspend our corporate groups and peer and family volunteers working within the Home. We have a few individuals and family ‘bubbles’ that tend to our gardens, and some of our youth and peer volunteers connect with our residents and respite children online. From girl chats and virtual spa days, to story time and dance parties, our volunteers are growing their connections with our children.

Our Team:

We continue to implement measures to ensure the health and well-being of our Care Team members, which remains at the forefront. Daily screening is completed for each staff member who enters the Home and we continue to support staff members should they need to be absent from work due to illness, to self-isolate, or because they work in other care environments. Our nurses and personal support workers provide exceptional care for the children and we thank them for their incredible dedication and professionalism during what is, without a doubt, the most challenging time in their careers.

Our Operations team is working remotely and team members can be reached at their respective email addresses. Our clinical leadership team is on-site at the Home daily to provide support to our Care Team and to be another set of hands, when needed, to care for our residents.

We are pleased to share that in March, Halton Region confirmed that all staff working at The Darling Home for Kids would be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as a high priority congregate care setting. The majority of our team members have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, which offers another layer of protection for children in our care.

Our Events:

Much like many other organizations, our events have been impacted by the pandemic. This year we were forced to cancel our in-person volunteer and donor appreciation events, family events and community engagement opportunities. We will be hosting our Wheels event virtually again this year in June, and participants will take to the greens in July for a round of golf at our tournament, while adhering to all COVID-19 guidelines. Our largest signature event will continue as a No-Go Gala and Online Auction, bringing our supporters together virtually to raise essential funds for our programs and services.

We hope that 2022 will have us all back together again, but until then, we thank our community of donors for continuing to support our fundraising efforts.

Our Commitment:

We continue to monitor and adhere to the recommendations from the World Health Organization, Public Health Agency of Canada, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, the Ministry of Community,



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Children and Social Services, and Halton Region Public Health, ensuring alignment and effective implementation of protocols. The health and well-being of our children, families and staff remains paramount, and as healthcare providers, we are committed to providing a high standard of care at The Darling Home for Kids. We will continue to work with our team, families, community partners, and government agencies in the weeks and months ahead as we come together to navigate the third wave of COVID-19.

For the latest updates on our response to COVID-19, please refer to our website www.darlinghomeforkids.ca or contact us by phone at 905-878-7673, or by email info@darlinghomeforkids.ca

At The Darling Home for Kids we are fortunate to have a community of supporters and partners who truly care about our organization, and may worry in uncertain times like this. Rest assured we are doing well, and continuing to take good care of our residents, and each other.

Thank you for your commitment and continued support. We wish you and your loved ones the best during this difficult time.

Regards,

Kristin Horrell
CEO
The Darling Home for Kids