

Better Together

Winter 2018



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Manitoba

Keeping families close™

Proud to support families from Winnipeg, rural Manitoba and beyond



Double the Love

The Mistry Family, from Virden, Manitoba, stayed at Ronald McDonald House and visited the Ronald McDonald Family Room while their premature sons received life-saving medical treatment. Pictured (clockwise from top left) Zeus, Parmeg, Zorav and Shirav

"When I went into pre-term labour in February, we rushed to the Brandon hospital. We were soon informed that we were being moved to Winnipeg because of the complexity of my pregnancy. I was carrying twins, one of which was diagnosed with unexplained intrauterine growth restriction. This means that my unborn baby was considered smaller than it should have been due to not growing at a normal rate inside the womb. It was at this point that the fear of the

unknown set in. Not only were we scared of being first-time parents, but we also knew we had a long journey ahead with no place to call home.

When we arrived in Winnipeg, my husband, Zeus, immediately started looking into accommodation options. At this point, our anxiety was uncontrollable. We hadn't

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planned for this. My sons were early, they were high-risk and on top of that, we were away from home and well outside our comfort zone.

I was admitted to the HSC Women's Hospital where I spent five days before giving birth to our precious twin boys. Zorav was born weighing 4 lbs, while Shirav weighed in at only 2 lbs, 6 oz. During this time, the doctors informed us that we should find a place to stay in Winnipeg for the foreseeable future, until Zorav and Shirav were strong enough to make the trip home.

A nurse at the Brandon hospital had given us some information about Ronald McDonald House Charities Manitoba (RMHC Manitoba). At the time, we were very uncertain about how long our stay in Winnipeg would be, if RMHC Manitoba would be able to accommodate us and what the comfort level would be like for us post delivery. All those questions were answered once Zeus visited Ronald McDonald House. He was so excited about the facilities available. We were now on the waiting list and once admitted, we could stay as long as we needed.

The boys were born premature, but thankfully, genetically healthy. We suspect the pregnancy was a case of superfetation. This occurs when a second, new pregnancy occurs during an initial pregnancy. Babies born from superfetation are often considered twins since they may be born during the same birth on the same day.

The best thing about RMHC Manitoba was that they were able to accommodate ourselves and my mom as well. They truly allow your whole family to support you and your children. We cannot say enough about the staff

and volunteers at RMHC Manitoba. They were kind, understanding, generous and always ready to help.

During our stay at Ronald McDonald House, we were able to make strong friendships. I became really close with another NICU mom that we would see every day and talk about our babies' progress. There was this feeling of comfort in knowing you are not alone. It was really nice to have other families around you who understand what you're going through. We were able to share their joy and support each other through our daily challenges.

It's weird when you think about it, but staying at a Ronald McDonald House or a Ronald McDonald Family Room makes your own problems seem so small when you look at the bigger picture. When you come home to the familiar faces, you forget all your worries and share happy moments with the new family you have made.

It's hard to put the impact RMHC Manitoba has had on our family into words. They provided us with a safe place to get through the tough times together. It's true that they keep families together when it's needed most.

Among the many wonderful things RMHC Manitoba gives us, the top two things in our opinion are:

1. As a parent, all you have to think about is your children. Everything else is taken care of for you by the amazing staff and volunteers at RMHC Manitoba.
2. At RMHC Manitoba, you're assured that you're not alone and there's always support. Staying here gives you the feeling of a strongly knit community, a family. To us, the H in RMHC Manitoba means Home." ❤️

-Parmeg Mistry



Executive Message

As we pause to reflect on RMHC Manitoba throughout 2018, we give thanks and appreciation to all those who have recognized and valued our important support to families faced with childhood illness or injury. Today, Ronald McDonald House and Ronald McDonald Family Room are helping more families in deeper and more meaningful ways than ever before.

In 2017, our programs supported 2,225 families with overnight stays and day use programs. RMHC Manitoba is proudly providing families with accommodations, meal programs, transportation, parking, programming and more. This is so families can stay close - close to the medical care their child needs and close to each other. Supporting families from Winnipeg, rural Manitoba and beyond, the RMHC Manitoba Mission saved families over 1.28 million in costly out-of-pocket expenses.

Since 1984, RMHC Manitoba has proudly worked with our medical partners to play an integral role in family-centered healthcare. Our commitment to our Mission and the communities we serve continues to grow and evolve to meet the needs

of our families. Today, thanks to medical advancements and treatments, more children are healing. However, their healing journey is often more complex and requires longer and more frequent hospital stays.

To meet the needs and demands of Winnipeg and rural Manitoba families faced with childhood illness or injury, including premature babies and high-risk pregnancies, **RMHC Manitoba is proud to share that we have been approved to build a new Ronald McDonald House to expand and deepen our support and our Mission.**

Our success and growth is a result of steadfast community support and partnership. Surrounded by kind, passionate and generous partners, in 2019, we celebrate our 35th Anniversary and look to the next chapter of RMHC Manitoba with hope and gratitude. We extend heartfelt appreciation to all who have supported and all who will continue to support the RMHC Manitoba Mission. Together, we achieved our past successes and together, we will move forward to help even more families. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Rhonda Lorch

Rhonda Lorch
President, RMHC Manitoba



Wendy Galagan

Wendy Galagan
CEO, RMHC Manitoba

Mission Statement

RMHC Manitoba supports the health and well-being of children by providing a "home-away-from-home" and other services for critically ill, chronically ill and seriously injured children and their families.

Board of Directors

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Rhonda Lorch

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Privacy Statement

Ronald McDonald House Charities Manitoba/Pediatric Oncology Family Centre of Manitoba Inc. does not sell, trade or release the personal information of its donors.



Growing Stronger Together

Since 2014, the Delaloye family, from Neepawa, Manitoba, have been supported by RMHC Manitoba to be close to their daughter, Alyx, as she received life-saving medical treatments for leukemia. Pictured (clockwise from bottom left) seven-year-old Alyx with St. John Ambulance Pet Therapy dog at RMH, the Delaloye family at the 2018 Hope Couture Fashion Gala, Jody and Alyx sharing a McDonald's RMHC Cookie together at RMH.

"The summer of 2014 changed drastically for us. Our seven-year-old daughter, Alyx, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, which is a very common childhood cancer. We began chemotherapy within hours of that and she's had many different types of treatment and medication to treat her illness.

We are now coming up on two years after finishing the standard treatment time for leukemia. The first two years after treatment are critical. During this time, there is a high risk for relapse, but thankfully, we've almost made it.

She is now, technically, a normal child and is healthy again. She goes to school and is one of the top in her class in all subjects. She is a competitive gymnast and swimmer. She broke four swim records this year. In gymnastics last year, she got three silver medals.

She did 38 push-ups in a minute recently. She has a lot of energy and a very strong personality. She's had to grow up a lot. She knows more about cancer than most adults would. She loves unicorns, artwork and mermaids.

We'll still come in for checkups. We just got switched from eight weeks today and we don't come back for 12 weeks going forward. That's three months! We feel sad that we don't visit the House as often as we used to.

We had many many nights at Ronald McDonald House which my children absolutely loved and we're still very close with the staff and volunteers here. We consider them an extended family of ours. We all have different reasons why we love staying at Ronald McDonald House, but we can all agree that this is truly our home-away-from-home."

-Jody Delaloye

Buy an RMHC® Cookie Share some ♥. Every RMHC Cookie you buy helps families with sick children stay together*



Cookies mean so much to RMHC and our families. In October 2018, McDonald's Canada launched a new menu item across Canada - RMHC Cookies. The heart-shaped RMHC Cookies are inspired by the many volunteers who bake for our families at every RMHC Chapter across Canada. *A portion of the proceeds from every cookie supports families staying at RMHC.



RMHC Manitoba is truly thankful for the ongoing support from our generous partners at McDonald's and celebrates their continued support within our Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario community. On average, 25% - 30% of RMHC Manitoba's funding is provided by local McDonald's Owner/Operators. This is raised through in-store and drive-thru coin boxes, kiosks, signature event sponsorship, the 10 Cent Happy Meal® program, McHappy Day® and the new RMHC Cookie program. This incredible support and partnership is integral in allowing us to keep families together.





Ronald McDonald House volunteer, Marlene Janzen, loves baking cookies and interacting with guest families

3. Why do you volunteer for RMHC?

"It's just dear to my heart. I think it goes back to when my aunt and uncle were involved with Ronald McDonald House in the beginning. As a former nurse, my experience with patients I worked with made me realize what a great place this was and a wonderful place this is. It's a safe haven when you're dropped into one of the worst situations of your life. For a parent, to find a place where there is a bit of peace, comfort and a place to stay, that you can afford, means so much. Often families' healing journeys turn out to be

not just days or weeks in length, but months. You see what a difference the little things make to families here."

From NICU Nurse to RMH Volunteer

An Interview with RMHC Manitoba
Ronald McDonald House Volunteer, Marlene

1. How did you find out about RMHC?

"I used to work at the hospital as a nurse and would often send my patients from the NICU to come and stay at Ronald McDonald House. I'd call and make inquiries for them because often, at that stage, they were so overwhelmed and it was so nice to know the House was available for them. The families were dropped into a terrible situation with a new baby, a few hours old and were not familiar with the city. It felt good making that connection for them."

2. How long have you volunteered at RMHC Manitoba?

"I've been an RMHC Manitoba volunteer since 2014. It's been almost four-and-a-half years."

4. When do you volunteer and what do you do at the House?

"I volunteer every Monday morning. What I do at the House is bake. I bake cookies, muffins, cake, things like that to make people feel more at home. Often the smells are just as comforting as the cookies themselves."

5. What family story stands out to you?

"I remember one dad that had a really sick little girl. He would show up on my volunteer shift, sit on a stool in the kitchen and we would chat. He wasn't looking for advice, but just needed to talk to somebody. Sometimes people need someone to validate their feelings and tell them they are doing an amazing job as parents. What I do feels like such a small thing, but I love volunteering at RMHC Manitoba."





Your support has made a difference in the lives of a variety of meaningful families at Ronald McDonald House of Chicago and Ronald McDonald Charities.

Thank you for helping us bring families together.





helps provide a
ful programming for
ld McDonald House
onald Family Room.

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WestJet Helps Give an RMHC Manitoba Family the Adventure of a Lifetime!



Four years ago, Katrina Breemersch was diagnosed with a second inoperable brain tumour leaving her blind in her left eye and with low vision in her right. It was decided she must undergo radiation treatment as she already had chemo to treat her first tumour. With no living arrangements and a requirement to stay for several months, the family from Brandon, MB, were supported by RMHC Manitoba to receive the care they urgently needed. Katrina continues to stay at RMH as treatments are necessary.

In 2017, a friend of RMHC Manitoba won a WestJet Gift of Flight at the McCain Clear Lake Golf Classic third party fundraising event. Out of the kindness of his heart, he gifted his incredible prize to the Breemersch family. Below is a letter from Katrina that shares the amazing journey she had with her mom thanks to the Gift of Flight, courtesy of WestJet Cares for Kids.

WestJet 
Cares for Kids

The Gift of Flight

We thank the WestJet Cares for Kids program for their ongoing support to RMHC Chapters across Canada through Direct Service Family Flights, Business Administration Flights and Fundraising Development Vouchers.

Dear WestJet,

From the bottom of my heart I wanted to thank you so much for the opportunity of a lifetime.

In May, I went to London in England, Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland, Belfast and Dublin in Ireland, and Wales. On the trip, I saw amazing places and ate all kinds of food.

During our trip, I saw a phenomenal musical - Mamma Mia!, the London Eye, the Tower of London, Kensington Palace, Buckingham Palace, Changing of the Guard, Thames River Cruise and more. We also went to Windsor Castle and the church where Prince Harry was married the day before, which was stunning! My mom even tried her hand at driving on the wrong side of the road.

In Edinburgh, my mom and I met one of her cousins. Together, we toured a castle from 1607 that is part of our heritage and family history. It was great!

In Glasgow, I was able to visit the Ronald McDonald House there and see how they operate. That was awesome! We travelled by train and ferries between the countries. We even went swimming in the ocean in Edinburgh and Dublin. One of my favourite things about Dublin was the Celtic music and river dancing.

I loved staying in castles. They were amazing. My favourite castle is the Dalhousie Castle even though we had to climb seven flights of stairs to our room. One of my favourite parts of the castle was eating in the dungeon.

I wanted to stay in Edinburgh forever. I will never forget this opportunity and what you did for me.

Love, Katrina

Celebrating New Ways our Donors are Supporting RMHC Manitoba

Hockey Heroes

The 2017-2018 McCreary Mustangs Atom hockey team generously raised over \$14,000 from their hockey season in support of our families. Coaches commented on the valuable experience of giving back to the community, sportsmanship and teamwork.

We invite you to sign-up your hockey team to raise funds for RMHC Manitoba and help keep families with sick or injured children close when they need it most. Show your team spirit by raising pledges for every goal your team scores during the 2018/2019 season. Every participating team will receive red and white striped hockey socks to show their stripes in support of RMHC Manitoba!



The McCreary Mustangs Atoms were filled with team spirit as they presented their incredible donation to RMHC Manitoba!

A Gift that keeps on Giving

In 1983, the Charleswood Kinsmen Club Fund (CKCF) was established to raise funds to cover medical expenses and travel costs for families facing medical challenges. In 2017, a review committee chose to transfer the funds to RMHC Manitoba, an organization aligning with the Club's Mission.

In early 2018, the Charleswood Kinsmen Club and the Headingley Community Foundation Inc. announced a partnership with the transfer of \$138,539 to the Foundation to manage the funds.

A fund will be set up with The Winnipeg Foundation (WF), in the name of CKCF. The fund will provide annual grants to RMHC Manitoba while the original funds grow into the future.

RMHC Manitoba is incredibly grateful for this amazing gift that celebrates the Club's past commitment to helping families and created legacy of continued support.



Cheque presentation from the Charleswood Kinsmen Club and Headingley Community Foundation to RMHC Manitoba



Scott Russell of Russell Farms in St. Andrews, MB

Growing Support

Scott Russell of Russell Farms in St. Andrews, Manitoba, generously donated his time, equipment, fuel and other resources to grow, combine and donate proceeds from the sale of his crop. He selected RMHC Manitoba to be the fortunate recipient of the donated funds. Our thanks also extends to Alliance Seed, Omex Agriculture Inc. and Parrish & Heimbecker Limited.

We are truly fortunate to receive this amazing support and to celebrate a wonderful beginning for our new Crops for Charity Program. We thank all involved in this special initiative that helps our families stay together.

To sign up for the Hockey Heroes, Crops for Charity or annuity programs, email info@rmhmanitoba.org

RMHC Manitoba Signature Events



32nd Annual Hope Couture Fashion Gala

April 12, 2018 | RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg

Together, we celebrated a VIVA GLAM evening and raised **\$315,000** in support of our Mission!



29th Annual FORE! THE HOUSE Tournament of Champions

September 6, 2018 | Breezy Bend Country Club

This year, we came together and raised over **\$184,000** for RMHC Manitoba families!



4th Annual RED SHOE CREW WALK

June 13 - June 24, 2018 | Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Dauphin

The walks and fundraising events collectively raised over **\$63,000** in support of our families!



McHappy Day[®]

For the love of families.

On May 2, 2018, \$184,788 was raised on McHappy Day for RMHC Manitoba!



Thank you to our third party event fundraisers!

RMHC Manitoba is fortunate to have an incredible community of advocates holding their own fundraising events in support of our cause! Thank you to all our friends who held events in 2018!



The annual Northern Lights Barrel Race raised \$16,000 for RMHC Manitoba in 2018! Since 2012, over \$94,000 has been raised by Northern Lights for our families!

Join us for upcoming RMHC Manitoba
Special Events in 2019!

Hope Couture
Fashion Gala
March 13

McHappy Day
May 8

Red Shoe
Crew Walk
June 1-9

FORE! THE HOUSE
Tournament of
Champions
September 5

RMHC Manitoba by the Numbers

2017 Stats

2,225

Total number of families supported

- Ronald McDonald House and Ronald McDonald Family Room overnight accommodations: 479
- RMHC Manitoba day use programs: 1,746

5,645

Total nights of accommodations supported

- Ronald McDonald House (14 sleeping rooms): 4,377
- Ronald McDonald Family Room (3 sleeping rooms): 907
- Hotel partner: 361

\$1,280,230

Total annual savings for families faced
with childhood illness and injury.

12%

The cost per dollar raised for RMHC Manitoba

RMHC Manitoba Board of Director Member Highlight

"I was always aware of RMHC Manitoba, but it wasn't until I began investigating organizations to support with my time that I became instantly connected to the RMHC Manitoba Mission. As a father, I could easily identify with out-of-town families struggling to cope with the added stress of trying to obtain accommodations in Winnipeg while their sick child was in hospital. RMHC is all about families. The staff at RMHC Manitoba are remarkable in their ability to provide the right support to families at the right time during their stay at the House or the Family Room. By joining the RMHC Manitoba Board of Directors, I am able to contribute to the Mission in some small way, so the RMHC Manitoba staff can continue to carry out the real work of keeping families together when it matters most."

- *Dave Coverdale*



Dave Coverdale, RMHC Manitoba Board of Directors and CFA, Vice President and Senior Portfolio Manager, TD Wealth Private Investment Counsel

Help Keep Families Together!



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Manitoba

By supporting our **Adopt a Room program**, you are providing families with a warm and comfortable place to stay during some of the most difficult times they may ever encounter.

Bedrooms at Ronald McDonald House (14) and Ronald McDonald Family Room (3) are available for adoption at \$5,000 annually. Common areas, such as family lounges and kitchens at the House and Family Room, are available for adoption at \$10,000 annually. Your Adopt a Room support is 100% eligible for a tax receipt.



Adopt a **Room** PROGRAM

Currently available for adoption:

- 2 bedrooms at the House
- 3 bedrooms at the Family Room.
- Multiple common area spaces at both programs

Discover many other ways to support RMHC Manitoba!

Event Sponsorships

Sponsor our upcoming **signature events!**

Monetary Donations

Make a monetary donation to help our families stay close to each other!

Home for Dinner

We are always looking for groups to prepare home-cooked meals for our families at the House and Family Room.

Wish List

Help make our House and Family Room feel like home for our families by donating supplies needed most from our wish list!

Volunteer

We depend on various volunteer roles throughout the year to support our family services, special events and other initiatives.

**Start your
FUNdraiser -
It's as easy as 1 - 2 - 3!**

Choose an activity, (such as your birthday or someone else's birthday), create your online fundraising page and start raising money to help children heal together with their family.

**MAKE
FUN
MATTER
FOR FAMILIES**



For more information on any of the ways to support RMHC Manitoba above, please visit rmhcanitoba.org. For questions or to support, call **204-774-4777** or email info@rmhmanitoba.org

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all our supporters for making our Mission possible!