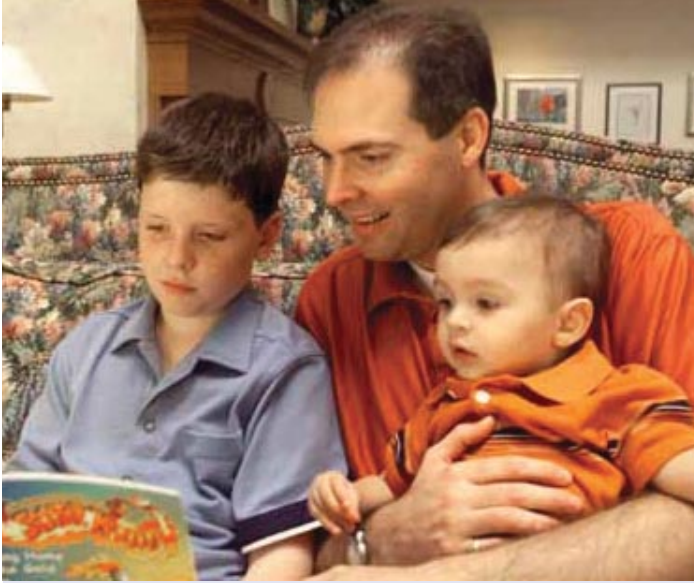


Ronald McDonald House Charities®

THIRTY YEARS OF HELPING
KIDS TO SMILE AGAIN

Keeping Our Promise



Catching a quick shower. Making a sandwich. Finding a quiet place to gather your thoughts. When your child is undergoing treatment for cancer or another serious illness, everyday routines suddenly become rare luxuries.

For families of critically ill children, little else matters but making sure their son or daughter gets the best possible care. Sometimes this means traveling to a distant city, far from household comforts like a washer/dryer or a favorite chair. In other cases, the right medical facility may be closer to home. But no matter if your child's treatment takes you five or 5,000 miles from your front door, you never want to be more than a few steps from their hospital bed.

Somewhere to Go When You Can't Get Home

Despite their reluctance to leave the hospital, parents desperately need a break from the stress of beeping monitors and busy ICUs. Recognizing this need, Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC®) launched the first **Ronald McDonald Family Room™ Program** inside Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics in Kansas City, KS twelve years ago. Since that time, more than 60 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms have opened in seven countries around the world, including Australia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States.

An offshoot of the successful Ronald McDonald House® Program, Ronald McDonald Family Rooms provide a peaceful

retreat for local families to rest and recharge their batteries. For a mother nursing a premature infant, it can mean a chance to relax between feedings. For a sister or brother, it's a place to play, do homework or watch TV. And for a parent spending the night on their child's unit, it's a welcoming sanctuary where they can wash up, answer emails or have a private conversation.

A Place Where Hope Lives

The Ronald McDonald Family Room at Northwest Texas Hospital in Amarillo is such an integral part of that facility's commitment to excellent care that it has logged 65,000 visits and doubled in size since it opened in September 2000. Jan Reid, executive director of the city's thriving RMHC Chapter (also home to a Ronald McDonald House®), beams when she describes the unswerving support from McDonald's® Owner/Operators, community groups, local businesses and volunteers "from all walks of life" who raise money, donate food and dispense helpful information at the Ronald McDonald Family Room front desk from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week.

"Most hospitals are geared toward caring for the patient, not the family," says Reid, explaining the simple yet soul-reviving solace a Ronald McDonald Family Room provides during the most anxious time in a parent's life. One not-so-secret stress reliever: plenty of chocolate. "Contrary to popular belief, it's a great health food," she affirms.

The Greatest Reward

But like anything else, the success of the Ronald McDonald Family Room Program is best measured by the people it touches. One mother expressed her feelings in a way that rings true for many: "Our family can honestly say that the walls of the Ronald McDonald Family Room have witnessed our family's most troubled days as well as some of our most joyous times. We would truly have been lost without its comforts."



In the coming months, we'll be telling you more about the Ronald McDonald Family Room Program and other core programs of Ronald McDonald House Charities. For more information on how you can lend your love, courage and support, visit www.rmhc.org.