



# The Guilds of Valley Children's Hospital Child Life Endowment

## Helping Children and Families Cope

Research verifies that traumatic events and stressful situations negatively impact the health and development of children. Children in a hospital setting require specialized care that looks like play but actually promotes understanding of the child's medical condition. By embracing the value of play as a healing modality, the Child Life Program at Valley Children's helps children and their families reduce the effects of stress caused by illness, injury and hospitalization.

Most children prepared for medical procedures experience significantly lower levels of fear and anxiety compared to children who are not prepared. This preparation also promotes long-term coping and adjustment to future medical challenges. Our Child Life specialists are trained professionals who hold bachelor's and master's degrees and collaborate with doctors, nurses and staff to help our patients and families understand medical diagnoses, procedures and treatments through education and play. They also help siblings, parents and other family members cope with feelings of helplessness, anger and guilt.

The individualized interventions our Child Life specialists provide are based on their expert assessment of each unique set of circumstances. These interventions offer both psychosocial and clinical benefits to our patients as an integral part of their care. All members of our Child Life team are knowledgeable professionals trained to interact and communicate with patients in a developmentally and age-appropriate way.



## \$1 Million: The Guilds Child Life Endowment

Valley Children's emergency department managed nearly 100,000 patient visits in fiscal year 2014, and this patient volume is expected to steadily increase in the years ahead. Our Child Life team not only works closely with patients in the emergency department, they also see them in our inpatient units, outpatient practices, and imaging and surgery departments. Currently, nine Child Life specialists and assistants provide more than 28,000 patient contacts per year.

The need for Child Life interventions has never been greater. Given the current staffing levels for this vital program we cannot keep up with the rising demand. Adding seven Child Life specialists and assistants will allow us to accommodate 55,000 annual patient contacts.

The \$1 million Guilds Child Life Endowment will help meet current and future needs of patients and families. This will enable us to grow the Child Life program and ensure the availability of these services in perpetuity.

## Because of You

Laughter and happiness promote healing of the mind and body. By providing patients with opportunities for normal play and peer interaction, Child Life reduces anxiety and enhances the patient and parent experience.

Your philanthropic support toward the Guilds Child Life Endowment will help Valley Children's expand this essential service and ensure our patients and their families continue to benefit from therapeutic play activities that reduce anxiety and promote healing.

Thank you for your continued support.



*“Minimizing the anxiety of being in a hospital helps children cope better and heal faster.”*

— Mary Beth Jones, Supervisor,  
Child Life Program, Valley Children's

To learn more about the Guilds of Valley Children's Hospital and how you can support this important program, please contact the **Guilds Office** at **(559) 353-7145** or **[Guilds@ValleyChildrens.org](mailto:Guilds@ValleyChildrens.org)**.