Your 2020 impact on kids:

Children’s Wisconsin Annual Report
Our cause

Children’s Wisconsin was founded more than 125 years ago by seven women philanthropists and community volunteers who believed kids needed specialized care, and a pastor who helped homeless children find safe and loving homes. From our humble origins in a rented house on Brady Street, Children’s has grown into a top-ranked pediatric enterprise and the largest social services agency in the state — with 2 million annual touch points with kids systemwide. We owe our very existence and continued success to you — our community, our founders.

Every time you make a donation, support an event or give your time, you help us deliver life-changing care to kids and families from across the state and beyond. By making Children’s your cause of choice, you’re ensuring a happier, healthier future for generations of kids.

A new platform to tell our story

In 2020, Children’s Wisconsin Foundation unveiled a new, more user-friendly website. Your donations help the kids and families we serve in so many ways, and we needed a better way to share the stories about the powerful impact of your gifts. Visit childrenswi.org/giving to learn more about the amazing kids you help, upcoming events benefiting Children’s and all the ways that you can continue to help us deliver the best care to Wisconsin’s kids.
At the outset of 2020, we never could have imagined all the ways that COVID-19 would change nearly every aspect of life. But the Children’s Wisconsin commitment to health and safety — of our patients, staff and greater community — never wavered.

When we asked for help to safeguard our vulnerable patients and medical team at the start of the pandemic, our community responded with an awe-inspiring show of support. From lovingly sewn face masks to hot meals to financial gifts, many local businesses, nonprofit organizations and individuals stepped up to support our patient families and health care heroes. Because of your generosity, Children’s continued to provide care for the physical, social and mental health needs of kids across our state — at a time when they needed us more than ever.

All our staff were under tremendous stress as we navigated the uncertainties of the unfolding pandemic, changing protocols and practices regularly to keep up with new information. Early on, we cancelled non-time-sensitive surgeries and in-person appointments to reduce the number of people in our facilities and preserve precious supplies. To continue to safely meet our patients’ needs, we quickly ramped up our use of telemedicine and conducted more than 75,000 virtual visits through the year — far exceeding a 1,500 virtual visit target set pre-pandemic.

Not surprisingly, our community looked to Children’s for guidance on how to keep kids safe. We provided valuable information and advice on everything from testing to vaccinations to how to safely return to school and other activities. We also stepped up to ease the burden on adult health systems by treating young adults up to age 26 in our Emergency Department and in our Milwaukee hospital.

As we reflect on this historic year, the generosity of our supporters illuminates every page. Thank you for being an important part of our story and for all you do to help us deliver the best care for kids — today and tomorrow.

With gratitude,

Meg Brzyski Nelson
President, Children’s Wisconsin Foundation
New Clinics Building opens
In December 2020, Children’s celebrated the opening of a new specialty clinics building. This six-story building serves as the new entrance to our Milwaukee hospital and clinics — more than 350,000 people will walk through its doors every year. Thanks to philanthropic support, the facility design creates a much more efficient experience for patient families, particularly those with complex needs. The new multidisciplinary clinic provides coordinated care for kids with complex needs in a welcoming, comfortable and safe environment. Other highlights include a new Child Life Center on the first floor, which features fun, interactive activities for kids to make their visit to Children’s a little easier. The space bursts with color and energy: Design elements throughout the building tell stories of Wisconsin’s past and present, and seasonal images and sculptures incorporated throughout the three-level surgical platform depict Wisconsin’s winter, spring, summer and fall.

A new resource for precision medicine
Joy Lincoln, PhD, FAHA, the Peter Sommerhauser Chair for Cardiac Quality, Outcomes and Research at the Herma Heart Institute, is developing a cutting-edge clinical umbilical cord blood and tissue bank that will pave the way for personalized pediatric medicine. The premise is simple: collect cord blood and tissue from patients around the United States and store it free of charge in a nationally certified and accredited lab, where it’s kept protected for future use. Then Children’s will use stem cells from those stored samples for personalized medical interventions if and when needed.

For example, instead of repairing a heart defect with synthetic materials or donated human tissue, we can use a child’s own stem cells to develop surgical material specific to that patient. This highly effective approach reduces complications and the number of surgical procedures a child has to endure as they grow. While this approach is being piloted in the Herma Heart Institute, it has tremendous potential to help kids with other diseases, including cancer and sickle cell disease.

Care closer to home in northeast Wisconsin
When a child is sick or injured, families shouldn’t have to travel far for the care they need. Your support of Children’s Wisconsin-Fox Valley means that families in northeast Wisconsin have access to the best care right at their doorstep. This includes our 22-bed, Level III neonatal
intensive care unit (NICU), 20-bed inpatient pediatric unit, extensive specialty clinics, and wraparound services that help kids cope with illness and trauma.

In addition to providing care closer to home at our Fox Valley hospital and clinics, Children’s outreach programs and services support kids and families at home, school and in the community. We’re committed to helping kids in northeast Wisconsin live the fullest lives possible, and with your continued support, we plan to do even more.

**Mental and behavioral health campaign takes off**

COVID-19 shone a spotlight on the urgency of children’s mental health like never before. But even before the pandemic, Children’s Wisconsin launched an ambitious, five-year, $150 million plan to tackle the mental and behavioral health crisis in kids. And despite the many disruptions in 2020, we made important progress on several key initiatives, including:

- **Catching depression through universal screening:** It can be difficult to recognize the signs of mental illness in kids, but early detection is crucial to catching issues before they become a crisis. Our goal is to make screening for mental health concerns a consistent part of every interaction throughout our health system, regardless of the reason for a child’s visit. Depression screening is now standard practice at all Children’s Wisconsin primary care offices, with nearly 97% of all eligible kids ages 12 and older screened. Screening for suicide ideation is also standard in the Emergency Department and Trauma Center (EDTC). Children’s exceptionally high rate of screening reflects our deep commitment to detecting and addressing issues as early as possible — before a crisis.

- **New crisis response team provides 24/7 help:** A growing number of kids are coming to the EDTC in the midst of a mental health crisis, but until recently, Children’s didn’t have the resources to meet their needs effectively. Thanks to a generous $2.5 million gift from the United Health Foundation, we created a 24/7 mental health emergency response team to provide immediate and coordinated assessment, referral and treatment for this growing population. In addition to leading de-escalation and other interventional measures, the crisis response team provides post-discharge care for as long as needed, assisting families in establishing continued care.

We also continue our work on the Milwaukee County Child/Adolescent Crisis Redesign, leading efforts to create a comprehensive crisis care delivery model with health system partners, Milwaukee County and other community crisis agencies.
When we launched the awareness campaign in 2020, we literally lit up Wisconsin with our message of hope shining through the darkness, using spotlights on Children’s Wisconsin buildings and in the community with partners such as Kohl’s and Rexnord to project the Shine Through logo and mental health facts. We created the Shine Through website (shinethrough.childrenswi.org) with a wealth of resources for parents and kids, and further amplified our message through media coverage and print, video and digital ads designed to break down the stigma around mental health. We want every family in Wisconsin to know: There is no health without mental health, and it’s okay to ask for help when you need it.

**Advancing care through the Translational Research Unit**

Philanthropy was key to supporting Children’s Translational Research Unit (TRU) during the pandemic. This team of research nurses continued to support investigators from the gastroenterology, diabetes, hematology, neurology and spina bifida programs, keeping clinical trials moving smoothly and collecting valuable patient data that could change the future standard of care. Even more remarkably, the TRU was able to support infectious disease treatment by including Children’s Wisconsin data in the national pediatric COVID-19 registry. This registry has provided important understanding of how COVID-19 presents in kids and which populations of kids are most vulnerable to the virus.
Supporting families during the pandemic — and statewide

Children’s community-based services and programs target the continuum of care, from prevention to intervention, and seamlessly provide support to achieve our ultimate goal: healthy and whole kids, empowered families and strong communities. As 2020 drew awareness to many social issues, including health disparities and social injustices, equity remained core to all of Children’s services. We supported positive outcomes for children and families across Wisconsin in many ways this past year:

• We helped hundreds of families meet basic needs by providing masks, food, diapers, cleaning supplies and other critical resources during the lockdown period of the pandemic.
• Children’s foster parents opened their homes to children and teens who were exposed to COVID-19 or who tested positive, placing themselves and other family members at risk.
• As violence increased across our community, we increased services to support victims of violence, helping them heal with trauma-informed care, and providing social and emotional support to stop the cycle of violence and prevent revictimization.
• Our parent/caregiver education shifted online, expanding our reach to new audiences and specifically focusing on stress management tools to address the many challenges all families were facing.
• We partnered with Marquette University, enlisting education students as liaisons to support online learning.

Recognized as one of the nation’s best

In 2020, Children’s Wisconsin earned the highly coveted Magnet Recognition Program® status for the fourth consecutive time from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. The Magnet designation is granted every four years to organizations that demonstrate sustained superiority in nursing care. Only about 7% of the nation’s hospitals have achieved Magnet recognition, with just 3% successfully earning re-designation.

Children’s Wisconsin has been ranked among the best in the nation in six specialties in U.S. News & World Report’s 2020-21 Best Children’s Hospitals report. The specialties ranked were:

• Cancer
• Cardiology and heart surgery
• Gastroenterology and GI surgery
• Neurology and neurosurgery
• Orthopedics
• Pulmonology

Children’s Wisconsin also made Parents magazine’s list of Top 15 Children’s Hospitals in Innovation and Technology, and Children’s was named a Top Workplace by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel for the 11th year in a row.
Resilient, dedicated and supportive volunteers

Children's Wisconsin Foundation's volunteer community continues to grow and is now more than 150 volunteers strong. As COVID-19 paused many typical volunteer operations, new and regular volunteers stepped up in other ways, such as providing support through heartfelt encouragement and incredible acts of kindness to our frontline staff and sourcing unique and lifesaving donations to support our COVID-19 response. Your dedication inspires us every day!

Ladish Co. Foundation gift and others enhance emergency care

In October, Children’s announced plans to expand and move the Emergency Department and Level I Trauma Center at our Milwaukee campus to the front of the hospital to improve access, the child and family experience, and patient care. The new space will feature expanded services and amenities thanks to $5 million in donations, with the Ladish Co. Foundation contributing $4 million and the Jendusa family donating $1 million. Portions of each gift will support mental health in the emergency setting, including mental health crisis response and an even safer environment to care for children and adolescents.
Northwestern Mutual commits $5 million for cancer care

In February 2021, the Northwestern Mutual Foundation announced an incredible $5 million gift to support Children’s MACC Fund Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. The gift, Northwestern Mutual’s largest standalone donation, builds upon more than $4.2 million that Northwestern Mutual has given toward Children’s Wisconsin cancer initiatives since 2013. The funding will launch in-hospital navigator and psychosocial programs to help guide patients and families through diagnoses, treatment and recovery — an important part of the MACC Fund Center’s commitment to offering families the full continuum of care. The funding will also expand existing programs and services, such as the Northwestern Mutual Day Hospital for Childhood Cancer, to continue to provide outstanding outpatient care for children with cancer, sickle cell and blood disorders.

Mental health challenge raises $30 million for mental health

In early 2020, Children’s announced that the Reiman Foundation, Inc., not only pledged $15 million — the largest individual commitment to Children’s at the time of the gift — it also issued a challenge to the community: a promise to match dollar-for-dollar donations to Children’s mental and behavioral health campaign. The Reiman family’s amazing generosity caused a powerful ripple effect. More than 3,000 individuals helped meet the $15 million challenge goal, with more than 60 individuals donating more than $1,000, and seven making donations of $1 million or more.

Donors who generously committed $1 million or more to the effort include the Ladish Co. Foundation, United Health Foundation, Mary and Ted Kellner, Dan and Karen Buehrle, Rexnord Foundation, Jerry and Becky Jendusa and family, and Sue and Curt Culver. Children’s is also grateful to Kohl’s and The Boldt Company for their generous commitments in 2019 to help Children’s address Wisconsin’s mental health crisis.

Planned giving provides hope for the future

We’re so grateful to all the benefactors who have included Children’s in their estate plans — this past year Children’s Wisconsin Foundation received $10 million in realized bequests and new statements of intent. These generous contributions allowed Children’s to maintain momentum and helped our supporters find a meaningful way to give back in a time of economic uncertainty. There are a number of simple ways to include Children’s in your estate plans that can accomplish your personal financial goals and your charitable desires, enabling you to make an impact on kids and families beyond what you could ever imagine doing during your lifetime. For details and estate planning tips, go to plannedgiving.childrenswi.org.
Areas your gifts support

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**Total** $42,306,703

Sources of gifts

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**Total** $42,306,703
Thank you

Children's Wisconsin wouldn’t exist without your continued support. Your generosity helps us provide the best care for kids today and powers the research and innovations that will change lives in the future. For all you’ve done in 2020 and for all you continue to do, thank you!