



This photo was taken before social distancing measures.

“Despite our bad luck, we were fortunate to continue to be treated at the Children’s during the pandemic.”

— Mel, mother of Emma and Evan

Born prematurely at 29 weeks and two days gestation, my twins are now 14 months old.

Because of their early arrival, my babies had to spend many months in the Children’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU): 86 days for Emma, who gave me a wonderful gift by coming home on my birthday, and over 230 days for her brother Evan. Every hour spent away from them brought tremendous pain to this mother’s heart.

During the pandemic, some of Evan’s treatments had to be postponed. Thanks to the Children’s telehealth program, which lets specialists like occupational therapists and physiotherapists share their expertise remotely, we received the support we needed to ensure our twins were cared for.

We still had to go to the Children’s for Complex Care services. I wasn’t comfortable going at first because of the context created by COVID-19. But as soon as I got to the hospital, I was reassured. Normally, their infection control practices are beyond reproach. During the pandemic, I immediately noticed measures had been further enhanced.

These days, while no one wants to go to the hospital, my husband and I are reassured: the Children’s infection control protocols are at the highest level. It definitely put us at ease.

Now more than ever, I want to thank the hospital staff and generous donors like you whose unwavering support enables the Children’s to offer exceptional care and programs during this crisis.

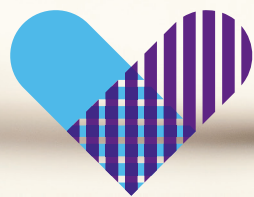
Luckily, we were in good hands. My husband and I are grateful to the hospital staff who treated us like we were family. While our babies were receiving ultra-specialized, cutting-edge care, being called by our first names made us feel like we belonged.

With your support during the most difficult times, Evan and Emma continued to thrive under the care of dedicated specialists.

Thank you for being there for us, and other Quebec families, in these life-changing and crucial moments when all we want is for our children to get better.

Mel

— Evan and Emma’s mom



The Tiny Tim Fund: A Source of Comfort for Jade's family

Imagine struggling to make ends meet just to feed your family and keep a roof over your head, all while caring for a sick child during this pandemic.

Jade's parents know this experience first-hand, and can thankfully count on vital financial assistance from the Tiny Tim Fund to help them through it.

Jade was born much too early. An extremely premature baby, she suffered from a number of medical complications, and has undergone two major surgeries already. So young and already so brave. Yet because she is so fragile, she is hospitalized at the Children's for an indefinite period.

With a five-year-old son at home, Jade's mom was forced to stop working due to health problems. During the lockdown, the family lost their only breadwinner when their father found himself unemployed due to COVID-19. They have just enough to cover rent, leaving very little for meals and trips back and forth to the hospital to see Jade.

How do they manage to take care of their children? Because of YOU.

Your generous contribution has helped the Tiny Tim Fund ease the burden on Jade's parents by helping them put food on the table and paying for their trips to the Children's so they can lovingly care for their little fighter. Thank you for helping to provide for the basic needs of our young patients and their families in this time of crisis.



Remote Care for a Burn Victim

"Don't play with fire. And don't hang out with people who don't follow that rule," says young Francis who, at 12 years old, almost died after experiencing severe burns on 35% of his body.

"Accidents involving fire escalate quickly and you can't get away," explains the teen, whose recovery has been difficult and long. The pandemic has presented another challenge for Francis by affecting how he receives his treatments.

Like other patients, Francis, who continues to receive skin grafts, among other treatments, several times a year, can receive some of his treatments through remote care. "To cut down our trips, I've been caring for him at home," explains Céline, Francis' mother. "I was worried, but the team of experts at the Children's was able to meet our needs. We were in constant communication, before and after the surgery. Thanks to remote care services, Dr. Sabrina Cugno of the pediatric plastic surgery team helped guide me through some steps of post operative care I could perform at home to help his recovery, maximizing Francis' healing and minimizing the need to head to the hospital in person."

Francis' burns occurred following an experiment with rubbing alcohol that went very wrong and resulted in a coma and seven months of hospitalization. The young patient and his family then faced years of physical and emotional suffering, surgeries and many medical appointments. "It took a lot of energy and courage to cope with everything. It also put a huge financial strain on our family," explains Céline. "Thanks to the Children's loyal donors we were able to get through it."

For Francis' mom, the generosity of people like you helping families like hers has been invaluable, especially in times of crisis.

"All I can say is thank you! Your support allowed my son and me to grow closer, despite the challenges. Sick children and their parents need people like you, now more than ever."

Together Let's Feed Our Champions!

During the pandemic, the Children's staff went above and beyond to care for some of the sickest children in Quebec.

Thanks to your generous support, the Together Let's Feed Our Champions campaign provided free meals to these dedicated professionals as a way of thanking them for their work on the front lines. Our Champions want to say thank you!



United for Kids' Mental Health

How do you comfort a child you can't hold in your arms? In this time of crisis, mental health experts at the Children's are redoubling their efforts to find creative solutions to ensure the well-being of young patients and their families.

Thanks to the support of donors like you, the Children's pediatric psychiatry department is using remote care to communicate with patients and identify children in distress. "During a pandemic, it's critical to maintain our relationships with vulnerable and isolated youth in the community while minimizing the risk of transmitting the COVID-19," explains Dr. Martin Gignac, Chief of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Children's. "Using technology, we can offer live remote care and training for patients and other healthcare professionals."

Faced with the challenges of the pandemic, which threatens to cause an unprecedented mental health crisis, pediatric psychiatry professionals at the Children's banded together to find innovative approaches to care for their young patients, whether hospitalized or at home.

"Our remote services and the creation of virtual groups greatly reduce trips to the hospital," says Dr. Gignac. "Even after the crisis, we will continue to use these new practices, which allow us to offer an even better quality of care for even more kids, all over Quebec."

For Dr. Gignac, it's because of donors' generosity that his team was able to take fast, effective action. "The Pediatric Emergency Mental Health Fund gives our experts the resources to offer kids and teens remote emergency and crisis care adapted to their needs. I'd like to thank our donors for allowing us to make the mental health of our young patients and their families a priority."

Thanks to YOU the Children's Was Ready

For almost 50 years, donors like you have been there for our patients, generously donating where the needs were greatest. As the world changes before our eyes, one thing is clearer than ever:

Your support was instrumental in preparing the Children's to face the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Your gift helped to build a hospital where each single-patient room was designed to reduce the spread of infection, and facilitate social distancing.

From life-saving equipment that helps sick children breathe, to simulation training so that our experts are ready for every medical emergency: **you were there.**

When families were left reeling, financially and emotionally, after their child's diagnosis: **you were there.**

You have funded cutting-edge research in respiratory tract infections. And you have allowed the Children's to attract the brightest talents in critical care.

On all fronts, **you were there.** And our staff were ready to provide the best care in the world for our young patients during this crisis.

COVID-19 has created a new paradigm. In this ever-shifting landscape, the Foundation is working closely with the Children's to continue to meet the most urgent needs as they arise.

We hope that we can continue to count on your loyal support, especially now.

The Children's During the Pandemic

Excerpt from an interview with Frédéric De Civita, Associate Director of Multidisciplinary Services and Support Programs, Montreal Children's Hospital

In February, before the pandemic began to make its way through the province, our teams were in constant contact with senior leadership from the Children's, as well as our adult counterparts within the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) and the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

We enacted immediate measures to keep our patients, families, and staff members safe. This meant canceling all volunteer visits and limiting visitors to only one or two parents or caregivers per child.

It also meant putting all elective surgeries and clinic visits on hold and collaborating with these teams to ensure that urgent care continued to be delivered efficiently and safely. In an effort to continue to offer follow-ups, we worked quickly to develop videoconferencing capabilities so our families could avoid having to come into the hospital whenever possible. We increased the hospital's capacity to respond to the crisis, all while maintaining essential services to our patients.

The next step

We want to continue offering a safe environment to our patients while adapting our way of working to the "new normal" since COVID-19 is a reality that will have a major impact on the future of healthcare.

Now we must plan how to ensure continued accessibility of care, slowly increase our hospital activities, and continue to review our needs as we move forward. This will include adapting physical layouts inside the hospital to respect social distancing requirements, working on our coordination of care, and putting a greater emphasis on videoconferencing appointments, if necessary. We need to increase the capacity of our technologies to care for patients from home and to efficiently manage our waiting lists so our kids get the best care as quickly as possible.

