



# Fall 2015 Roger's House Chronicles



## Spectacular, Incredible, Brave Siblings

As Roger's House expands and grows we are excited to have the opportunity to offer new services to our families. This year we are pleased to offer a new support group to our Roger's House siblings. SIBS or Spectacular, Incredible, Brave Siblings is a support group offered once monthly on a Saturday morning to all who have a sibling accessing Roger's House services. The goal of SIBS is to foster a safe and fun environment for "Sibs" to receive support with peers living through similar life experiences. We strive to increase peer support and decrease feelings of isolation. The crafts, silly games and dramatic plays we do are the children's favourite activities.

In these activities the children can really be their silly selves, and the children open up and share their inner feelings. The magic of SIBS occurs during those quiet times, when the children are working on a drama or art based project and they feel comfortable to ask those difficult questions. Another favourite activity of the "Sibs" is Dr. Jeopardy. Every couple of months we invite a Roger's House doctor or nurse to play a game where children can anonymously ask personal or medical questions about their sibling. The children get to ask what is really on their minds in a safe and fun space. Friendships are made instantly, and the children are happy to finally meet someone who is living through a life like theirs. It is great to see them receive support from the other leaders, but even more incredible to see them support each other!

For more information about the SIBS group please contact Katt Brooks, Recreation Therapist.

613-523-6300 ext 667 kbrooks@rogershouse.ca

## A Message from our "Sibs"

"It is fun, amazing, and crafty. It is a way for us to stay positive and it helps us to feel happy and heard about our feelings. We feel sad to leave SIBS because we have so much fun together. We are able to talk about our brothers and sisters who are sick with other kids who know what we are going through. We can talk about ourselves and what we love to do, and about how important our feelings are too. We have made really great friends at SIBS group; they are kids who understand me and my life. Sometimes we wish that there was a SIBS school. I find SIBS is a place where I can be myself. Come to SIBS. It is the best place!!! Yay SIBS! "

A Message from our "Sibs".

## Roger's House: It's Where I Found My Tribe



When Liam began to show signs that he was not progressing and keeping up with his friends in kindergarten, we looked to our family doctor. We were told that we were overprotective but were reluctantly given a referral to a pediatrician. Liam was eventually seen by the pediatrician and again our concerns were dismissed. We knew something was not right with Liam. It took a fall down a full flight of stairs at school and a concerned friend, who is a doctor who works some emergency shifts at our local hospital, to see him and agree with us that Liam needed to be seen by neurology at CHEO. Fast forward some time. Liam is still undiagnosed and a mystery to his specialists. But all who love him – his family, close friends and everyone at Roger's House know that he is so much more. Liam is a 9 year old boy who loves a good joke, a good movie, all things Iron Man, and his visits to his holiday retreat—Roger's House. Roger's House is where Liam goes for much needed respite time for our family. They are who we call to help us troubleshoot wet coughs, feeding intolerances, unexplained fevers, dehydration and any other small thing he throws our way. His doctors, nurses, recreational therapists, PSWs, volunteers and all other staff know him, love and welcome him, and help us keep him as healthy as he can be. But Roger's House has become so much more to us. So much more to me.

Roger's House is where I finally found my people. They are my tribe as we collectively call ourselves. Dave and I finally took the leap last fall, listened to some advice and joined the Parent Support Group. All of a sudden we knew we were no longer doing this alone. Living with a child with a life limiting illness is what we all share. We are not the only ones that battle for little things for our children. We can have a conversation in acronyms and not need to stop and explain because we all have the CHEO lingo down pat. We support each other and use each other as sounding boards to come up with ideas to get through situations that are unique to having medically fragile children. We understand about living in the now because we really do not have a clear view of the future. Being a part of Roger's House has let us connect with others on the same path. We did not choose this path but our strength and determination comes together and is stronger because we have each other. I am forever grateful for the love and support that we all get from Roger's House.

Carolyn Clark



## Megan Wright: Executive Director

As fall begins we start to think about school and the changing leaves. The Roger's House team is taking the opportunity to reach out with our regular newsletter. This past summer, much like last year, has been busy with many admissions. It's been wonderful to see a full house with our dedicated staff and volunteers accommodating the needs of families and guests. It was heartwarming to witness gatherings on the patio, the kids in the camping tent in the foyer, and the craft table in the playroom with beads galore ready to make a new necklace or bookmark. Laughter, calming music, and movies could be heard coming from the new and improved Snoezelen Room. The house was full of sights and sounds that focused on fun every day, **as it should be!**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome and introduce you to our new staff who have recently joined the team. Madelena Arnone-Social Worker, Molly Brown-Registered Practical Nurse, Rachael Cale-Recreation Therapist, Jennifer Martin-Registered Nurse, Charles Medeiros-Personal Support Worker, Bruno Perrier-Manager, Brandy Prevost-Registered Practical Nurse, and Valerie Tinkess-Senior Administrative Assistant Volunteer Services. With their arrival brings the expansion of programs and growth in services provided to our guests and families. Thank you to all of our dedicated staff who work so hard for our kids and families. Please know that we always encourage feedback. Please write or call us or even better stop by for a visit. We like to hear what is working well and also ways we can change and improve the supports we provide.

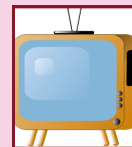
This October we are planning to spruce up the house with fresh paint and gleaming floors. The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Conference is being held locally and some of our staff, board members and volunteers will be in attendance to share experiences, expertise and to review various research outcomes. Lastly our Coordinator of Volunteer Services is planning for the launch of our new visiting hospice program. Stay tuned for more information as we look to seek your input in the coming weeks.

## Thank you Birmingham Family!!

The Roger's House families, staff and volunteers are so thankful. We are all able to enjoy hockey games, concerts and other fun events at the Canadian Tire Centre because of the generosity of the Birmingham family. Go-Sens-Go!



## CBC Documentary



Keeping Canada Alive is the name of a documentary series in which Roger's House pediatric palliative care hospice was portrayed. The televised series looks at the various health care systems in Canada. The documentary was aired on October 11th and is now available online!

Thanks to the generous participation of families, children, youth, staff and volunteers we had an "action" packed day on May 6<sup>th</sup>. It is a wonderful opportunity to heighten the awareness of pediatric palliative care.

***Upcoming Events:***  
**Pediatric Symposium  
of Canadian Hospice  
Palliative Care  
Association Conference  
October 28th 2015  
@ The Westin Hotel,  
Ottawa**

**Holiday Memorial  
December 6th 1-3pm**

**Roger's House  
Christmas Party  
December 13th 2-4pm**



## **Lemonade Standemonium**

This year Roger's House was proud to take part in our second annual Lemonade Stand this summer. This year we doubled the amount of money raised to \$722! All the money we raised went towards child-based cancer research. I wonder how much money we will make next year?



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### In remembrance of...

We honour the following children who died at Roger's House since winter 2015

Aaron Issac Rabishaw	Matt Marcil	Molly Robillard	Michaela Day
Barrett Alexander Dupuis	Josée Awad	Liam Sean Wilson	Khloë Belyea
Walker Patrick Ingimundson	Jacob Séguin	Timothy Lloyd Bondy	Joey Lauzon
Logan Coops Shufelt-Tremblay	Aubree Masson	Trevor Dykstra	
Marc Antoine Bouchard	Max Benes	Jack Richard Paul Anderson	
Malik Lafontaine			



### Admissions to Roger's House in 2015:

Occupancy at Roger's House continues to be very high. On days where several admissions and discharges overlap we may have up to 12 children gathered around the nursing station. We are increasingly concerned about the risks associated with this scenario. We want our guests to be comfortable and safe.

Following consultation with staff, we have decided to implement the following changes effective January 1, 2016:

1. Discharges will occur between **9 & 11 each morning**.
2. Admissions will occur between **1 & 4 each afternoon**.
3. Respite days used will be tallied at midnight each day (admission at 4 pm Friday & discharge at 9 am Sunday will be counted as 2 days rather than 3).

These changes will permit staff to properly clean rooms between guests & reduce the potential risk to guests. The reward is one less day used each weekend stayed at Roger's House

We appreciate your adherence to these changes and welcome your feedback.

Nancy Graham, Admissions Coordinator

## Bereaved Families Holiday Memorial

Mark Your Calendars: This year's Holiday Memorial Event will be held on December 6<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm. Bereaved families are invited to return to Roger's House to enjoy a cup of tea, cookies, and the opportunity to share memories about your child with other families. A memorial tree will be placed in the front lobby, and you will be invited to commemorate your child by hanging a decoration provided by Roger's House. Please RSVP your interest to Carol Chevalier at [cchevalier@cheo.on.ca](mailto:cchevalier@cheo.on.ca).

We love it when members of our favourite hockey team come for a visit and we get afternoon cuddles! Thanks for the visit Patrick Wiercioch.



## New Volunteer Home Visiting Service

Volunteers are integral members of our care team at Roger's House. An additional new service is in the development stages: Volunteer Home Visiting Service. Trained and skilled volunteers will provide emotional support and companionship while offering respite to parents in the child's home. Visits may occur once a week or less frequently, depending on family needs.

Children and youth referred to Roger's House services qualify to request a Visiting Volunteer. The Coordinator of Volunteers will visit the home and assess how Roger's House can assist.

The next steps will be to find a match with a volunteer. The Coordinator of Volunteer Services will liaise with volunteers and families on a regular basis. The child and family must agree to the involvement of the Hospice Home Visiting service and be receptive to periodic visits by the Coordinator of Volunteer Services to assess ongoing needs and to monitor the program.

This service is optional for family participation. It will not affect the number of admission days to Roger's House. It is in addition to respite provided at the hospice.

In the beginning, this service will be limited to the Ottawa area. For further information, please contact Lise Beauchemin, Coordinator of Volunteers [lbeauchemin@cheo.on.ca](mailto:lbeauchemin@cheo.on.ca) or 613-523-6300 ext 600.



## Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Roger's House is a charitable organization, we are so grateful to our many supporters. Thank you to the Ottawa Senators Foundation for their continued support. The numerous community fundraising events facilitated by the Ottawa Senators Foundation team are instrumental in contributing to the success of the Roger's House services for families.



## Did you know????



We have music played by our volunteer musicians on many days throughout the week. And we always look forward to visits from our favourite Ottawa Pet Therapy dog Jake with his mom Chantel!



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