



A HAPPY ENDING
FOR A BOY WHO LIVED IN A BUBBLE



CHRIS' STORY

I was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma when I was nine years old. My parents were told I'd be lucky to live two years. That was more than 30 years ago. Now I'm a husband and have children of my own. And I donate both my time and money to support Ronald McDonald House Charities.

In 1976, my diagnosis was usually a death sentence. Fortunately my doctor, Stuart Siegel, was a world-renowned pediatric oncologist. He's also a long-time member of the RMHC Board of Trustees.

I received an experimental treatment and had to live in a sterile plastic bubble for three months. Sometimes I was so sick, I wanted to give up. Having my parents with me is what got me through.

Soon after I finished chemo, the first Ronald McDonald House in Los Angeles opened—the third in what is now a worldwide network. My mom and I stayed there whenever I went for check-ups.

It was comfortable, affordable and convenient. Volunteers provided home-cooked meals every evening, brought activities for guests, or just offered a listening ear over a soda or cup of coffee. Mom and I could talk with other kids and parents going through the same thing.

Until I became a parent myself, I didn't understand what parents of sick children go through. As you read this, families around the world are frightened, exhausted and coping with unimaginable crisis: the critical illness of their precious child.

For my family and for others like us, Ronald McDonald House Charities offers comfort and hope. Won't you join me in giving from the heart?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris', written in a cursive style.

“Before the Ronald McDonald House opened, I had to live in a run-down motel near the hospital. There was no one to talk to, no one who understood what I was going through. A child’s illness affects the whole family. It’s a very emotional, very rough time. The Ronald McDonald House is such a blessing to parents. It keeps families together when their child is sick and offers so much caring and support.”

—ANNETTE NEHLS, CHRIS’ MOM



GIVING BACK

Chris didn’t just benefit from RMHC programs himself. He wanted to give back. When RMHC of Southern California opened Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times® in 1982, he was among the first campers. Created for children with cancer, the camp helped Chris heal emotionally.

The camp was so much fun, Chris volunteered as a camp counselor for more than a decade. He understood what was most important about camp. “Kids come to camp in wheelchairs, with IV poles and scars and balding heads,” Chris says. “But at camp, they’re not different. They can just be kids.”

More than 30,000 volunteers worldwide lend their time, talent and passion for helping others. They understand that simple caring is sometimes the best medicine.

To learn how you can make a difference, please visit rmhc.org and check out volunteer opportunities in your area.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

www.rmhc.org

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES®

helps children and families in 52 countries and regions worldwide. As a non-profit organization, RMHC® is solely supported through donations from individual and corporate donors.

WITH YOUR HELP:

- The **Ronald McDonald House®** program provides more than 6,200 rooms each night, easing the psychological and financial burden of a child's critical illness. Each year, families save approximately \$226 million in hotel costs alone by staying at a Ronald McDonald House.
- Thousands of families every day enjoy a quiet respite in a **Ronald McDonald Family Room®** located within the hospital. Research shows having families nearby helps the child in the healing process.
- More than 100,000 children who otherwise have no access to health care receive medical and dental services and health education through the **Ronald McDonald Care Mobile®** program.

DONATION DOLLARS DOUBLED

In these troubled economic times, more and more children and families need our help. Your donation makes a difference. And now, your donation can go even further. Thanks to BrandSource®, donations made during April and May, 2009 will be doubled* — **making your generosity twice as powerful.**



Ronald McDonald House Charities
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