Three-year-old Constance has been battling kidney disease since she was born. She's endured multiple surgeries, seizures, hernias, headaches, high blood pressure, and daily dialysis treatments. But somehow, she doesn't let that get in the way of just being a kid.

“She doesn't let it slow her down whatsoever,” says Kristin, her mom. “I don't know how she does it, but she's always happy.”

Kristin and Constance first stayed in the Seattle House in 2014, in the months after Constance was born. At that time, her care team at Seattle Children’s Hospital was working to assess the extent of her kidney disease.

Constance was in the hospital during that stay, but Kristin stayed at the Seattle House with Constance's two older brothers.

“Having a place where I could have my sons with me and still be there for Constance was amazing,” says Kristin.

Constance was discharged from the hospital when she was two months old. Over the next few years, she had a few medical scares, but was able to live mostly at the family's home in the small town of Ephrata, Washington.

That changed in September 2017, when the at-home dialysis wasn’t able to keep up with what Constance's body needed. Kristin and Constance moved back into the Seattle House while she underwent more intensive care at the hospital. They returned home in January, but came back to Seattle just a few weeks later after Constance suffered a seizure.

Unlike when she was an infant, Constance is now able to enjoy and explore the Seattle House between her dialysis appointments.

“She loves the playgrounds and all the walking trails around here,” says Kristin. “And she loves the crafts that volunteers do with her and all the other kids.”

Kristin and Constance are currently waiting for a kidney to become available. They’ll likely be living at the Seattle House through the transplant and recovery.

It’s been hard to be away from the rest of their family, but having a place to stay and a community around them has made it a little easier.

“This place makes being away from home a little more manageable,” says Kristin. “It’s really been a life-saver.”

Love, Kristin
Your Impact in 2017

2017 marked the first year that the Seattle and Anchorage Houses were both open, allowing us to serve more families than ever. More than 1,600 families stayed with us last year, and the only reason we were able to provide housing and essential services to those families is because of our donors, volunteers, and supporters.

The Seattle House provided **27,976 nights of housing** to **429 families** in 2017. The average length of stay was **63 days**, with 30% of families staying longer than the average. The Seattle House was very full in 2017: the occupancy rate was 95%.

During its first full year of operations, the Anchorage House was a home-away-from-home for **1,212** expectant mothers and pediatric patients. The average length of stay for those families was **7 days**.

From a financial perspective, in 2017, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Western Washington & Alaska received the majority of its revenue from contributions and gifts. 79 cents of every dollar we spent went directly to supporting families in need.

### Volunteer Spotlight: North Seattle ASG

Every month, a half dozen or so members of the Seattle Chapter of the American Sewing Guild set up shop in the basement of the Ronald McDonald House in Seattle.

They bring 40 colorful pillowcases that they've hand-sewn over the last month. They set these out for families, and new residents at the Seattle House are always excited to receive a pillowcase that adds some personality and excitement to their rooms.

The sewing group also mends torn clothing that families bring by and fixes torn mattress covers or pillow protectors. And the project that's always waiting for them is turning worn-out linens into hundreds of rags for use by the facilities staff.

The group has been coming since 2009, and their services provide a valuable service to families and help the House save on linen costs by re-purposing old items. What keeps the group coming back to the House is an appreciation for the craft and the opportunity to use their talent for a good cause.

“Turning out stacks of rags may not be glamorous,” says Louisa Jones, a member of the Seattle ASG, “but it’s nice to give back in a way that’s tangible.” ❤️
Volunteer at the Seattle House!

Our individual volunteers help to create a supportive, welcoming community for families at the Seattle House. We have many positions and time slots available, including:

**Front Desk**
The Front Desk is the hub of the Ronald McDonald House! Volunteers are the first people our families, visitors & staff see when they enter.

**Family Resource Center**
As a Family Resource Center volunteer you will staff the center where families check out movies, electronic games and game consoles.

To see a full list of available shifts and positions, visit rmhcseattle.org/volunteer/individuals

Spring at RMHC

Everyone at the Seattle House gets pretty excited when the sun starts making regular appearances! Here’s a peek at what our families have been up to this spring. ♥

- **Center**: Heidi and Konner pose with a snowman after an early spring snowfall. They came to the Seattle House from Hawaii.
- **Right**: Girl Scout Troop 40957 from Everett donated a bunch of supplies from our wish list that they purchased with money made from cookie sales.
- **Left**: The therapy dogs that visit the House take Anna’s mind off of her treatment for Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. Here, she visits with a yellow lab named Weslyn.
- **Center**: A troop of professional dancers were in town to perform at a Taylor Swift concert. They stopped by the Seattle House for a quick performance - and many residents joined in the fun!

Your support matters.

Every donation to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Western Washington & Alaska helps to provide housing, essential support, and a welcoming environment for families at a difficult time in their lives.

Be a hero for families today! Return the included envelope or visit rmhcseattle.org/donate
What will your legacy be?

A bequest to RMHC may be the most important gift you ever give.

Did you know there is a simple way to continue helping families with seriously ill children for many years to come?

By setting aside a gift to RMHC of Western Washington & Alaska in your will, you will ensure families always have a place to call home at the House.

Making a gift like this may sound complicated, but it isn’t! We can provide you with simple language to add to your will and connect you with estate attorneys who can help you with this process.

Leaving a legacy gift to RMHC is an easy and fulfilling way to support families.

If you have questions about this process or would like more information, contact Heather Bauer at heather@rmhcseattle.org or 206-838-0614.