This past year has held many unexpected changes for everyone, especially for families staying at RMHC who are taking care of their immunocompromised children during an international pandemic. Throughout this overwhelming year, the Ronald McDonald House remained open and continued to provide essential services to ensure families can focus on what matters most—the health of their children.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have made many changes to ensure that the House can be as safe for our families as possible. We have continued to provide meals throughout the pandemic, in the form of boxed meals and packaged snacks. Where volunteers used to prepare meals for our families, we have transitioned to our Boxed Meal Program. It has been a success, with community members and organizations sponsoring boxed meals and ensuring that our families have nutritious options each night.

We have also increased cleaning and sanitizing procedures in the House. Shared spaces in the House are closed and families spend most of their time in their rooms. Additional cleanings daily assure families they will be safe at the House so they can focus on caring for their child.

With fewer families staying in the House at one time, there is a significantly smaller risk of them coming into contact with an infected person.

Our staff and a core group of volunteers have made these changes possible. While the House is currently closed to our larger community, we have stayed in touch by creating virtual opportunities for interaction for families, including ways volunteers can help from home, and expanding our online presence to give regular updates to our community.

2020 was a year of change and flexibility at the House, and we are grateful to all of the donors, volunteers, and supporters that stepped up without pause and helped make sure families at the House would never have to go without masks, sanitation supplies, meals, and support. As we look forward to the rest of 2021 and a brighter future ahead, we want to say a big THANK YOU! You have made an amazing difference for families.

♥

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Cassie's Story

The Powell family has endured enough uncertainty for a lifetime, but they continue to fight. Their story began when Cassie was only six years old, when she started feeling an indescribable back pain. An initial x-ray made doctors think she had a slipped disc, but once she had an MRI, the truth was revealed. “We knew something was wrong when Cassie was still sedated after the MRI and they were sending a doctor to talk with us,” says Andrea, Cassie’s mom. The diagnosis was cancer.

Cassie began her treatment in Portland in 2011. After another relapse, the Powell family moved to Washington, so they could get Cassie in at Seattle Children’s Hospital. As Cassie’s treatment continued, they made the decision to stay at the Ronald McDonald House. “They make it as home-y as possible here,” says Andrea. “Everything you might need is provided and if it’s not, they’ll get it for you.”

When Cassie began to lose her hair again from chemo, it was uncomfortable and surprisingly painful. Andrea reached out to our Front Desk to see if they happened to have a pair of clippers. They didn’t, but within the hour someone had gotten some and delivered them to their room.

Through the ups and downs, Ronald McDonald House has remained a constant and convenient place to stay. Cassie, now 16, greatly appreciates being able to sleep in as long as possible and roll out of bed for her appointments. The pandemic has created a temporary change in the social environment and community comradery at the House. However, Andrea and the Powell family remain appreciative for what the House has provided during Cassie’s journey and all the friends they have made along the way. “It really is a home away from home.”

2020 Gala Recap

Our first-ever virtual gala and auction was a huge success! Together, our community of donors, supporters, and volunteers raised over $590,000 for the House to keep providing essential services for families!

Be sure to save the date for next year’s gala on October 23, 2021!

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Western Washington & Alaska gratefully acknowledges the following corporations and individuals for their sponsorship and support of the 32nd Annual RMHC The House That Love Built.

Presenting Sponsor: John L. Scott Foundation

Sponsor a Family Matching Sponsor: McDonald’s of Western Washington

Gala Sponsors: Seattle Children’s, Wizards of the Coast, Report Footwear, the Bungie Foundation, Franke, Inc., Keurig Dr Pepper, Mize CPAs, Pacific Northwest Baking, RTI, S2K, the Schuler Family Foundation, Spawn Ideas, and Wells Fargo
Help From Home in 2021!

Want to support the House from the comfort of your own home? Now you can, with our list of great ways to donate, volunteer, and learn more about what we do, all virtually! Check out our new Help from Home page on our site to learn more at rmhcseattle.org/volunteer/help-from-home.

You can organize a donation drive, host a virtual information session, and much more with our new ways to Help From Home!

Around the House

Boxed Meal Program
Since we started our Boxed Meal Program to replace volunteers coming in to cook meals, there has not been a single night without a warm meal for our families! We would like to give a big shout-out to Side-By-Side, who have been participating in our Boxed Meal Program weekly since its inception!

Holidays at the House
Although the holidays had to be celebrated a little differently this year, we had some amazing volunteer groups help bring holiday cheer to the House. Thank you to the Holiday Cruise Group for providing meals on Christmas Eve and Christmas, Rick Rizzs of Toys for Kids for gifts and stockings for families, Linda Hunnell for Christmas stockings, and Sally Fiorini for decorating the House for the holidays!

Expansion
Our planned expansion, which will add 25 new rooms to our House, is currently under construction! For current updates, visit the Expansion page on our website. We look forward to this new chapter of providing support for families!
You Make a Difference for Families!

Throughout all the uncertainty of the past year, you, our community of donors, supporters, and volunteers, have enabled the House to continue providing essential services to families.

While volunteers and visitors to the House have been extremely limited, you have found ways to be part of our community. From attending our virtual gala to helping from home, you, our community, have made a huge difference for our families.

Thank you for supporting our families!