



THE POWER OF A WISH

2015 / 2016 Annual Report





A respite from pain. A moment of joy. The spirit of support that brings communities closer. A smile. The courage to carry on.

That is the power of a wish and the power of what we do.

A MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL BOARD CHAIR AND CEO



Over the past thirty-one years, The Children’s Wish Foundation of Canada has granted nearly 25,000 wishes to Canadian children.

Like many other organizations, we began this year facing profound changes in the charitable giving environment, and we needed the courage to respond.

Our goal was to seize the opportunity to refresh our mandate, to work more deeply with our healthcare partners to broaden the range of children to whom we grant wishes, to seek out new donors and re-energize current donors with our new vision, and to reach out to more Canadian families.

This past year, we completed a record 1,195 wishes, 219 more than the year before. We saw an increase in approved wish referrals, up 220 over the previous year for a total of 1,451. To support our refreshed mandate, we needed to better engage our donor partners and invite new donors to support our change. We had outstanding support and commitment from our donor partners to help us grant even more wishes this year.

We responded to the call from our medical community partners to broaden the range of children to whom we grant

wishes. Now children with serious genetic and neurological diagnoses, like severe cerebral palsy, are part of the Children’s Wish family.

In October 2015, we launched our More Wishes, More Wonders national major giving campaign. The campaign has garnered the support of current and new donors, including our largest-ever multi-year pledge from the Slaight Family Foundation.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we do so with tremendous optimism. We are proud of the profound impact Children’s Wish has had on the lives of millions of Canadians.

On behalf of everyone at The Children’s Wish Foundation of Canada and the wish kids we have supported, a heartfelt thank you to all who have helped make the power of a wish possible.



Brenda Abrams,
Chair, National Board of Directors

Chris Kotsopoulos
Chief Executive Officer

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Children's Wish has had a tremendously successful year. Across the country, we granted wishes to more kids and touched more lives than ever before.

Our commitment to being the best at wish granting is evident in this success.



▲ A Record-Breaking Year for Wish Granting – Our donors make it possible!

Thanks to our donors across Canada, we reached more children, along with their families and communities, by granting a record 1,195 wishes this fiscal year. That's 219 more heartfelt wishes than last year - an increase of 22%.

▲ More Wishes, More Wonders Campaign

Our *More Wishes, More Wonders* Major Giving Campaign launched coast to coast on October 29, 2015. To date, \$3.7M in donations and \$3 M in multi-year pledges have been confirmed by generous supporters. These donations are helping to fund hundreds of heartfelt wishes for children diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, including serious genetic or neurological illness.



100%

OF **WISH PARENTS** SAW **POSITIVE** EMOTIONAL OR **PHYSICAL BENEFITS** FOR THEIR CHILD



1,239

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS ACROSS CANADA WHO **REFERRED** A WISH CHILD LAST YEAR



557

THE NUMBER OF **WISH CHILDREN'S** **HOME TOWNS** ACROSS CANADA

2.4M

NEARLY **2.4 MILLION CANADIANS** HAVE HAD THEIR LIVES **TOUCHED** IN SOME WAY BY A CHILD'S WISH



BC and Yukon Chapter (top)

100 Wishes Milestone

Wish Coordinator Lindsay Barnett explains how the BC and Yukon chapter reached their 100 wishes milestone: “Our whole team tries to tell everyone they meet that they have the power to refer a child, helping us connect with eligible kids and engaging our communities. We’ve also had a positive response to our new, expanded criteria, meaning more wishes for deserving kids.”

Alberta Chapter (second)

2,000th Wish Granted in Alberta

The Children’s Wish Foundation of Canada was founded in Alberta in 1986. The first wish we received was for a stereo system. On June 9, 2015, 29 years after the founding of the Alberta Chapter, Children’s Wish granted the 2,000th wish in the province to Coleen, a 3-year-old with cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

Last year, Children’s Wish expanded wish granting to include those children with severe genetic or neurological conditions. Coleen is one of those children, which makes her status as the 2,000th wish kid all the more significant.

Coleen’s wish was to go on a Disney Cruise. In the fall of 2016, her wish will come true. The family will set sail from New York City on a Disney Cruise with Mickey and crew for the wish of a lifetime. Coleen loves swimming, and the promise of walking into the Atlantic Ocean has spurred her to learn to walk more capably.

Coleen’s mother, Penny, says the impact of the wish is immeasurable. “A wish means the world to a family and to a child like Coleen.”

The last 29 years and 2,000 wish children in Alberta continue to remind us all of the power of a wish.



Saskatchewan Chapter (third)

Children’s Wish and Ronald McDonald House Charities Saskatchewan Graham Slam Golf Tournament

In the summer of 2015, The Children’s Wish Foundation, Saskatchewan Chapter and Ronald McDonald House Charities Saskatchewan partnered together on the Graham Slam Golf Tournament with Canadian golf favourite and hometown hero, Graham DeLaet. There is great synergy between both organizations and supporting families in the province has helped create a bond between Children’s Wish and RMHC in Saskatchewan that will continue to grow into the future.



Manitoba Chapter (bottom)

The Anticipation of a Wish Come True

As special guests and ambassadors of the Manitoba and Nunavut Chapter’s 7th Annual Shiver Ball Gala, Achahk and his parents, Arlen Dumas, Chief of the Mathias Colomb Cree First Nation and his wife Pam Palmater, a lawyer and Associate Professor and the Chair of Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University, were extremely honoured to attend the gala and show their appreciation for Achahk to have his most heartfelt wish granted.

Fifteen-year-old Achahk was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis when he was only three months old. At the age of 8, Achahk’s health began to deteriorate and he had to be admitted to hospital and ultimately placed on a lung transplant list. A donor was found and transplant surgery was successful. After three long months of recovery, Achahk finally received news that he could go home from the hospital.

Achahk is now looking forward to having his most heartfelt wish granted. While Achahk decides on what his wish will be, he wants to be sure that whatever it is, his entire family will be a part of the experience.



Ontario National Capital Chapter (top)

Algonquin College – A Partnership for Success

The Children’s Wish National Capital Chapter has enjoyed an incredible and unique partnership with Algonquin College School of Hospitality & Tourism’s Event Management program for the last eight years. Algonquin made a commitment to raise \$1 million for Children’s Wish by the end of 2016, and they have almost reached their goal. Children’s Wish is grateful for this hugely successful partnership. In 2010, we were proud to nominate and see the Algonquin Event Management faculty and staff win the AFP Outstanding Group Philanthropic Award.

Ontario Chapter (middle)

Making Magic at the Castle

The Children’s Wish Ontario Chapter held their first annual Princess Dance Party at the historic Casa Loma in Toronto. The sold out event was a resounding success! Though the Princess Dance Party is a new signature event for the Ontario Chapter, it’s a well-established and very popular event in several of our Chapters across Canada. We are so happy to bring this event to Ontario, and we are confident it will be a favourite for many years to come. Special thanks to key sponsor Fortress Development.

Quebec Chapter (bottom)

357 Unique Wishes Granted

With 357 wishes granted, this is a record year for wish granting in Québec. Each wish is as unique as the child who imagines it and is prepared with great care to meet the needs and expectations of each child and their family. One of those children was Angélique. “What I liked the most,” says her mom Vicky “was to see the wonder in Angélique’s eyes. We all came back from our trip well-rested and serene and she has remained really happy. It was a memorable experience for the whole family! They say that when a child is sick, the whole family is sick. Medicine probably cured my daughter, but it’s Children’s Wish that healed the family.”





New Brunswick Chapter (top)

Bayside Middle School – 13 years of making wishes happen

Bayside Middle School has been fundraising in support of Children’s Wish for over 13 years. They have consistently raised in excess of \$20,000 annually. Four students at Bayside have been wish children and this has motivated the students and staff to surpass a collective total of \$300,000 over their 13-year fundraising history. Go Broncos!

Nova Scotia Chapter (second)

Katherine Learns to Smile

Five-year-old Katherine Simpson has complex genetic conditions and is fully dependent on oxygen and a ventilator every day of her life. Her wish was to go to Disney World with her parents; something her mom Lisa never thought would be possible. The impact of a wish is so powerful that it can be life changing for a child like Katherine and her family. After returning from their Disney trip, her family reported that Katherine had learned how to smile. Dad Pete explains, “We said before we left that the trip would be worth every bit of everybody’s effort if she smiled once, and she lit up!”



PEI Chapter (third)

The PEI RumRunners

After 10 years of hard work, generosity and good fortune, the PEI RumRunners reached a significant milestone; they passed the \$1-million mark in funds raised for The Children’s Wish Foundation of Canada. Since 2006, their flagship annual golf tournament and, in recent years, their ‘One Night – One Child’s Wish’ and ‘Home From Away’ events have been hugely beneficial to wish families.



Newfoundland Chapter (bottom)

A funny thing happened on the way to the Emerald Gala...

Each and every one of our wish children and their story is unique. There is, however, one wish story that offered a surreal twist at our annual Emerald Gala. This year’s Emerald Gala featured *The Masterless Men*, one of the most popular Celtic groups in the province. We were thrilled to see Peter, one of our very own wish kids, was one of the artists in the band, reminding us how our work can ignite passion and inspire a wish child to an exciting vocation.



THE POWER OF A WISH

As Canada's authority on wish granting, we understand that the power of what we do is essential to children diagnosed with life-threatening or severe genetic or neurological illnesses. It is both immediate and lasting, and the positive impact is felt by not only our wish kids, but all those around them.



Mable's Wish

Six-year-old Mable can hardly believe her ears. The city of Edmonton is in trouble and the chief of police is appealing for *her* help. "Spider-Mable, we urgently need you," he pleads in a special news broadcast. Mable was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia when she was four years old.

As a result, she endured blood transfusions and several rounds of chemotherapy. Not only that, the medicine Mable was prescribed caused terrible headaches and even affected her ability to do simple things like hold a crayon and draw.

But in September 2015, hundreds of people in Edmonton pitched in to create an elaborate adventure for Mable. The event brought one little girl a day she'll remember forever. And brought a whole city, and a country, together to cheer her on.

Emmanuel's Wish

Emmanuel never saw the car that hit him at 160 kilometers per hour on the country road in front of his family's cottage. The crash left him with six broken ribs, a perforated lung, severe head trauma and two fractured vertebrae. Emmanuel fell into a coma and was given little chance of survival by his doctors.

But in February 2016, Emmanuel was granted his most heartfelt wish – to meet his favourite NBA player, Kobe Bryant, during the NBA All-Star Weekend in Toronto.

Hunter's Wish

When 14-year-old Ontario teen Hunter Guindon was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis in the summer of 2009, a social worker at the hospital went to his room and asked him what he would do if he could do anything at all. Hunter said he would love to cook with celebrity chef Michael Smith. Six years after his wish was granted, Hunter has taken his positive wish experience and his passion for cooking and made it his life's work.. he now works for the renowned chef at his new restaurant, 'Fireworks'.

Jonas' Wish

Born with spastic cerebral palsy, Jonas is restricted to a wheelchair and struggles every day with basic functions. Jonas wished for a swim spa so that he could float freely in the water anytime he wanted. In November 2015, his wish was granted.





Our Healthcare Partners

In hospitals and clinics across the country, healthcare professionals are working with Children's Wish to help grant a sick child's most heartfelt wish. This year, our healthcare partners referred a growing 1,451 kids to Children's Wish, because they understand the positive medical and emotional benefits of a child's wish-come-true. Joy is a wonder drug.

Our Donors & Partners

We could not grant 1,200 wishes every year without the support of our valued donors. The companies, community groups and individuals who support us year after year provide the much-needed funding that allows us to continue to fulfill the most heartfelt wish of every wish child.



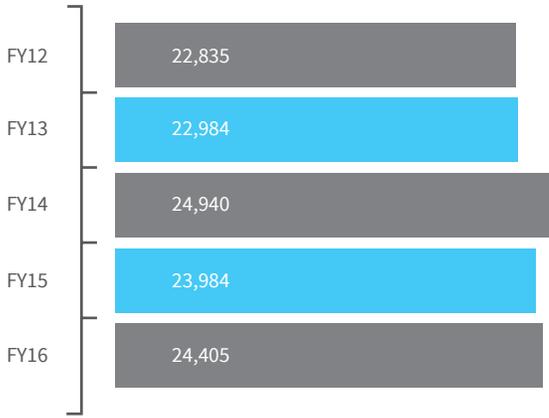
Our Volunteers

We are very proud of our strong partnerships with so many individuals and groups who volunteer their time, talent and expertise to support Children's Wish and the thousands of wish kids and families we serve. Without our extended family so much of what we do would not be possible. Our most sincere thanks to the more than 20,000 volunteers across the country who make such an incredible difference.

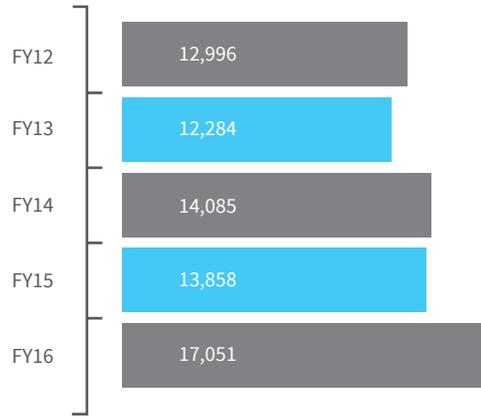
Our 2016 Laura Cole National Volunteer Award Recipient **Westley Hood** from Prince Edward Island.

Financial Highlights

The Foundation recorded a 22% increase in the number of wishes granted to children with life-threatening, complex genetic or neurological conditions. Indeed, the business of wish granting has never been more complex, and the need for donor support never greater.



Revenue (\$ Millions)



Wish Expenses (\$ Millions)

[VIEW FULL DIGITAL ANNUAL REPORT](#)



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