

Children's Health Update

Children's National to Make March Matter for Children in the Hospital

(NAPS)—This month, kids across the region will enjoy playing sports, spending time with friends or traveling for family vacation on spring break. Sadly, hundreds of other children will remain in the hospital fighting to get stronger, coping with life-altering diagnoses and enduring treatment.

But thanks to dedicated doctors, nurses, child life specialists and more, pediatric hospitals, like premier pediatric hospital Children's National Hospital in Washington, D.C., make treatment and coping with conditions as positive an experience as possible for patients and their families. Hospitals like Children's National focus on addressing more than just the underlying illness, injury or condition. They provide critical education, support and encouragement to prepare not only their young patients, but their parents, siblings and families for recovery or coping with a chronic condition. This way, patients can feel informed, empowered and confident to heal or manage their own condition over time. Hospitals also work to treat the whole child and help improve their experience through creative programming like art, music, games and pet therapy.

One Child's Ability to Take Control

Reese was 5 years old when she had her first seizure and dropped to the ground during a school fire drill. That day, neurologists at Children's National in nearby Washington, D.C. diagnosed her with epilepsy.

However, with her diagnosis came education, knowledge and power. Not just for her, but for her entire family, allowing her to grow up stronger and enjoy life to the fullest. "My doctors have helped me control my seizures ever since," says Reese. "They taught me how to limit them, how to trust my instincts when one's coming on and how to handle a seizure even if I'm by myself." With this knowledge, Reese, now 9 years old, says she has a lot of confidence to live with her condition, as does her family.

Reese had a seizure on the school bus this year and her friend yelled to



Reese, 9, on vacation with her family in Costa Rica.

the bus driver to get her little brother, John. He's only 7 but knew what to do thanks to the care and support Reese and her whole family received at Children's National.

"Some people who have seizures feel like they can't do anything, but not me," says Reese. "I have a plan and I know my limits, thanks to my doctors." Last year, Reese even traveled to Costa Rica with her family where she swam in waterfalls, crossed hanging bridges and climbed cliffs.

Make March Matter

This exceptional level of care can make a big difference in a child and their family's experience, however, child life and specialty programming as well as research is not often covered by insurance. Rather it is funded through the generous philanthropic support of the local community.

To ensure children like Reese have the programs, resources and exceptional care they need to enjoy stronger futures, Children's National Hospital Foundation is celebrating its third-annual Make March Matter fundraising campaign all month long. The campaign invites community members to shop, dine and donate at businesses and restaurants in the DC area to help ensure exceptional care for patients and their families, both now and in the future.

Visit MakeMarchMatterDC.org to learn more.