



Helping extraordinary kids
regain their childhood.



An Immune Recovery Center

Passion and Purpose



In 1998, a nurse caring for children with cancer imagined a center where children undergoing immune suppression therapy would have a stress-free environment to recover. This passionate nurse dreamed of a center that provided a home away from home where children could interact with others while awaiting immune recovery.

The concept of RJ Children's Haven (RJCH), an Immune Recovery Child Care Center, was initially developed in 2011 and received non-profit status. The center will soon have a home due to some generous donors, and is slated to open in spring 2020.

Children need social interaction as an integral part of recovery. This innovative center will provide children and teens a solace from isolation, communication with others undergoing immune therapy, and opportunities for interaction with adults and peers who understand the solitude that occurs when they cannot attend school, play with friends, or go to family gatherings due to the risk of infection and illness.

RJCH offers a safe environment for child care, therapies, socialization, education, and support for children who are immunocompromised and their families. It's the first of its kind in the nation to offer children a chance for normalcy while recovering from immune compromising disease through body, mind and spirit care and healing. The vision that began 20 years ago to provide a safe, caring and social environment for children while being cared for in a home-like setting has become a reality.



One Child's Story

Weston was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia three weeks after his eighth birthday. His only hope for a cure was to have a bone marrow transplant. He lived in the hospital for four months, and then was isolated at home for nearly a year. He couldn't attend school, play with friends, play sports or go to public places.

"It was hard not being around other kids. I was very lonely," he said. "Having a center like RJCH would have made things so much better. I would have had other kids to talk to who were going through the same things as me. I would not have been so alone."

"RJ Children's Haven is the perfect support at the perfect time for our family. It is exactly what we need to help our son transition back to school through socialization and educational support."
- Parent of J.B.



The Inspiration



RJCH is inspired by Rachel and Jason. Rachel is a young woman who was treated for pediatric cancer and survived. Jason was a passionate nurse who used his gifts to heal children with cancer but lost his life too soon.

Why RJCH is Needed

Cancer Care Annual Reports from a local pediatric hospital show more than 200 new patients are added to their cancer registry annually.

Cancer, genetic disorders, transplants, inflammatory disease, radiation, and certain drugs weaken children's immune systems and can place them at a short-term risk for infection. When a child's immune system is suppressed, he or she cannot attend school, day care or activities in the community without risk of infection. Children can spend formative months and years in isolation at home. Their social and emotional development may suffer as a result. Additionally, they may fall behind academically.

Parents often must give up their source of income and health benefits to stay home with their child, or they must take many absences from work to attend multiple appointments and therapies. Necessary therapies are sometimes skipped or unable to access.

At RJCH, parents can leave their children in a safe and supportive environment. They can return to work knowing their child in recovery is being well taken care of.

These children often deal with loneliness because of their diagnosis. RJCH offers a place they can receive and give support because their journeys are similar.

Therapies will be conveniently provided in designated rooms at RJCH where outside agencies and professionals can support the child's needs: occupational therapy, speech therapy, physical therapy, medical social work, music and art therapy, academic tutoring, and family resources and support.

The goal of RJCH is a coordinated and collaborative effort with the child's primary and specialty team. A staff nurse will be onsite to provide an assessment of the physical, mental or emotional needs of each child, and to administer oral medications. Nurses who follow the child's care in a home health setting will provide the same care at RJCH in a medical treatment room, including all invasive procedures, such as ports, feeding tubes and access lines.



Services Offered at RJCH



SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Licensed child care facility that is fully child-proofed with trained staff, state-required child-to-provider ratios and written policies. Provides a comforting place of respite and supports employment or re-employment for parents.

HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

Onsite, registered nurse makes ongoing assessments for wellness and physical, mental or emotional needs. If a health status change occurs, family will be notified ASAP.

CLEAN AIR

A hospital operating room-grade HVAC system that protects children from airborne pollutants.

CONVENIENT ACCESS TO THERAPIES

Designated spaces will be available to coordinate all therapeutic services for the child, including occupational therapy, speech therapy and physical therapy.

PLAY, MUSIC AND ART THERAPY

Play, art and music therapy is an integral part of recovery. Child life specialist-assisted activities will be available for social, emotional and developmental growth.

EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Social workers, counselors and psychologists will also provide needed support and resources in designated spaces for children and their families.

ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

Tutors will be available for individualized help.

MEDICAL NEEDS MET

Medication administration and home health nursing care will be provided in an equipped setting for more invasive procedures, including tube feedings, ports and access lines.

NON-CONTAGION ISOLATION AREA

When illness occurs, a separate area is provided for rest until pick up arrives.



We Need Your Support

A building has been purchased in the Hospital Hill neighborhood less than five blocks from a world-class, pediatric hospital. Construction will begin in fall 2019 with an anticipated opening in spring 2020. RJCH is asking the community to learn more about the project and consider a donation to ensure its success.

While the purchase of the building, construction and capital expenses are covered, donations are needed to support operational costs. These include the purchase of specialty equipment, furnishings, developmental resources and materials, and unmet costs of care for the children. Many opportunities for giving and sponsorship are available. Or, you may give a donation in any amount.

Please share our commitment to the body, mind and spirit healing of children with a donation to RJ Children's Haven today. All donations are tax deductible.

Visit rjchildrenshaven.org for more information.

RJCH Leadership



RJCH, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, is led by an Executive Board including two nurses, and a healthcare administrator and organizational leadership expert. The Executive and Advisory Boards are comprised of professionals with decades of experience treating children with life-threatening health conditions. This includes nurse practitioners, pediatric specialist physicians, parents, licensed social workers, Blue Valley school teachers, music and play therapists and business leaders.



For more information, visit rjchildrenshaven.org
Executive Board email:
board@rjchildrenshaven.org
Mailing address:
P.O. Box 3295, Independence, MO 64055
Phone: (816) 888-9036