



Reach Out and Read (pg.3)

The Child Life Program at Mount Sinai offers a full range of free activities and services to make the hospital experience easier, more familiar and more comfortable for children.

Our staff of certified Child Life Specialists includes experts in early childhood education, special education, creative arts therapy and recreation therapy.

Through play, art, school and socializing with peers, these experts help children retain their creativity, self esteem and independence, and continue their normal development while in the hospital.

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One on One With Volunteer Bert Rachel Freed

By Cheryl Strauss, B.A., CCLS
Child Life Specialist

In September 1999, the Child Life Program was given an invaluable gift- volunteer Bert Rachel Freed! Three years after she began volunteering with the Child Life Department, Bert shows no signs of slowing down. She regularly devotes 2-3 days per week to the pediatric patients and their families on the inpatient units. Even on holidays, when volunteers are not expected, Bert often arrives to help make the day brighter for those stuck in the hospital. Whether she is playing a game with a patient at the bedside, sharing artistic ideas with groups of children in the playroom, or adding decorative touches to liven up a pediatric area, Bert's kindness and generosity overflows. No one is exempt from Bert's giving spirit as patients, siblings, parents and even hospital staff have been touched by her loving hands. One look at her blue volunteer jacket, decorated by patients with painted rainbows and other childhood symbols, speaks of the special connections that Bert has developed with many patients over the years. I recently spoke with Bert to learn more about her volunteer experience.

What motivated you to volunteer with the Child Life Program?

Initially my motivation came from the fact that my daughter had been a seriously ill patient at Mount Sinai several years ago and had received **wonderful** care from the hospital staff. I wanted to reciprocate for all that I felt I had been given during that difficult time. Once my daughter left for college, I signed on as a volunteer. Looking back, I see that while my original intent was to give to others, I have personally been given so much more through my interactions with hospitalized children and families. The reciprocal benefits of giving are immense and we don't have to wait for something significant to happen to us to propel us to do something good for others.



An art activity with a patient

What aspect of volunteering do you most enjoy?

Number one, hands down, it is the interaction with the kids- patients AND siblings! Number two is working with the Child Life staff to help make the hospital environment in pediatrics as "homey" as possible. The playroom should be a comfortable, stimulating, and

attractive space that feels inviting. Being in the hospital can be an isolating experience and the monthly calendar that I create and adorn with seasonal decorations (such as hearts in February, pumpkins in October, etc ...) helps patients maintain a sense of connection with the community outside of the hospital.

How do you feel after spending the hours at the hospital? You must be exhausted!!

No, I'm elated! In fact, the days that I am the busiest with patients are the days that I leave the most invigorated. I quickly forget that these are sick children as I focus on typical tasks of childhood-playing, creating, laughing. I leave feeling energized by the smiles on patients' faces and the knowledge that my work was appreciated.

What have you learned through your volunteer experiences?

Often you go into something thinking that you are going to teach others and you come away learning so much yourself. As a volunteer, I've been given so much, I've been taught.

What advice would you give to a new volunteer?

As soon as you begin to

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One on One With Volunteer Bert Rachel Freed *(Continued)*

volunteer, seek out as much knowledge as possible. This is the foundation for your future experiences. Listen, observe, ask questions! Because they are the liaisons between you and the children, work closely with your Child Life

supervisor as well as other hospital staff to develop a good rapport. Also, remember that kids know more than we initially may expect. Give kids the respect and honor that they deserve and focus on the moment!

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities within the Child Life Department, please contact Caroline Boynton in the Volunteer Department at 212-659-9180.

The Use of Photography in the Child Life Program

By Marissa Vozos, M.L.S.
Child Life Specialist

Mount Sinai's Child Life Program has a long tradition of collaborating with patients and families using video, art, music and many other creative modalities. Children have the opportunity to express what they think and feel in unique and innovative ways.

In the summer of 2002, the Child Life team embarked on a creative collaboration with consultant Dwayne Dixon from the *Literacy Through Photography Program (LTP)*.

Artist Wendy Ewald launched LTP in the Durham Public School

system in 1989 at the Center for Documentary studies at Duke University. LTP traditionally offers workshops to teachers with the mission of encouraging students to find their voice through photographs and written text. For one week Child Life staff engaged in the first-ever LTP workshop for Specialists to gain skill in offering photography experiences and techniques to engage patients and families in creative expression during their hospital stay. This skills workshop involved basic assignments-photos of self, family, community, and dreams-to teach everything from framing and point of view to how to develop film. Specialists

explored the aesthetics of photographic form and the power of images to stimulate thinking and writing.

Child Life Specialists and Child Life / Art Therapy Interns will continue through the next year to develop photo programming that facilitates self-expression and creative adjustment to hospitalization and illness. We look forward to publishing some of the work that our patients and families create.



Smile!



Volunteers Pediatric Emergency Department

The Child Life Department is looking for volunteers who are interested helping create fun, colorful art displays within the Pediatric Emergency Department. Help improve the aesthetic

appearance of the ER into a more child friendly, expressive environment.

Any artist who can donate time, talent, or materials for bright, **therapeutic murals**, art displays, or

thematic/educational bulletin boards should contact Kevin Brooks X47151 or Anna Eckhardt X45495 or at 212-241-6797.

Volunteers.... Reach Out and Read!

By Anna Eckhardt, B.A.
Reach Out and Read Coordinator

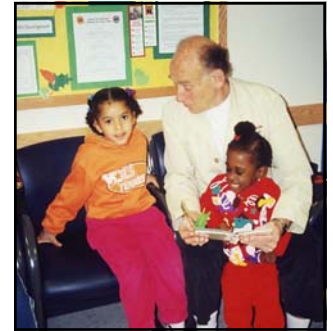
The Reach Out and Read Program at Mount Sinai Medical Center is looking for Volunteer Readers in the Pediatric Ambulatory Care Clinic. Volunteers transform the clinic waiting area into positive learning environments for children and parents. Come enhance the emotional well being of children during their hospital clinic visit,

encourage the enjoyment of reading and promote literacy in young children. Volunteers reading aloud in the clinic waiting areas provide pleasurable and comforting activity for children who are bored or anxious about visiting the doctor. Furthermore, when reading to children, volunteers model book-sharing techniques for parents -showing them by example that reading aloud is fun for adults and

children, and demonstrating ways to make reading aloud successful.

The program asks energetic, enthusiastic volunteers to commit to at least 2 hours a week for at least 4 months.

If you would like more information and would like to participate in the Read Out and Read Program please call Anna Eckhardt, Coordinator, 212.241.5495



"Once Upon a Time..."

Dialysis Ceiling Tile Project

By Magda Oliveras M.S., CCLS
Child Life Specialist

Children who require dialysis undergo treatment in a primarily adult hemodialysis center. These pediatric patients and families spend several hours out of their week in this area. An integral part of meeting the psychosocial needs for these patients and families is to facilitate a more soothing environment. To help meet this need Starlight foundation sponsored the **Ceramic and Ceiling Tile project**. Art Therapist and Child Life Specialist Kimberly Bush, facilitated groups and individual art sessions to create the ceramic and ceiling tiles. Children as young as 2 year olds, family members and staff participated in this creative process and produced extraordinary ideas and tiles.

The ceramic tiles were created by children, families and staff; the artist served as a facilitator. The ceiling tiles were designed by pediatric patients and brought to life on ceiling tiles by Art Therapist Kimberly Bush. Environmentally enhancing the Hemodialysis Center has created a more family friendly environment.



Julio Santana



Manuel Rodriguez



Jason Velez



Jose Ruiz



Darnell Duke



Estrella Bryant



Manuel Rodriguez



Jose Ruiz



Manuel Rodriguez



Darnell Dike

New Hours for the Family Resource Center

The Child Life Program is pleased to announce the Family Resource Center's new hours:

*Monday-closed
Tuesday-10-2 pm
Wednesday-3-7 pm
Thursday-11:30-5 pm
Friday-2:30-7 pm*

We have a wide variety of books for children and adults, as well as computers to help you research medical, parenting, and child development information. It's a great place for parents to take a break, check e-mail, word process, and get some coffee or tea. Our goal is not to offer medical advice but to help families obtain the information they need and want.

To schedule another time to use the Family Resource Center, or to request research help if you are unable to leave your child's bedside, please call (212) 241-6797.

"Top Ten" Most Useful Medical Websites

By Dana Wyles, M.L.S.
Family Resource Center Librarian

The Medical Library Association researches consumer and patient health information websites and has ranked the following as the ten best :

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov

healthfinder* (English and Spanish)
www.healthfinder.gov

HealthWeb
www.healthweb.org

HIV InSite
<http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/InSi.te.jsp>

Mayo Clinic
www.mayoclinic.com/index.cfm?

MEDEM: an information partnership of medical societies
www.medem.com/default.cfm?

MEDLINEplus

<http://medlineplus.gov>

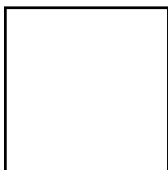
National Women's Health Information Center
www.4woman.gov/

NOAH: New York Online Access to Health (English and Spanish)
www.noah-health.org

Oncolink: a University of Pennsylvania Cancer Center Resource
www.oncolink.com



Place mailing label here



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