

ANNUAL REPORT

2019

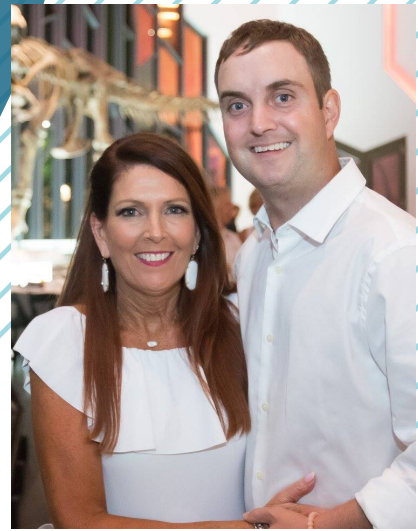
SHADOW BUDDIES

SPECIAL BUDDIES FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN



A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

MARTY POSTLETHWAIT



Treatment options and hospital facilities are becoming increasingly more sophisticated. With each passing year in the United States, children and adults have access to more effective treatments and better medications. The good news is that more patients are surviving diseases, injuries and condition that were previously incurable. The bad news is that these patients rarely receive treatment for the psychological and emotional effects of undergoing the challenge of illness.

As a mother of a child born with multiple congenital birth defects, I can personally speak to the importance of emotional well-being during the healing process. My son Miles has undergone more than 42 surgeries, and together, we have spent countless nights in the hospital. Despite his trials, Miles has maintained a sunny, positive outlook on life, even when life wasn't easy for either of us. Every parent of a medically challenged child shares that moment of feeling out of control of the situation, and I will never forget mine. Miles was four, and after a very difficult surgery, I found myself hovering over his still body, desperate for a sign that he would be okay. Hope comes from the most unexpected sources, and I remember the sheer joy I felt when, from beneath the hospital sheets, his little thumb emerged to give me the all-clear. Thumbs up, he was saying, it's going to be okay.

Thanks to supporters like you, 2019 marked another successful year of providing "Miles of Smiles" and joy to children in need! The Shadow Buddies Foundation hosted a number of great events, including our 24th Annual "The Crown Jewels of Kansas City" benefit gala. We are proud to continue our mission of charity and hope! As always, our supporters make all the difference to us. We hope that you will continue working with us on our mission to provide Shadow Buddies to all children who need them in the coming years!

OUR MISSION OF CHARITY & HOPE

The Shadow Buddies Foundation is dedicated to providing support and knowledge to children with severe illnesses and disabilities. The Foundation accomplishes this through unique programs designed to enhance the lives of children and adults by fostering compassion and awareness of differences with our line of 31 condition-specific "Shadow Buddy" dolls.

Crafted from muslin and carefully researched to represent a child's medical or emotional condition. Shadow Buddies offer seriously ill or medically challenged children the companionship of a friend "just like me." Each year we deliver approximately 40,000 Shadow Buddies worldwide with 5,000 of the buddies staying here locally in Kansas City.



OUR PROGRAMS

PINK PARTY

Launched in 2010 at the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta-Scottish Rite, the Pink Party is quickly becoming one of our most sought after programs by Child Life Specialists and pediatric hospitals throughout the United States. Currently Pink Parties are being held in Kansas City and hosted by numerous sponsors such as Sporting Kansas City. Each year we continue to host parties in seven different states across the country. The day is all about pampering girls who are in the hospital or receiving treatment in outpatient facilities. We don't forget about the mothers, grandmothers, sisters, aunts or any other caregiver who are always by the girls side, they get pampered too! The pampering includes a makeup station, a hair and wig station, as well as a nail polish station! Each girl is given her very own Pink Party Buddy complete with a tutu handmade by our wonderful volunteers! To find out more about our Pink Party program, please contact Marty Postlethwait at marty@shadowbuddies.org or (913) 642-4646.



HOLIDAY HUGS

In October of each year we kick off our annual "Holiday Hugs & Toy Drive Program" that provides toys, Shadow Buddies and dinner to hundreds of Kansas City metro families. We team up with local businesses and restaurants to collect toys for the holidays that will then be distributed to local families, shelters and other like-minded non-profits that are passionate about helping children. In 2019, not only were we lucky enough to provide toys to the Fantasy Flight families, but to numerous non-profits alike. Toys were distributed to ReStart, Hope House, Camp Quality and many more! As part of the toy and gift distribution, The Shadow Buddies Foundation staff, along with the board of Directors and volunteers, visit a Kansas City shelter to make dinner, and deliver toys while spending time with the children and families utilizing the services of the chosen organization. This is an evening we look forward to each holiday season!



OUR PROGRAMS

SUMMER BACKPACK PROGRAM

Each year, we provide more than 1,000 backpacks to special need camps around the country. Shadow Buddies are used at specialty camps to help ease the first day jitters by welcoming the special campers! Endorsed by camp counselors and nurses at the camp, the Buddies are used to teach children about their medical condition and promote a positive image. Shadow Buddies Backpacks are loaded with camp essentials, fun activities, and of course, a condition specific Shadow Buddy! Each child takes a Buddy home and has something to share with their family and friends! A year-long reminder of the new friendships they made at camp!



RESCUE BUDDY PROGRAM

The Rescue Buddy entails supplying a Buddy to every child who comes in contact with EMS personnel through illness, injury or who are simply scared due to emergency situations. The rescue workers use the Buddies to extract information from the child and help explain the extent of the injury/illness. They also use the Buddy to give the child reasonable expectations of what will happen upon arrival to the hospital. The Rescue Buddy will provide comfort, act as a companion and a partner that understands what they will be going through. The Rescue Buddy comes with a soft blanket to help comfort that child. The Buddies quickly calm the child and allow them to focus on their Buddy which make it easier for the EMS to make their assessment. Overall, the workers feel the Rescue Buddy gives them a unique tool to improve care right from the beginning.



SUPERHERO PROGRAM

In 2015, The Shadow Buddies Foundation celebrated their 20th anniversary and to commemorate 20 years of spreading "Miles of Smiles" to children everywhere, we launched the Super Hero Buddy program. Every Shadow Buddy delivered, donated, shipped and ordered came with a Buddy sized super hero cape and mask. Working with children for so long has taught us how important it is for a child newly diagnosed with an illness, living with a disability or experiencing an emotional situation to feel like a Super Hero. In our eyes, they are real superheros! The Super Hero Buddy Program was so successful that we decided to expand the program into 2016 to incorporate the children who are also going through various treatments.



OUR EVENTS

FANTASY FLIGHT

Many children dream of traveling to the North Pole to meet Santa. In 2018, Shadow Buddies partnered with United Airlines to host the first Fantasy Flight since 2001. On December 14th, 2019, with a little Christmas magic, the second annual Fantasy Flight took place! 50 terminally ill and medically challenged children received their boarding passes to take part in this magical day. The children boarded a United Flight, and flew in the air for 45 minutes to the "North Pole" where they were welcomed by Santa and Mrs. Claus themselves! The terminal they had recently departed from was transformed into a Winter Wonderland where mascots, superheros, and princesses were there to greet them! The celebration continued with festive activities, games, crafts, and each child was given Christmas presents from Santa himself! Each toy that was provided for the children was generously donated through the numerous toy drives hosted by Shadow Buddies leading up to the event. The "North Pole" and holiday magic was made possible because of our wonderful volunteers, staff, board members, and an amazing partnership with United Airlines.



KANSAS CITY CROWN JEWELS

Our 24th annual gala, "The Crown Jewels of Kansas City" was held in September at the Double Tree by Hilton, and it was a huge success! The Shadow Buddies Foundation raised over \$70,000 to help spread "Miles of Smiles!" We can't thank those who participated enough for their continuous support to our foundation! A special thank you to Klein & Walker Orthodontics, as well as Hollister Inc. and all of our sponsors and volunteers.

For the first time, Shadow Buddies presented three Miles Awards to three very deserving recipients. Board member, Tanner Coble was one of the recipients as well as long time volunteer and friend, Jodi Gearon. The last Miles Award went to Hollister Inc. which would make them the first ever corporation to receive a Miles Award.

To celebrate those in our Kansas City community, we created the first ever Children's Royal Court. Here we honored children from our community who have received a Shadow Buddy throughout their medical treatment.

Shadow Buddies is very excited to be celebrating our 25th year in 2020! The 25th annual gala will be held on Friday, September 18th 2020! You won't want to miss our silent & live auction and other surprises we have in store! Save the date and purchase your tickets at Shadowbuddies.org



OUR EVENTS

SHOOT FOR THE KIDS



BIRDIES, BOGIES & BUDDIES



PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENTS



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