FOR FRIENDS OF LA RABIDA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

MARCH 2020

e-Currents

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COVID-19

LA RABIDA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

COVID-19 Update

The COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to send shockwaves throughout global health systems. As we continue to monitor the impact that the virus has had on our community, we are committed to keeping our patients, families, and staff healthy and safe.

Despite the effects of the outbreak, we are committed to providing the care our patients need. To uphold this promise, we are utilizing telehealth technology to minimize the disruption of care for our outpatient families. When possible, primary care, specialty care, and behavioral health services are being conducted using this technology to reduce the traffic and exposure within the hospital.

As a result of the recent measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, many of our families are faced with unforeseen challenges, including the loss of school meals or fewer paychecks. Our staff is dedicated to working directly with families to identify community resources to ensure they have access to the services they need to get through this unprecedented time.

As we navigate through the unknowns that have come with this global health crisis, we remain dedicated to providing high-quality care to our children and families. We are grateful for the support of our community during this unprecedented time.

Meet Calliope

After being delivered at a mere 24 weeks, Calliope was diagnosed with periventricular leukomalacia, also known as PVL. PVL is a brain injury often found in children born prematurely that is caused by damage to the white matter that surrounds the ventricles of the brain, which transmit messages between nerve cells and other areas of the brain.

"The neurologist showed me the big spot on her brain, and he said that there would not be activity in that area of the brain ever," shared Isabella, Calliope's mom. "Little did I know that through therapy, the brain can make neuropathways around that spot to compensate for what is meant to happen there. It's amazing."

Over time, Isabella began to notice something about Calliope. "We found that she wasn't really using the left side of her body," shared Isabella. This was a result of a condition called hemiplegia, a form of cerebral palsy that is caused by damage to the hemisphere of the brain that is in control of one's muscle movement. Many children who have PVL will also be diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

Calliope began going to physical therapy on a regular basis to strengthen that left side, but Isabella felt that she could be pushed harder. "We found that Calliope's original therapists weren't as aggressive as they needed to be. I felt that she wasn't making progress," said Isabella. That's when Calliope arrived at La Rabida.

Margie, Calliope's physical therapist at La Rabida, has been transformative in her progress. "Margie picked right back up where her previous therapists had left off, but took things to the next level," shared Isabella. "I love how she is so hands-on and aggressive with her. Calliope feeds off of that. She loves to be pushed."

Through routine physical therapy, Calliope has started to build up her strength. Once relying on a walker, Calliope is now able to walk all on her own.

"Margie shows us how to do all of the exercises at home. We don't have all of these balls and tools, but she taught us how to mimic the movements with pillows and things around the house," said Isabella. "She makes it fun for both of us. It's important to me that Calliope likes her therapist, and she loves Margie."

Calliope, now three years old, has made so much progress. "She is now using her left side more and more each day," shares Isabella. "She has overcome so much."

The Benefits of Integrated Behavioral Health

Over the past year La Rabida has focused on expanding the reach of our integrated behavioral health services. The ultimate goal of integration is to eliminate the boundaries between medical and behavioral health care. By providing behavioral health care to children during their medical appointments and in a medical provider setting, the stigma associated with these services has been greatly reduced. Our expert team of behavioral health clinicians works within our outpatient clinics alongside each patient's medical team to identify a child's needs at the earliest opportunity to improve the quality and comprehensive care we provide.

During new patient visits in our primary care clinics, children are screened for their behavioral health needs. This allows our team to effectively identify children in need of services at an early stage. If a child shows signs of need, our clinicians work in partnership with the family to develop a plan of care.

This model of behavioral health treatment benefits our patients and families in a number of ways. Our "one-stop shopping" approach to healthcare allows us to increase the access to care for families. By combining appointments into one visit, our families can see all their clinicians in a single trip. Because many families have evolving schedules and transportation can be a challenge for some, this one visit makes care more manageable.

The integration reduces the stigma surrounding behavioral health treatment. Because a child will be seen by their behavioral health clinician during a standard medical appointment in a medical provider setting, we are able to normalize emotional and behavioral health care. Our overarching goal is to create a culture of care where a child's emotional and behavioral health and needs are viewed as an important aspect of their overall health and that screening and treatment for those needs is a normal and routine part of providing care at La Rabida.

By utilizing this strategy, we have found great success in reaching more children, identifying behavioral health needs sooner, and improving the access to behavioral health services.

Honoring our Physicians on Doctor's Day

Every March, we take the time to celebrate the physicians who play an integral role in the health and happiness of our patients. Doctor's Day, which takes place on March 30th, is a day in which we honor our physicians for their hard work and commitment to caring for the children and families of La Rabida. It is because of their dedication to La Rabida that we are able to touch the lives of so many children across the Chicagoland area.

On behalf of the patients, families, and staff of La Rabida, we thank the doctors who have dedicated their careers to improving the lives of our patients.

Every Child Counts in the 2020 Census!

Did you know that almost a million children under the age of five were undercounted in the 2010 US census, making them the most undercounted age category?

The Federal government allocates over $1.5 trillion in funding to state and local governments based on census data. Please complete the 2020 census by April 1st by clicking here.

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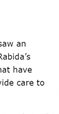

FRIENDS OF LA RABIDA AWARDS CELEBRATION

NOVEMBER 12
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ABC7 Chicago and Disney
Andrea Zopp, World Business Chicago

For more information, contact Lona Slaughter at 773.256.5955 or lslaughter@larabida.org.

The 2019 Annual Report

It is because of the support of people like you that we saw an exponential amount of growth during the last year. La Rabida's 2019 annual report highlights the notable milestones that have allowed us to extend the reach of our services and provide care to more children and families.

We are grateful for your continuous support and look forward to a happy and healthy 2020! Click here to view.