

Meet Josefina



Josefina's journey with diabetes started when she was 17 months old. Her mom, Andrea, had an inkling that something was wrong when Josefina was always thirsty, frequently urinating, and one morning her head began slumping over while eating breakfast. "The pediatrician told me to bring her in. Josefina walked into La Rabida with her little pink hoodie and her sunglasses on, popped up on the table, and our world changed within 20 minutes," explained Andrea. "She was diagnosed with diabetes that day, October 2nd, 2008. You don't ever forget that day."

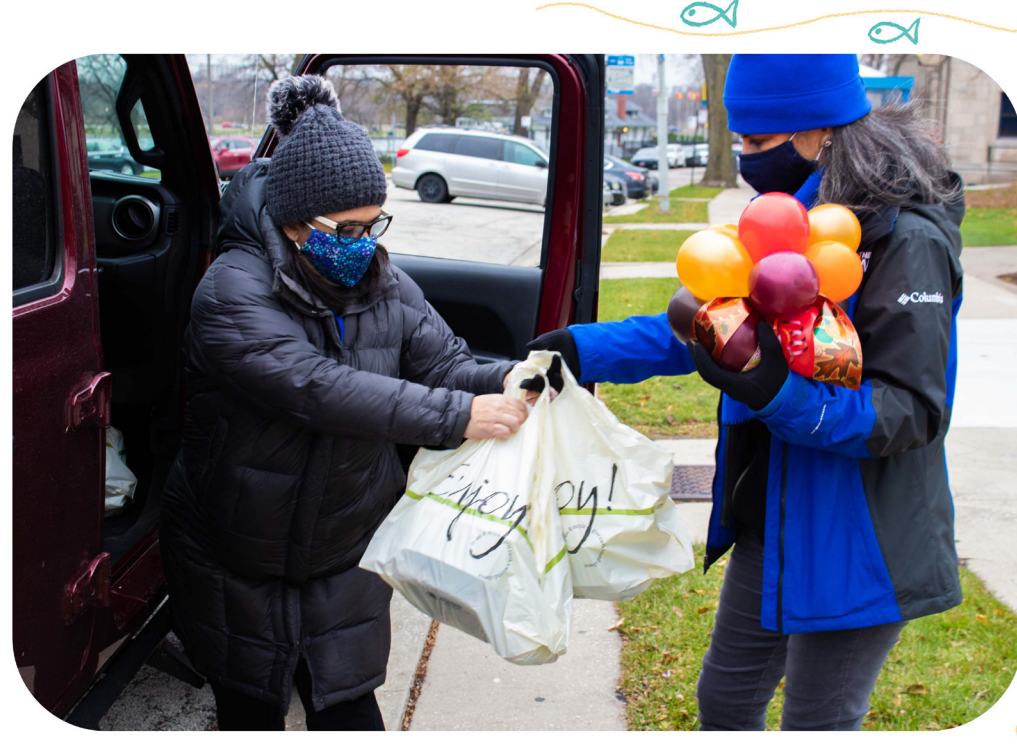
Josefina was then admitted aboard the S.S. La Rabida inpatient unit. "It was a really terrible four days. I don't remember crying that much ever before. We really just didn't know what to expect," shared Andrea. "The La Rabida team, from that very first day, helped pick us up as a family and walked us through each step. Each day we focused on different things. We met with the nurses, the diabetes nurse educators, the endocrinologists, the social worker, the dietician – you name it there was a person for it."

The goal of La Rabida's Chicago Children's Diabetes Center (CCDC) is to help support kids like Josefina navigate the obstacles they are facing while also providing support for their families. "It is truly an entire team that navigates this with the families together, especially in the beginning," said Andrea. "I can't speak highly enough about this team."

Since Josefina was discharged, she has continued to visit the CCDC and Dr. Anita Swamy. "La Rabida has been there from the very beginning and through each phase of diabetes. Josefina was so little when she was diagnosed she couldn't articulate or verbalize what she needed, so it was very difficult trying to navigate that world. Each phase [of childhood] has its own challenges and the CCDC team has been there for each one," explained Andrea.

Now 14 years old, Josefina is thriving, playing travel soccer and is a member of both the swim and water polo teams. "She's very active and healthy - your typical teenage girl. But that doesn't come without a ton of hard work. I don't know that words would express our sincerest gratitude to the La Rabida team. My words would be better served with just a genuine hug to each and every one of them."

Celebrating Thanksgiving with a Drive-Thru Feast



Happy Thanksgiving from the Gem on the Lake! Our drive-thru Thanksgiving Day celebration was back again this year. To continue keeping our patients safe and socially distant, we packaged up Thanksgiving meals in to-go boxes for our families to pick up and enjoy at home.

Our friends at ABC 7 Chicago, volunteer chefs from the American Culinary Federation, and La Rabida's talented food services team came together to ensure that our kids and families could had a delicious Thanksgiving feast this year. The to-go meals included roast turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, dressing, rolls, cranberry sauce, fruit and cheesecake bites for dessert. Patients aboard the S.S. La Rabida inpatient unit also enjoyed a feast from the comfort of their cabins.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Thanksgiving celebration possible: La Rabida's food services team and volunteers, members of the American Culinary Federation, ABC 7 Chicago, Whittingham Meats, All Occasions Balloons, Basic American Foods, Eli's Cheesecake, Gonnella Bakery, Mid-America Club, Testa Produce Inc, and Tzuco.

Help Us Help Our Patients

At La Rabida Children's Hospital, our mission is simple: we're dedicated to improving the quality of life for each of our patients who live with complex conditions, disabilities, and chronic illnesses. Children don't choose their circumstances, and we never let those circumstances impact the care children receive. We treat patients regardless of their family's financial circumstances. We are able to do this because of the support of individuals like you. Support our work today: <https://larabida.org/donate>

As a result of federal coronavirus relief legislation, taxpayers can take advantage of a deduction for donating to qualifying charitable organizations — up to \$300 for individual filers and up to \$600 for married couples. This provision will be expiring on December 31, 2021.

DONATE TODAY

A Look Back - La Rabida over the Last 125 Years



How much do you know about the history of La Rabida? Did you know that La Rabida's original building was given as a gift to Chicago from the Spanish government after the 1893 World's Fair? As we continue our celebration of 125 years serving Chicago's children, let's take a trip down memory lane to see how things have changed over the years.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1X0rOVLNE]

2021 Friends of La Rabida Celebration



Thank you to everyone who took part in the 2021 Friends of La Rabida Awards Celebration! Whether you joined us in-person at the Ritz Carlton, Chicago or virtually through the event's livestream, we are so grateful for your support of La Rabida and for making an impact on our children and families.

For the 10th consecutive year, ABC 7's Ravi Baichwal served as the evening's emcee. It was an evening filled with celebrations! This year marks La Rabida's 125th year of serving the children and families of Chicago.

We recognized two of La Rabida's dearest friends: ABC 7 – The Walt Disney Company with the Corporate Partnership Award, and Andrea Zopp, CAST US – Cleveland Avenue with the Community Support Award. Both ABC 7 – The Walt Disney Company and Zopp have shown tremendous support and engagement to further our mission of helping children with complex medical conditions reach their fullest potential.

Guests also celebrated the incredible accomplishments of one of our patients, Ja'Miya, who shared her journey with cerebral palsy and all of the obstacles she has overcome with the help of her care team at La Rabida.

Because of the generosity of attendees and supporters, the event raised over \$720,000 to support the patients and families of La Rabida. A big thank you to our sponsors for making this year's gala possible!

This Month on Social

Yovis' Surprise from the Chicago Bears!



Yovis, a 7-year-old rehab patient at La Rabida, was treated to an extra special surprise thanks to our friends at the Chicago Bears! As a part of the Crucial Catch initiative, Staley da Bear knocked on Yovis' front door and surprised him and his family with a trip to the Shedd Aquarium and tickets to a game at Soldier Field. Thank you to the Chicago Bears for making Yovis' dream a reality!

Respiratory Therapists Present RN/RT Collaborative Communication Award to Harworking Nurses



La Rabida's team of respiratory therapists work closely with our nursing staff to provide the best care possible to our passengers aboard the S.S. La Rabida inpatient unit. To celebrate the outstanding collaboration between the two specialties, our team of respiratory therapists recognized two of La Rabida's dedicated nurses, Katie Majcenk and Andrew Ritchie. Katie and Andrew were each presented with the RN/RT Collaborative Communication Award for providing compassionate care, proactively collaborating with the respiratory team, and serving as staunch patient advocates. Thank you Katie, Andrew, and the entire respiratory care team for all that you do for our patients!

La Rabida is looking for After School Tutors

We provide one-on-one help with school work to an assigned child at our weekly virtual tutoring sessions. Tutors should have a desire to improve the educational experience while serving as a role model and mentor for the children in the tutoring program. Volunteers may choose between two session times:
4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. or 6 to 7 p.m. on Tuesday evenings.
 Sessions are held virtually, until further notice.

If you are interested please contact George Hardin, Manager of Volunteer Services
 Email: ghardin@larabida.org Phone: 773.256.5985

