

## News & Updates

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### Upcoming Activities

**November 6**  
"Operation Give Back - the Impact of Non-Profits"  
[US Senate](#)  
[Federal Credit Union](#)

**November**  
Candy & Item Drive

**December**  
Annual Drive

**About Us**  
Spreading Hope Through Psychosocial Support <sup>SM</sup>

[Learn](#)

**Support**  
Help Make The Miracles Possible

[Donate](#)

CFC #59853



## Our Carts are Inspirational

Mattie Miracle learned first hand the importance of community support and generosity when Mattie was in cancer treatment. The co-founders received food, snacks, and drinks daily for 14 months from friends and family. They realized that these gifts were vital to maintaining their basic needs and enabled them to care for Mattie by his bedside.

Based on these learned experiences, **Mattie Miracle operates five Snack & Item Carts**: two at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital (Washington, DC), two at Children's Hospital at Sinai (Baltimore, MD), and one at NIH's Clinical Center (Bethesda, MD). Our Carts meet the needs of over **2,500 families a year**, and provide nutritional snacks, candy, toiletries, drinks, and wellness items free of charge to families.

Our Carts have also served as a model for other organizations and programs. We are honored that our Carts continue to **make a difference in the lives of families** caring for children with cancer and that our work has served as an **inspiration for others** who actively help patients and their families face medical crises.

**Reflections from Children's Hospital at Sinai**

It's not just about  
the medicine!<sup>SM</sup>



15th Anniversary  
Video

The Mattie Miracle Snack and Item Cart has been a big hit at the Herman and Walter Samuelson Children's Hospital at Sinai. For seven years it has been serving our young patients and their families. We are grateful to the Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation for bringing smiles and comfort to children, parents, and caregivers, with candy, snacks, beverages, toothbrushes, and other toiletry items.

Word of the Cart's impact spread throughout the hospital! In fact, **the Bridging Life Hospice inpatient unit at Sinai has modeled its own comfort cart for family members after the Mattie Miracle Cart.** A donor wanted to do something to provide snacks and comfort items to family members at both Sinai and Northwest Hospital's inpatient units. When hospice staff were considering how to make that happen, they visited the Mattie Miracle Snack and Item Cart for pediatrics. The hospice staff felt that Mattie Miracle's Cart served as a perfect model for their program and it inspired them to launch their own cart.

**Check out our Amazon Wish List and participate in our Fall Candy & Snack Drive. It is thanks to your generosity that these psychosocial miracles are possible!**

**Click on the image below to keep our Carts rolling.**



Spreading Hope Through Psychosocial Support. <sup>SM</sup>



**Child Life Corner  
with  
Adina Levitan, CCLS**

# Not Billable but Essential

Have you ever looked over a bill to determine the cost breakdown of what you are being charged? For parents of pediatric patients this can be a daunting process, wondering and hoping that treatments, medications and scans are being billed to and paid for by insurance. Hospital bills are notoriously difficult to decipher and can lead to a maze of phone calls to ensure things are not being overcharged or misrepresented. Within that confusion, most parents may not even notice what is clearly missing. **In many children's hospitals where child life services are provided, parents will never see a line item for child life services.** This is because **child life is not a billable service.** So you may be wondering, how are child life services funded if they are not technically generating line item revenue for hospitals?

**There are several ways child life services are paid for:**

1. Child life services have been built into the hospital budget. This means they are accounted for in the fiscal year and salaries, amenities and other necessities for a program to run have been allocated for the upcoming year.
2. Grants and donations, like those from Mattie Miracle, are designated specifically for the child life program, whether to pay for physical items like toys or prizes, or for the salary of a child life specialist.
3. Some hospitals have their own foundation that raises and funds various programs and needs within the hospital.

There are many reasons why child life is not a billable service, due to our credentials, however **child life specialists can in fact provide cost saving measures, like providing interventions that reduce the need for certain medications or helping a child get a procedure earlier by providing developmentally appropriate incentives.** For example, when I provide support for children to receive a lumbar puncture without sedation, they do not require anesthesia, anesthesia staff, a designated sedation room, or recovery time. They simply complete their procedure and go home (of course it's not so simple but with appropriate support it is possible).

In many conversations I have had, child life specialists are seeking the appropriate licensure to become a billable service, however, this is on a state by state basis. There are some states that have billing codes that allow for insurance reimbursements in the private practice sector, however we have not seen it at the hospital level. **Child life services may seem "extra" on a budget sheet but they are in fact essential to a child's overall healing and coping.**

## Funding Child Life

In July 2018, Mattie Miracle endowed its second Child Life Program Fund. To date we have donated **over \$282,000** to Children's Hospital at Sinai. This fund pays for the full-time salary of a child life specialist. **Emily Nosek is the 6th Child Life Specialist** funded by Mattie Miracle since 2011. Our Child Life positions serve around 1,500 children and families a year.

Mattie Miracle is committed to funding access to Child Life services for children with cancer. A Child Life Specialist has the necessary skills and



abilities to make a very frightening and stressful medical experience more manageable. In fact, we believe **Child Life services are just as important as the medical treatment.**



## 14th Annual Fall Item Drive

It's candy and snack season! Please help us stock our **free Snack and Item Carts** at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital (Washington, DC), Children's Hospital at Sinai (Baltimore, MD), and NIH's Clinical Center (Bethesda, MD).

Our five Carts are considered a life saver by families who are caring for a child with cancer or other life threatening illness. **Our hospital Carts support 2,500 families a year.** Hospitals have requested that candy remain in its original unopened vacuum sealed bags, with its manufacturer's expiration date. Therefore, the safest way to meet these requirements is to use an Amazon Wish List.

**You can participate in our 14th annual Candy and Snack Drive from anywhere in the USA.** Please view our Amazon Wish List, and we request all items be received by November 11, 2024.



Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation  
is a GuideStar PLATINUM  
Participant Charity





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