

## News & Updates

November 2021 | Volume 12 - Number 9

### Upcoming Activities

March 2022  
Symposium at  
[APOS Conference](#)

April, 2022  
11th Annual  
Toiletry Drive  
(Wish List Coming  
Soon)

May 15, 2022  
13th Annual  
[Virtual Walk](#)

### About Us

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

[Learn](#)

### Support

Help Make The  
Miracles Possible

[Donate](#)



## We are Grateful

During this season of Thanksgiving, we thank you for standing behind the Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation. Thanks to our incredible supporters, our **11th Annual Candy & Snack Drive** was bigger and better than ever. Boxes of items from our on-line Wish List flooded the Foundation.

In 2020, due to COVID-19, Mattie Miracle migrated away from a live Candy & Snack drive to an all virtual format. This was a difficult decision, especially since our Fall Drive had great community energy, spirit, and participation. We were concerned that the virtual format would greatly impact the success of the Drive. However, we have learned never to under estimate your loyalty and generosity. You clearly understand how vital our Candy, Snack & Item Carts are to families caring for children with cancer and other life threatening illnesses.

We are grateful to have so many **individual and community supporters**. Recently Mattie Miracle had the wonderful opportunity to meet Mel Rodriguez, a Spanish teacher at Nativity Catholic School in Burke, VA. Mel and her school are long-term Item Drive contributors. Mel said, "at our school we have a Virtue of the month that is led by one class. The month of October was the virtue of fortitude, and it was led by 7th graders. Each leading class presents on the virtue to the whole school and they also host a service project in which the entire school participates. **The 7th grade chose Mattie Miracle,**

CFC #59853

Giving

because they feel children and their families endure childhood cancer with great fortitude. The students specifically wanted to support the Foundation's launch of a Cart at the National Institutes of Health. In their presentation the students explained what Mattie Miracle does and listed the items needed for the **Wellness on Wheels** Cart. Then every day, for the month of October, the 7th graders made it their mission to collect items within their community and at their School."

## It's Not Just About the Medicine <sup>SM</sup>



What People Are Saying About Our Carts.... (it's big!)

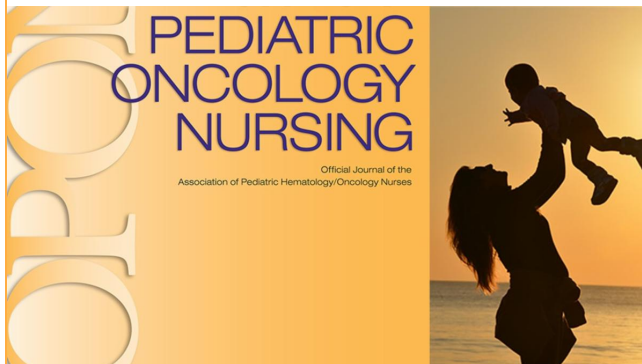
1. The Cart has drawers full of joy. ~ **Children's Hospital at Sinai parent**
2. As a parent, the Snack Cart is very helpful, especially in the evening when nothing is open. The Cart comes around throughout the week, but I am also able to go to the child life office at any time to get items that I need from the Cart. I love everything on the Cart, especially the toiletries. ~ **MedStar Georgetown parent**
3. I want to let you know how much our parents appreciate your generosity with the Mattie Miracle Snack Cart. So many of our families arrive with little or no resources to provide their own food. We often have parents, along with their newly diagnosed child needing a potential liver or small-bowel transplant, transfer to Georgetown from out-of-town. They haven't had time to prepare for hospital-life. Sometimes, parents are too embarrassed to mention their dire financial situation. Recently, until the nursing staff realized what was happening, a new mom's only "nutrition" was from the Snack Cart offerings. It's nice to see the smiles and genuine thankfulness from our parents when that familiar Snack Cart rolls around. It is one of the only continuities that our families can count on. It provides great joy to our families, which, in turn, provides great joy to our nursing and medical staff. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. ~ **Lyn Knowles; C51 Clinical Manager, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital**
4. I had the pleasure of taking around the Mattie Miracle Snack Cart a few weeks ago. Since I am a sedation nurse I don't often get to see the impact that programs like this have on our families. It was amazing to see how well received this Cart is and how helpful it is to our families at the hospital. I think my favorite part was when families would ask how much these items would cost them. I had the pleasure of telling them they were free of charge due to the support of the Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation! They would look at me with shock and say, really? Thank you so much for your continued support through this Cart, it really brightens the parent's day! ~ **Ashley Reeves; Pediatric Sedation Nurse, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital**
5. The experience here has been so different from other hospitals, I mean look at this Cart... you really love your families. You make us feel so welcome and part of the bigger hospital family. ~ **Children's Hospital at Sinai parent**
6. This makes our stay so much easier. I didn't want to leave her even for a minute. Wow, Thank you! ~ **Children's Hospital at Sinai parent**
7. This is awesome. I need a picture of this to show everybody, or no one will believe how cool this Cart is! ~ **Children's Hospital at Sinai parent**
8. This makes me feel human again...I love the Cart. I need to take a selfie with the candy. ~ **Children's Hospital at Sinai parent**

# Spreading Cheer

Psychosocial gifts come in all forms, candy and snacks included. Thanks to you, over the past two weeks Mattie Miracle has been able to spread cheer around the National Capital region.

All the snack, candy, and toiletry items we received were donated and delivered to **Children's Hospital at Sinai** (Baltimore, MD), **MedStar Georgetown University Hospital** (Washington, DC), and **The National Institutes of Health's Clinical Center** (Rockville, MD). These items stock our free Snack and Item Carts at these three locations.

The Mattie Miracle Carts serve **over 2,500 families a year** and provide sweet treats, nutritional snacks, drinks, and toiletry items to families caring for children who are hospitalized. Families find it challenging to leave their child's hospital bedside to meet their own basic needs, and our Carts provide this much needed support. Thank you for making these psychosocial miracles possible.



## Beyond the Veil

Cancer continues to be the leading cause of death by disease in children. In fact, on average, **five children a day** die from cancer in the United States (Siegel et al., 2021). This leaves parents to face the unimaginable, to question their identity, meaning, purpose, and future.

Dr. Christine Denhup recently published an article which highlights the reflections of six parents whose children died from cancer. The overwhelming theme she found was no matter how much time passes, parents never forget their children, and furthermore instead they find ways to continue the relationship and connection despite their children's physical absence. Or as these bereaved parents would say, they "parent beyond the veil."

**Grief work is about remembering and staying connected to the memory of a loved one.** In fact, when bereaved parents are prevented from maintaining this connection, it can have negative consequences. The article has huge clinical implications for healthcare professionals as well as those of us in the community who have family and friends coping with child loss.

**Article Citation:**

Denhup, C. (2021). "Parenting beyond the veil": The continued parenting relationship after a child's death due to cancer. *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, 38(6), 364-374.

Read more to access this ground breaking article.

[Read More](#)

## Shout Out of Thanks

Mattie Miracle thanks our community partners who held **independent item and candy drives** to support the Foundation. We acknowledge the following community partners for helping us spread candy and snack cheer around the National Capital Region:

- [Bishop Ireton High School](#)
- [FH Furr](#)
- [Heritage Presbyterian Church](#)
- [Moms of North Arlington \(MONA\)](#)
- [National Charity League - Port City Chapter](#)
- [Nativity Catholic School](#)
- [St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School](#)
- [The River School](#)



Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation  
[www.mattiemiracle.com](http://www.mattiemiracle.com)

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Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation is a GuideStar PLATINUM Participant Charity

