

FOR INSIDE MILTON, SEPT. 2011

Darling Home for Kids Provides Loving Support

It's a difficult and painful concept, the idea of children requiring palliative or respite care for degenerative or fatal conditions, but it's a reality that families all across Ontario have to deal with every single day of their lives. And for those families, Milton's Darling Home for Kids provides loving support and a much-needed rest from 24/7 care.

"We offer parents a break, giving them the chance to go on vacation, or spend time with their spouses or other children," says Executive Director Kristen Horrell. "Some of these parents are caring for their children around the clock, so a break is essential."

The Darling Home for Kids provides high quality respite and palliative care services for children who are medically fragile and technology dependent, many of who suffer from progressive illness. Originally known as Rose Cherry's Home for Kids, The Darling Home for Kids was built through the generosity of a group of visionary donors and volunteers who understood the need for critically important respite and palliative care services.

The Darling Home for Kids' mission is to optimize the quality of the lives of children with life-limiting or life-threatening illness requiring complex and/or technology-dependent care. The Home does this by providing respite services and paediatric hospice care in a home-like environment to families within communities in Ontario, with highly qualified nursing and support staff that can give out-of-home overnight care, bereavement support and educational training to these families.

Horrell, who has been involved with the Home for eight years now, says it's one of only two facilities in Ontario that provides this unique brand of service for kids. Using both government funding and community fundraising, Darling Home also provides suites for family members who want to stay at the Home with their children.

"The kids get to do a lot of fun, unique things when they stay here," says Horrell, including nature walks, hydrotherapy, a multisensory program and pet therapy.

The Home provides more than 24,000 hours of respite and palliative care to families each year. In addition to the 10 respite beds and two palliative care beds, the Home also has a large family room, a multi-sensory space designed to stimulate all five senses, therapeutic gardens, a wheelchair accessible swing, playground, trail, and waterfall.

“We opened our doors in 2004, and two years ago doubled in size,” says Horrell. “It’s a beautiful facility on 77 acres right here in Milton, but it feels like you’re in Muskoka.”

The respite program, for children between the ages of 0 and 18, provides 24/7 care for between 48 hours and one week. In addition to overnight care, there are Day Camps during school holidays and school Professional Activity (PA) days.

The Palliative Programming includes Palliative Respite Care, Palliative Emergency Care, Palliative Transition Care, and Palliative End of Life Care, to assist children and their families to live full, active, independent lives for as long as possible and when this is no longer possible, to help children and their families prepare and manage life closure and the dying process.

For more information, please visit www.darlinghomeforkids.ca

SIDEBAR

The 13th Annual Darling Home for Kids Event!

The Darling Home for Kids annual holiday event is one of Toronto’s premier outings and will take place on Thursday, November 3, at Liberty Grand, Exhibition Place, Toronto.

Please consider supporting this exciting event and The Darling Home for Kids, through a variety of sponsorship opportunities including:

Presenting Sponsor (\$50,000)

Platinum Sponsor (\$25,000)

Gold Sponsor (\$10,000)

Silver Sponsor (\$5,000)

Sweetheart Sponsor (\$2,500)

Sponsorship benefits include name and logo recognition in print materials, on-site signage and complimentary tickets. Companies may also purchase a corporate table of 10 for \$3,500.

Individual tickets can be purchased for \$300.

If you're unable to attend this event, you can choose to be a Darling Patron (minimum \$1,000 cash donation) for which you will receive a full charitable tax receipt.

For more information on The Darling Home for Kids' 13th Annual Comfort & Joy event, please contact Jennifer Young, Development Coordinator, at 905-878-7673 ext. 4.