

CARE TAKERS

FAMILIES RELY ON THE CARE WE PROVIDE



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Alberta

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"FAMILIES RELY ON THE CARE WE PROVIDE"



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VOLUME 1/ 2021

A MESSAGE FROM JASON EVANSON, CEO, RMHC ALBERTA

Dear CareTakers,

Thank you for volunteering with RMHC Alberta. This new RMHC Alberta Volunteer newsletter was created in the spirit of what you do every day for families with sick children.

As past, present, and future volunteers with RMHC Alberta you provide compassionate care when families go through their most challenging times. Your presence and support help families access vital healthcare treatments. Through your generosity their needs are met so that they can focus on their child and cope together, as a family.

The CareTakers quarterly newsletter highlights our volunteers, showcases volunteer opportunities, and creates a provincial connection between our most valuable resource – the people who care.

In this edition of CareTakers we share some updates on a brand new Comfort Cart recently launched in Calgary. Learn about our Shuttle Program firsthand from a volunteer who has been driving the extra miles for families. The delivery of these two programs to meet families both at bedside and on the road show the impact of our mission beyond the front doors of our Houses.

Thank you for every meal, every shuttle ride, every check in and check out. Thank you for your work on events, programming, and so much more. Thank you for being a CareTaker with RMHC Alberta.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'J. Evanson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jason Evanson
CEO, RMHC Alberta

Why Volunteer with RMHC Alberta?



Lori Rechlo

Volunteers are what make our Ronald McDonald Houses homes for families. They provide the extra care and comfort our families need through a smile, fresh baked cookie or even just saying "Good Morning". Volunteers provide a positive impact on families daily.

– Lori Rechlo, General Manager



Cathy Dick

Red Deer Volunteer

“I believe in what we do here! I had a premature child in the 1980's and saw the gap in support for families who lived far away from the hospital.”

– Cathy Dick



Vandy Daraseng

Edmonton Volunteer

“I volunteer at Ronald McDonald House charities Alberta, because my family and I stayed here when it was needed and I want to give back and help others, who are going through a similar journey as I am.”

– Vandy Daraseng

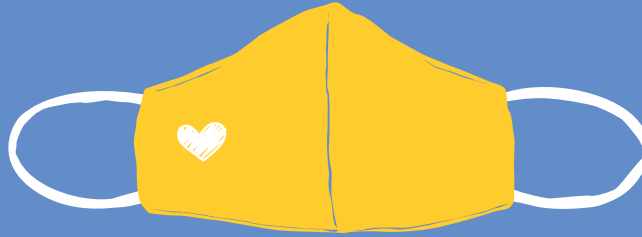


Calgary Volunteer

“Keeps my life in perspective.”

– Jo-Ann Dryden

RMHC Alberta COVID Response



Since March of 2020 RMHC Alberta has responded to the pandemic following the guidance of Alberta Health Services and RMHC Global. We have the following in place to protect families, volunteers, and staff.

- Proof of vaccination and/or immunization is required of all persons entering the Ronald McDonald House.
- Masks are required indoors. Masks are not required outside when social distancing is possible or when with one's cohort.
- Social distancing is always required when not with one's cohort.
- All persons will be screened at least once daily, including a temperature check, when they enter a House; they must be asymptomatic to enter. This process will be documented without exception.
- Cleaning and sanitation procedures are documented and happen at least three times daily throughout the House, with more rigorous sanitation completed for high-touch surfaces.
- Hands should be washed often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Always wash or sanitize hands prior to donning and doffing personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Common areas and equipment must be sanitized after each use by the user (ex. coffee pots, dining tables, counter tops, toys, etc.).
- People that drop into the Houses are not permitted in the House beyond the vestibule.

Did you know about our Shuttle and Comfort Cart program?



Beep Beep – Hop in!

Welcome to the Shuttle Program. This program has been going on for many years in Edmonton and is Brand New in Calgary. The shuttle program is used to shuttle families to and from the hospitals. The goal is to reduce the burden and expense of transport and parking for our families by operating a reliable and regular shuttle. The shuttle program goes from 7am-9pm in both houses. Our hope is to have a full set of volunteers able to drive the van to complete this large time slot.

If you fit the Skills & Qualifications this might be for you!

- Must be 25 years of age or older
- Must not have any at fault driving accidents in the past 6 years
- Require Police Records Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening, drivers abstract, and insurance letter
- Friendly, professional, flexible, responsible
- Ability to learn and adapt in a constantly evolving environment
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to maintain confidentiality

Shuttle Appreciation

"What volunteering at Ronald McDonald House means to me:

I can be of help to families I don't even know - Sickness or injuries are not things that any family plans. They just happen and, not at the most convenient times. Anything that I can do to lighten their load, even just a bit, is worth my volunteering.

Providing my volunteer services is easy, convenient and flexible- RMH staff provide me with the tools (shuttle bus, training & guidelines), ease of scheduling myself and, the flexibility of changing my schedule as need be. It's a great place to volunteer, with fabulous, caring staff and likewise other volunteers.



Comfort Cart Program

Welcome to the Comfort Cart: Where we offer support to families directly on the hospital unit.

Parents and caregivers with children in the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit at Foothills Hospital are getting a little bit of extra support with our brand-new Comfort Cart program. The Comfort Cart provides an array of beverages, snacks and comfort items that were curated through focus groups with families who have been through the experience of having a baby in the NICU. The cart is operated by volunteers for two hours on Tuesday and Saturday. In our first month we have served 27 families.





Life is not all about me - Volunteering at RMH is NOT a job! It is, for me, a conscious decision to step up and help support others in their time of overwhelming need. Helping out is never a job to me.

Rewards - Not expected, but also not hard to find; a parent's smile, their story, joys when things go positively, a quiet sigh of exhaustion on the 7 minute ride back to the house, and yes, even their feeling safe to shed an occasional tear unquestioned. Every shuttle trip is a reward in the making."

-Cliff Gervais Volunteer Shuttle Driver in Edmonton

Holiday Season at RMHC Alberta

Christmas is a busy time of year and that is no different at the Houses. Holiday volunteers are individuals who lend an extra hand around the holidays to bring Christmas cheer to our families. To bring Christmas to our families we start the last week of November with decorating. Decorating is done by volunteers who have amazing attention to detail. Throughout the month of December extra help is needed because we are accepting and wrapping donated items. Volunteers are also called upon to set up the north pole. Each House has a north pole that has all the gifts Santa and his team of elves have worked hard on all year for the families. Volunteers in December in the house are what make Christmas magical for our families.



Happy Holidays



Current Volunteer Opportunities

Calgary:

Bakers
House Refreshers
Shuttle Drivers

Edmonton:

Front Host
Shuttle Drivers

Red Deer:

Front Host
Bakers
House Refresher

Medicine Hat:

House Refreshers

Job Descriptions:

Front Host: Reception position with duties including answering the phone, greeting guests (including families, donors, volunteers, and visitors to the house), taking donations/payments, and checking families in and out of the house. May also include helping around the house with dishes, laundry, activities etc. **Minimum commitment:** 1 shift per week for six months.

Shuttle Drivers: Ensure families have safe, convenient access to the Hospital. Need to be 25+, clean driver's abstract and at fault accident free for at least 6 years, **Minimum commitment:** 1 shift per month for six months

Bakers: Using the House kitchen, volunteers come into the house to prepare and individually wrap 3 – 4 dozen cookies, muffins, or squares. **Minimum commitment:** 2 shifts per month for six months.

House Refresher: Provides support to family services and housekeeping staff with maintaining the cleanliness and tidiness of our House and Family Suites. Tasks include linen changing and laundry, dusting, sweeping, sanitizing, and window cleaning. **Minimum commitment:** 2 shifts per month for six months