

Building the Future Together

Good Neighbors

Upcoming Classes and Events



Meal Support Training for Parents of Children 12 to 18 | Wednesdays, April 8, 15, 22, 29 and May 6
6:30 to 8 p.m., \$320 per family

For Boys Only: The Joys and Challenges of Growing Up | Wednesdays, March 11 and 18
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. \$50 per parent/son pair; \$10 per additional child

For Girls Only: A Heart to Heart Talk on Growing Up | Tuesdays, March 10 and 17
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. \$50 per parent/daughter pair; \$10 per additional child

Children's offers families and staff free tours of the hospital grounds. For dates and times, e-mail julie.povick@seattlechildrens.org.

Here are just a few of the many classes and events offered by Children's. To register, obtain more information or view the complete calendar, go to www.seattlechildrens.org/classes or call 206-987-2000.

Car Seat Check | Saturday, March 21
10 a.m. to 1 p.m., free

Better Babysitters | Saturday, March 28
9 a.m. to 2 p.m., \$40 per person

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Good Neighbors



Uncompensated Care

“The cost of providing uncompensated care has grown tremendously, but it remains a fundamental part of our mission,” said Doug Picha, president, Seattle Children’s Hospital Foundation. “We just need to be diligent about finding ways to meet that need.”

Families come to Seattle Children’s with a lot on their minds – primarily the health of an ailing child but also the financial strain of paying a large hospital bill.

With help from the community, Children’s is continuing to make good on a promise made by our founders a century ago – to care for all of the children in our region regardless of a family’s ability to pay.

That comes with a price tag, though, and it keeps climbing. In fiscal year 2006 (October through September), Children’s provided \$37 million in uncompensated care. In 2008, this number grew to over \$86 million and we expect to provide more than \$100 million in 2009.

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About a third of the money raised in the community by our foundation goes toward uncompensated care. However, that still leaves a huge hole. The only way to fill it is from hospital revenues.

“We are a not-for-profit organization, but we still must strive to ensure strong revenue,” Picha said. “The difference is that instead of that money going to shareholders, we invest it in things like improving our facilities, expanding research and providing uncompensated care.”

The cost of uncompensated care has been climbing nationwide for some time and will only climb faster as the slumping economy puts more and more people out of work. The challenge is especially acute for families who come

to Children’s, where many patients are battling complex conditions that require highly specialized care and long hospital stays.

Sari, a girl who was diagnosed with a rare form of melanoma when she was just nine months old, is a good example. After the cancer quickly spread to her liver and lymph nodes, Sari was given just a 5% chance of survival. Four rounds of chemotherapy and many surgeries later, Sari, at age 8, is cancer-free and thriving. Through it all, support from our uncompensated care program enabled the family to focus on Sari’s health without extreme financial burden.

About 40 percent of Children’s patients are covered by Medicaid. But Medicaid reimburses Children’s for only about half of treatment costs and just a fraction of physician charges. About 90 percent of the money we spend on uncompensated care goes to cover Medicaid shortfalls.

Private insurance can also fall far short of paying the cost of treatment.

For example, more plans limit coverage of support services such as physical therapy. Other types of care, such as dental medicine, may not be covered at all. Some plans also feature high-deductibles and little or no coverage for certain conditions.

Any one of those factors can overwhelm a family’s finances. “That’s why it’s critical that we succeed both as a business and a hospital so we can afford to keep our promise to care for all children,” Picha said.



Children's Commitment to our Community

Lisa Brandenburg,
Chief Administrative Officer at Seattle Children's

Seattle Children's has made a commitment to the community to build only new space that is necessary. "Through a process known as integrated facility design, we are able to build exactly the space we need for patients and families. We're focused on building only what we need," said Lisa Brandenburg, chief administrative officer at Seattle Children's. "Plus, when we remove waste from our system, we are improving conditions for patients and families and all of the people who work here."

The integrated facility design process involves gathering information about the needs of a building's users and applying

that information to the design – a process that includes creating full-size mock-ups to test proposed configurations.

"You need to walk a mile in the shoes of the staff, patients and families who will use the clinics, emergency room, operating rooms, etc. before you can begin to understand how to design those spaces," continued Brandenburg, "It's all about beginning with the end in mind."

Children's used integrated facility design, part of the hospital's continuous performance improvement approach, when they began planning the new Bellevue Clinic. The process included creating a 10,000-square-foot mock-up

of the ambulatory surgery space in a parking garage. "Tracing the path of a potential patient and family through the facility is an invaluable learning experience," Brandenburg said.

Seattle Children's will utilize the integrated facility design process for the Seattle hospital campus design as well. Through a series of week-long design events involving both staff and patient families, we will review how we care for patients, identify and eliminate any wasted time, space and effort in order to develop a master plan design that supports providing the best care possible – not just today but well into the future.

Child Health and Safety

Shopping Cart Safety

About 24,000 children are treated in U.S. emergency rooms for shopping cart related injuries each year. Most of these children fall from the cart or the cart tips over on them. Try one of these ideas instead of putting your child in a shopping cart:

- Use a stroller, wagon or frontpack.
- Ask another adult to watch your child at home or come with you to watch your child while you shop.
- Have your older child walk and praise them for staying near you.
- Shop online and have your groceries delivered.

If you choose to put your child in a shopping cart, make sure it has a working safety belt or harness. Always use the safety device and stay right next to your child. Do not let your child stand up in the cart or climb on the cart. Teach your child that it is not safe to stand on the outside of the cart to try to ride it. Never put your child in the basket — the part where the groceries go. Do not place an infant carrier on the cart. Do not let older children push the cart with another child in it. Most shopping carts have a high center of gravity, so it's easy for children to tip them over.

Carts that allow children to ride closer to the ground are safer. Shop at stores that provide these carts. Along with taking a few minutes to prepare your grocery list, it's a good idea to take a minute to plan for a safe shopping trip.

To Learn More

- Visit www.aap.org/family/ShopCartPP.pdf for a Shopping Cart Safety flyer from the American Academy of Pediatrics.





Plan Supports Transportation Options

Seattle Children's is a busy place with lots of people coming and going. As the hospital grows, we're working hard to reduce the number of people who travel here in single-occupancy vehicles.

"We want to make it easier for people to leave their cars at home," said Paulo Nunes-Ueno, Director of Transportation. "By providing more and more transportation options, we're minimizing our contribution to congestion and making the neighborhood a better place to live."

The effort is nothing new. Between 1995 and 2008, Seattle Children's decreased the rate of employees driving alone to work from 73 percent to 38 percent. Now, with help from the Citizens Advisory Committee, we've developed a new Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) that will continue to reduce the rate of employees driving to the hospital alone.

One of the CTP's cornerstones is a shuttle system linking regional transportation hubs to the hospital. This summer, Seattle Children's launched the Green Line, which provides 15-minute service between the hospital and the downtown transit tunnel and carries 500 riders a day.

The CTP also increases opportunities for employees to bike to work. After we rolled out a Company Bikes program this summer, more than 100 employees signed up to receive free bikes in exchange for cycling to work at least twice a week.

In addition to coaxing more people out of their cars, Seattle Children's is committed to helping the city improve traffic conditions on surrounding streets. The CTP calls for a \$1.9 million contribution to city transportation projects and a significant investment in bike and pedestrian improvements near the hospital.

For more information please email paulo.nunesueno@seattlechildrens.org

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Fun-Filled Fair Promotes Health and Safety

Make 2009 a safer and healthier year – and have fun at the same time – by attending the seventh annual Community Health Fair at Seattle Children's.

Children ages 3 to 8 and their families can take part in various activities at the free event, which runs **from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 14, at the hospital's main campus.**

Families can get fitted for free adult and children's bike helmets and purchase low-cost life jackets. (Quantities are limited and wearers must be present.) Families can also buy low-cost booster seats.

Children are invited to bring their favorite doll or stuffed animal to the Teddy Bear Clinic. Donning a surgical mask and a doctor's coat, children can perform checkups on their dolls and teddy bears using a medical kit that includes bandages, alcohol wipes, toy stethoscopes and blood pressure pumps.

Families can explore the inside of an ambulance, tour an operating room and get a cast placed on a finger. Staff from the Heart Center will talk about heart health while dietitians will talk about healthy snacks and serve samples. The Tooth Fairy will even pay a visit.

Park in the Whale Garage and enter the hospital through the garage entry. For a map or directions to our main campus please visit: www.seattlechildrens.org.



To Learn More

- Call [206-987-1569](tel:206-987-1569)