



**Smiles**  
from Sarah  
Healing Children With Play

## 2023 IMPACT REPORT

Smiles from Sarah is a 501(c)(3) organization  
fiscally sponsored by the CORE Foundation





# 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Smiles from Sarah (SFS) was created to honor Sarah Catherine Fyock – and her sassy, playful, and generous spirit – as she faced numerous health challenges and hospital stays until she passed in 2022 at age 17. In her memory, our organization was established later that year and significantly expanded in 2023.

**Our Mission:** We strive to bring smiles and healing to children by expanding the impact and reach of child life programs and therapeutic play in hospitals. Therapeutic play serves a vital function in children’s medical care, allowing child life specialists to give children tools to develop, cope, and communicate when confronted with illness, injury, or disability.

We are proud of our accomplishments in our full inaugural year that have directly touched patients, families and caregivers through direct funding of child life programs at major children’s hospital centers as well as donations of inspiring therapeutic play kits.

We are grateful to “Sarah’s Smile Squad” which includes our countless volunteers, generous donors, CORE Foundation, hospital partners, child life specialists, play kit project participants and so many more who have supported along the way. We look forward to expanding our impact in 2024!



## Hospital Partners



We continued our strong partnership with Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), providing an additional \$20,000 in direct funding to support therapeutic play in 2023 for total contributions of \$40,000. We also delivered another 1,000 therapeutic play kits which were so well received, we’ll be adding deliveries to CHOP’s Specialty Care Center in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, in 2024!



In June 2023, we began our partnership with Children’s National, providing \$20,000 in direct funding to their child life program in support of therapeutic play activities. We delivered 450 play kits which have been “flying off the shelves!”



To close out the year, we are thrilled to have formed a new partnership with INova L. J. Murphy Children’s Hospital, which we believe will bring great things to come. In December, we provided a donation of \$10,000 to support therapeutic play with their first play-kit delivery set for January 2024.

# The Impact of Direct Funding to Hospital Partners

Overall, SFS provided \$50,000 in direct funding in 2023 to our three hospital partners to help further our mission and support child life programs.

Our hospital partners' child life programs utilized SFS funding in a variety of ways including: diamond art paintings (a HUGE favorite of adolescent girls), Hand2mind calming animals, Spot of Emotion books and toys, "Get to know you" DIY Jenga, worry monsters (loved by child life specialists but rarely in stock), medical play supplies and so much more.

In December, SFS funds also supported a PICU resin pendant workshop allowing families to create keepsakes to help cope with separation.

“Because of your support, we are able to keep these items in stock, giving our team the materials they need to provide their patient with effective (and fun!) therapeutic activities. ~ Manager of Child Life Services, Children's National

“The funds allow our team to be creative in their interventions and buy the things that insurance doesn't cover to truly improve the experience of patients and families at the hospital. ~ Child Life Manager, CHOP



## Therapeutic Play Kits

Our carefully curated collection of age-appropriate activities are designed for child life specialists (CLS) to engage with patients. They contain all the necessary items to inspire little builders, artists, storytellers and experimenters, all while helping to facilitate coping, emotional expression, and playfulness. In 2023, we teamed up with groups of all types and sizes to expand our reach and make an impact.



6 unique therapeutic play activities available!

15 therapeutic play projects hosted!

2K therapeutic play kits created!

### What We're Hearing...



“The kits have been amazing and a true game changer in the activities we are able to provide our patients and the therapeutic interventions we are able to have with our patients. ~ Manager of Child Life Services, Children's National



“It's really supporting the work we do and helping us be more efficient, but also inspiring [child life specialists] to try something new. ~ Manager of Child Life Services, CHOP



“The Smiles from Sarah team-building session was a standout activity that not only brought joy to the group but also allowed us to give back through the creation of 150 therapeutic activity kits. ~ Deloitte project lead

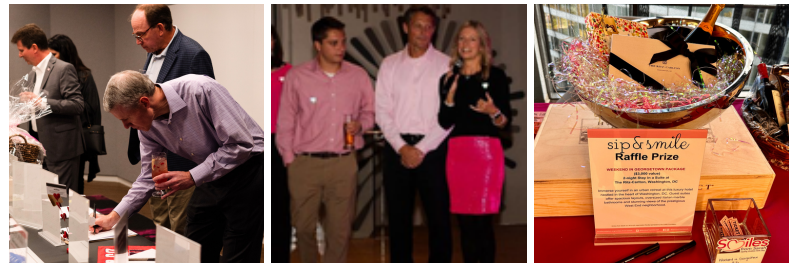


# Raising Awareness

In our inaugural year, it was critical for SFS to raise awareness of our organization, our mission, the importance of the child life specialty and the impact therapeutic play has on children, families and caregivers. We achieved this through various events throughout the year as well as ongoing communications to our community via social media.

Our first annual Sip & Smile fundraising event on October 21, 2023, was a huge success and raised over \$70,000! Held at Deloitte's Observation Deck in Rosslyn, Virginia – SFS drew a crowd of nearly 200 attendees for a fun-filled evening with beautiful views of the D.C. skyline while helping attendees gain a better appreciation of our mission and the important work of child life specialists. A special thank you to our donors, sponsors, volunteers and attendees for making this memorable night possible!

sip & smile





# Thanks to Our Major Supporters!

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## Looking Ahead

We're proud of what we accomplished in our first full year of operation and look forward to expanding our reach and impact. In 2024, we plan to add to and grow our hospital partnerships which will include providing direct funding, play kits and the exchange of ideas to bring more therapeutic play benefits to children's hospitals. If you're interested in getting involved with SFS in any way, please check out our website and social channels, or email us at [contact@smilesfromsarah.org](mailto:contact@smilesfromsarah.org).