



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
Greater Chattanooga

Keeping families close®

Keeping Families Close® 2025 *Annual Report*



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2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Betsy Conroy, Chairperson
Melanie Farrell, Vice Chairperson
Mary Lynn Wilson, Past Chairperson
Brad Moore, Secretary
Tim Vita, Treasurer

Dr. Merritt Adams
Christie Burbank
John Critchfield
Theresa Critchfield
Dr. Laura Hill
Karen Jolley
Dr. Yuvraj Kalra
Brock Oliver
Beth Painter
Ashley Robins Johnson
Deborah Spielman
Tripp Stephens



**Ronald McDonald
House Charities®**
Greater Chattanooga

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STAFF

Estephanie Acheson | Director of Special Events
Kristal Allen | Operations Relief Manager
Izabelle Bradley | Brand Specialist
Dr. Michael D. Brown | President & CEO
Leslie Bustos | House to Home Wellness Navigator
Kristy Carlock | Operations Relief Manager
Farin Cloyd | Executive Assistant
Tiffany Commons | Chief Operating Officer
Brad Dantzer | Director of House Operations
A.J. Davis | Chief Engagement and Volunteer Officer
Keshun Gentry | Director of McDonald's Engagement
Louise Holland | Operations Relief Manager
Amy Jenkins | Family Support Counselor *TN Voices
Susan Lemon | Donor Database Specialist
Danielle Lipe | Advancement Administrative Assistant
Jennifer McAfee | Chief Advancement Officer
Cindee McBride | Director of Data Management and Strategy
Melissa Milburn | Kitchen Manager
Mariah Pruitt | In-House Wellness Navigator
Jannat Saeed | Director of Marketing and Communications
Carla Sewell | Chief Programs Officer
Garland Sherman | Director of Facilities & Maintenance
Tiarika Taylor | Operations Relief Manager
Alicia Tomas | Environmental Associate
LaToya Walters | Family Room Wellness Navigator
Tonya West | Senior Director of House Operations
Trew Williamson | Operations Relief Manager



MISSION

We provide essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families and promote healing when children need healthcare.

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT & CEO



“It’s a House you never think you’ll have to use, but when you do, it’s a Home you never forget” – RMHC Family (2025)

Dear Friends, Donors, Volunteers, and Supporters,

Thank you for your unwavering support over the past 35 years. Every family we serve and every moment of care we provide is possible because of you.

As I complete my fourth year as President & CEO, I remain deeply humbled to witness the strength and resilience of the families who walk through our doors. Many are facing complex medical journeys, cancer diagnoses, premature births, heart conditions, and other serious illnesses affecting their children. In these moments of uncertainty, RMHC becomes more than a place to stay, we provide comfort, stability, and hope when families need it most. Your generosity makes that possible.

I am especially proud to have worked alongside our outgoing Board Chair, Betsy Conroy. Under her leadership, we've achieved significant milestones, more than doubling the number of families served, growing our operating budget by 40%, and strengthening our House to Home program in Bradley County to support families beyond their stay.

I am grateful for our dedicated Board of Directors and proud of our Legacy Circle members, whose vision ensures lasting impact for generations to come. As we look ahead, I am looking forward to locking arms with our incoming Chair, Melanie Farrell and outstanding staff to continue with this strong momentum, deepening our impact and serving even more families in need.

I invite you to continue standing with us. Your support, whether through giving, volunteering, or advocacy, ensures that no family faces a child's medical crisis alone. Together, we can provide the care, compassion, and closeness these families so urgently need.

Thank you for being such an essential part of the RMHC Chattanooga family.

With appreciation,

Michael Brown, Ph.D. SBS
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Brown".



LETTER FROM OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR



Dear Friends,

It was a true honor to serve as Chair of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Chattanooga Board of Directors for the past two years. It has been a privilege to work alongside so many dedicated board members whose leadership, passion, and commitment to our mission made this experience especially meaningful.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our donors, volunteers, community partners, and supporters. Your generosity and belief in our mission make it possible for us to provide comfort, care, and hope to families when they need it most. The impact of your support is felt every day within our House and throughout the communities we serve.

As I pass the torch to our incoming Board Chair, the incredible Melanie Ferrell, I am reminded that while board chairs may come and go, our constant source of leadership remains our CEO, Mike Brown. As steward of our strategic vision and a champion for the families we serve, Mike makes leadership transitions seamless. His steady guidance ensures our mission continues moving forward each day. Reflecting on the past two years, I am incredibly proud of the support, care, and comfort we have provided families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. For more than 35 years, Ronald McDonald House has been a home away from home for families with ill and injured children, and I was honored to celebrate our 35th anniversary during my tenure as Board Chair.

Among our greatest accomplishments, I am especially proud that, in alignment with global RMHC leadership, our Chattanooga chapter continues to lead through its commitment to the continuum of care. Today, our Wellness Navigators support families not only during treatment at Erlanger but also as they transition home. These compassionate professionals connect families with occupational and physical therapy, counseling services, physician referrals, and other critical resources that extend care well beyond their stay with us. Another highlight has been watching our staff grow and thrive across the organization. Every department—operations, volunteer services, fundraising, marketing, and family engagement—has excelled. Our team is deeply connected to our mission, the families we serve, our donors and volunteers, and our valued partners at Erlanger and McDonald's. Their dedication brings our mission to life every day. While I may be stepping down as Board Chair, this mission is far too important for me to walk away from.

As a mom of three, our family has spent many hours streaming Disney+ together over the years, so it seems fitting to borrow a farewell from one of our favorites. This is not goodbye. In the words of Mickey Mouse:

"Ta-ta for now, and see ya real soon!"

With gratitude,



Betsy Conroy
2024-2026 Board Chair

A handwritten signature of Betsy Conroy in blue ink.

LETTER FROM INCOMING BOARD CHAIR



It is an honor to serve as the incoming Board Chair of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Chattanooga.

First, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Betsy Conroy, our outgoing Board Chair. It has been a privilege and a joy to serve alongside Betsy as Vice Chair over the past two years. She has set a high standard through her exceptional leadership, dedication, and commitment to our mission. Because of her service, RMHC is stronger and better positioned than ever to support families throughout our region.

I am also grateful for our outstanding Board of Directors and excited to welcome six new board members this summer. Over the past month, I had the opportunity to join Mike Brown in meeting individually with each of our new members. They bring tremendous talent, enthusiasm, and a genuine heart for service. I am confident that our Board, working alongside Mike, our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners, will continue to advance our mission and strengthen the impact we make together.

As I begin this role, I am energized by the future of RMHC Greater Chattanooga and the opportunity to build on the strong foundation that has been established. Guided by our mission and inspired by the families we serve, I am confident our chapter will continue to provide compassionate care while expanding our reach and impact throughout the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued support of this remarkable organization. I look forward to working alongside each of you as we continue providing a home away from home for families during some of life's most challenging moments.

With gratitude,

Melanie Ferrell
2026-2028 Board Chair

Melanie E. Ferrell





504

Families served via the House



447

Meals provided



7,453

Nights provided to families



36,730

Total number of bedside hours



1,193

Families served via the Family Room



231

Longest nights stay



124

Families served via House to Home

Your support made a difference in 2025





260

Individual volunteers



119

Volunteer groups



146

Event volunteers



152

New volunteers



1,131

Adopt A Meal participants



13,124

Volunteer hours

Our volunteers made it happen in 2025





MEET THE *Millirons* FAMILY

After nearly ten years of trying to have children, Tim and Elizabeth Millirons were overjoyed to learn they were expecting twin boys through fertility treatments. But in 2004, their twins arrived much earlier than expected when Elizabeth's water broke in the middle of the night, ten weeks before their due date.

"Their lungs weren't fully developed, and they were both put on ventilators," Elizabeth recalled. As Emery and Harrison remained in the NICU at Erlanger, Elizabeth knew they would be there for weeks. Then came news she never expected.

Elizabeth's great aunt, Sarah Joe Hudson, was a Ronald McDonald House volunteer and had been working behind the scenes to help the family. One day, a social worker walked into Elizabeth's hospital room with an update.

"One of the social workers came in and said, 'We have a spot for you at the Ronald McDonald House,' and I just busted out crying," she said. "We stayed there a little over a month, and it was just amazing."

The House allowed the Millirons family to focus on what mattered most—being close to their sons. Thankfully, Emery and Harrison developed normally and are now thriving young adults. The twins celebrated their 22nd birthday this year.

"The meals, the safety, the love—it was all amazing. You could just go back and forth to the hospital and not worry about anything at home. I never remember going back to our house until the boys were released. I felt safe, loved, and supported."

-Elizabeth Milliron

The experience left a lasting impact on the Millirons family and inspired them to stay involved with Ronald McDonald House Charities for years to come. When the boys were eight years old, Tim and Elizabeth began bringing them to volunteer alongside them. Today, although Emery and Harrison are away at college, but they still return to help when they can.

Tim and Elizabeth have now volunteered with RMHC for nearly a decade and currently serve as Weekend Managers, helping welcome and support families facing challenges similar to their own.

"We just love the Ronald McDonald House," Elizabeth said. "We love everything about it." She added, "It's one of the highlights of our month."

More than twenty years after their stay, the Millirons family continues to give back to the House that helped them stay close to Emery and Harrison during one of the most important moments of their lives.

Hope365

\$150 is the value of a family's one-night stay at the Ronald McDonald House.



Give Hope Today

Scan to support
our families

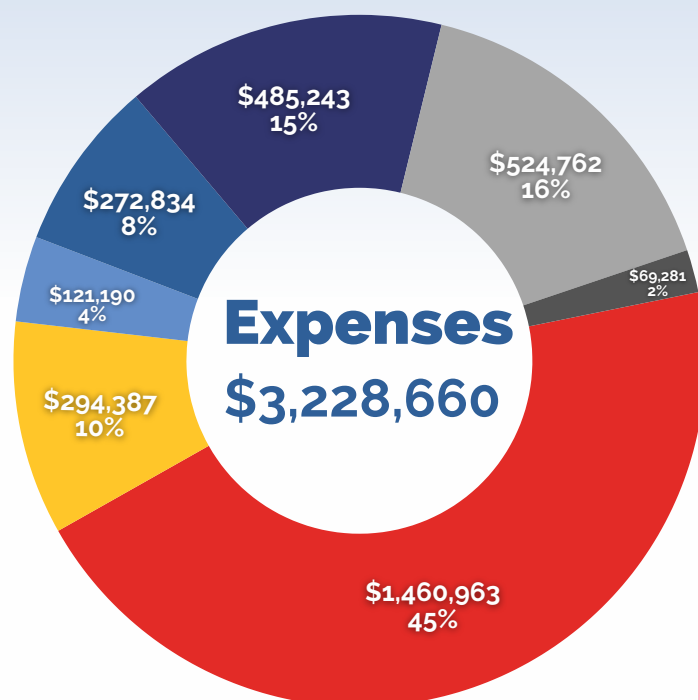
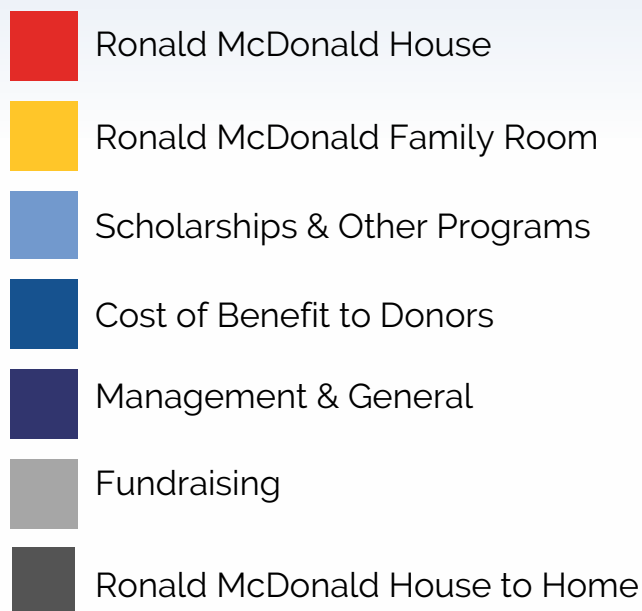
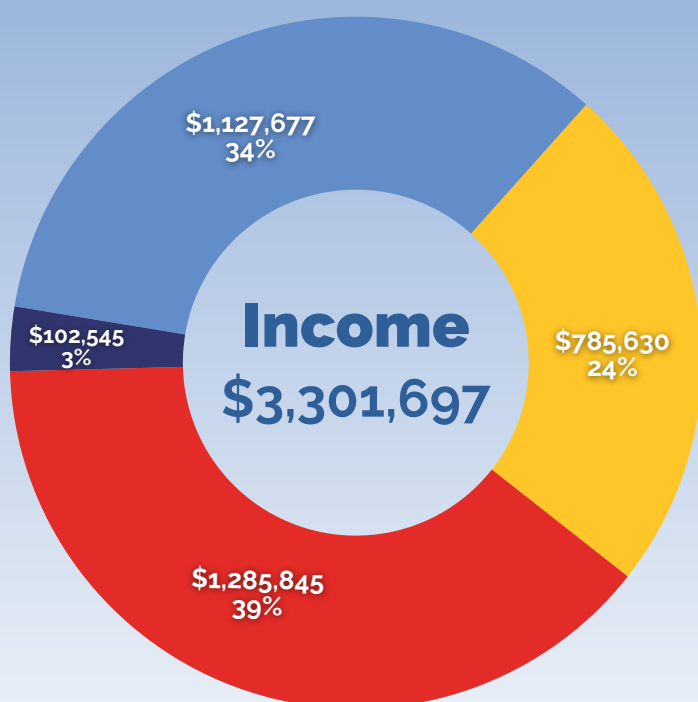


Because of the generosity from donors giving to our HOPE365 campaign, families like the Milliron's find comfort and community in Ronald McDonald House Charities. To learn more about how your donation impacts RMHC families, head to [RMHChattanooga.com](https://www.rmhcattanooga.com).

2025 Financial Summary

Net Assets December 31, 2024 - \$9,203,414

Net Assets December 31, 2025 - \$10,066,200



Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Chattanooga is being audited by Smith + Howard, Certified Public Accountants, and a copy of the audited financial statements will be available upon request and published on the organization's public website www.rmhcattanooga.com. RMHC of Greater Chattanooga is a BBB Accredited Business.

2025 Fundraising Events



Run4Kids
\$64,516



Golf Classic
\$107,965



Wine Women and Shoes
\$355,286



3rd Party Events
\$63,415

RMHC of Greater Chattanooga Scholars

McDonald's has always been a critical partner in the success of RMHC. Local owner-operators saw another opportunity for support soon after the House opened, establishing an endowment to fund scholarships for deserving graduating seniors. Since 2002, RMHC has partnered with the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga to award scholarships to graduating high school seniors. These scholarships are generously funded by RMHC supporters and their foundations, including McDonald's, the Williams Family Fund, the Amanda Holekamp Family, and the Mark Brooks Family Charitable Trust. It is a privilege to recognize exceptional students in Greater Chattanooga and the surrounding counties through these awards, honoring the contributions of these families and our forever and founding mission partner. In 2025, 25 deserving students received scholarships thanks to their generosity.





MEET THE *Welch* FAMILY

Dedicated Volunteers

What started as a volunteer opportunity through work has grown into a 14-year family tradition for Carrye and Jacob Welch. Carrye first became involved with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Chattanooga in 2012 while working for Kohl's. When volunteer opportunities became available through her employer, she signed up to help with a Phonathon fundraiser and later volunteered at Bug-a-Paluzza.

"I got hooked ever since," Carrye said. Over the years, that initial volunteer experience evolved into a lasting commitment to the RMHC mission. Along the way, her son, Jacob, became part of the journey as well.

Jacob's connection to RMHC began when he was just a toddler attending Bug-a-Paluzza with his mother. As he grew older, he began volunteering himself—helping at the Bug-a-Paluzza gate, assisting with Phonathon projects, organizing pledge forms, updating donation totals, and eventually serving as a caller during one of the organization's fundraising campaigns.

Together, Carrye and Jacob have supported RMHC in many ways over the years, from fundraising events to delivering cookies and helping prepare meals for families staying at the House. For both volunteers, the reason for serving is knowing their efforts help families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

"Knowing what it's doing for the families is the most rewarding part," Carrye said.

Jacob shared a similar perspective. "The satisfaction is knowing that my effort is not in vain and that it's being utilized where necessary," he said.

"I've volunteered for a lot of various charities over the years, and RMHC is one of the most gracious and appreciative, I've grown to love the family that this charity provides."

-Carrye Welch

One of Carrye's favorite parts of volunteering has been witnessing the impact of the House over time. Through years of serving at events, she has had the opportunity to meet families during a difficult season and later see them return with stories of healing and hope.

Want to get involved?

Volunteer Today



**Scan to join
the mission.**

"There's just been a lot of rewarding family moments where we get to meet the families during the events and then see them later and see how we've helped them so much," Carrye said. "I've worked with families that had stayed there and then are volunteering with me," she said. "It's a pleasure to meet them."

Despite busy schedules and competing responsibilities, volunteering remains a priority for the Welch family. Carrye makes sure Bug-a-Palusa is marked on her calendar every year, often requesting time off well in advance so she and Jacob can continue serving together.

For more than a decade, Carrye and Jacob have faithfully given their time to support Ronald McDonald House families. Their story is a reminder that a single volunteer opportunity can grow into something much greater—a tradition of service that spans generations and helps families find comfort, care, and hope when they need it most.



Volunteers like Carrye and Jacob help make Ronald McDonald House Charities feel like home for families facing their toughest days. From serving meals to supporting events, volunteers play a vital role in our mission. Learn more about volunteer opportunities at [RMHChattanooga.com](https://www.rmhcchattanooga.com)



| Mission & Forever Partner

Since its establishment in 1974, the Ronald McDonald House has been McDonald's designated charitable organization. RMHC operates as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, with McDonald's serving as its primary corporate benefactor. In the Greater Chattanooga area, a consortium of 57 locally owned restaurants ensures sustained support for families through RMHC of Greater Chattanooga. These operators are affiliated with the Greater Tennessee Valley Owner Operators Association (GTVOA).

In 2025, McDonald's contributed a net total of \$785,630 to RMHC of Greater Chattanooga through Round Up and other initiatives! AJ Davis, Chief Engagement and Volunteer Officer, alongside Keshun Gentry, Director of McDonald's Engagement, visit each McDonald's location monthly, collaborating closely with GTVOA to enhance Round Up participation and foster a strong connection between McDonald's employees and their enduring philanthropic commitment. Thank you to McDonald's for their continued support.

A.J. DAVIS

Chief Community Engagement and Volunteer Officer
aj.davis@rmhchattanooga.com



children's | Medical Partner

Hospital at Erlanger

The partnership between RMHC and Erlanger is rooted in the shared belief that families should never have to navigate a child's healthcare journey alone.

Every day, families walk through our doors carrying worry, exhaustion, and uncertainty. Through this partnership, the Family Room welcomes families into a supportive space where they can step away for a moment while remaining close to their child.

At the heart of this work are the volunteers whose compassion and dedication help make the Family Room feel welcoming and supportive of every family who visits. Whether it is a warm cup of coffee after a long day at the hospital, a quiet space to regroup, or simply the kindness of a smile from someone who cares, the impact of this partnership is felt in meaningful ways every day.

We are deeply grateful for the continued partnership with Erlanger and for the volunteers whose commitment makes this work possible. Together, they help ensure families have the support they need while staying close to their loved ones.

– LaToya Walters | Family Room Wellness Navigator

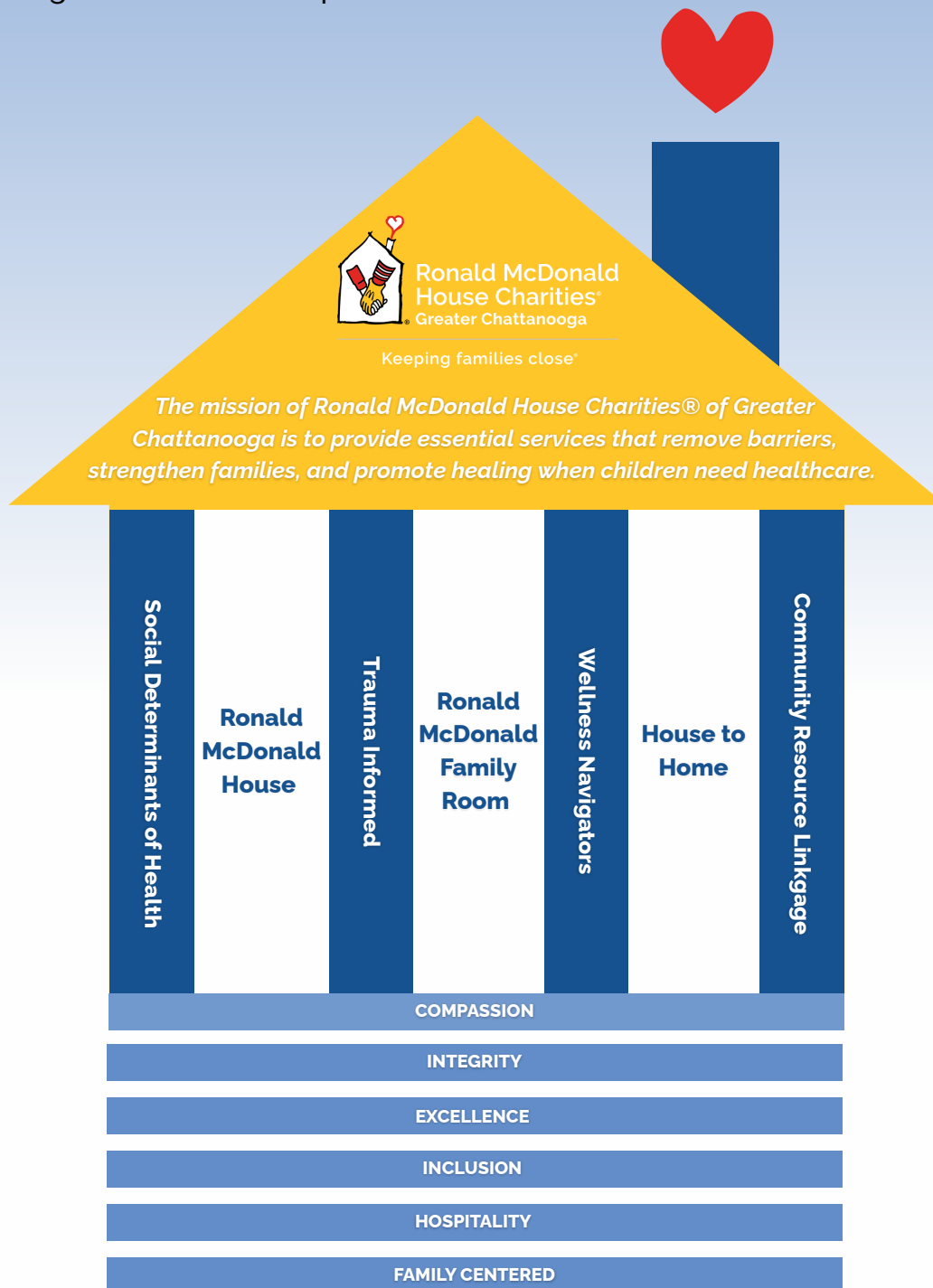


The Family Room can be located
on the 3rd floor of Children's Hospital
near the "F" elevators.



Wellness Navigation

Wellness Navigators are designed to assist families in improving holistic social determinants of health related to medical, social, emotional, and economic wellbeing. We understand that when a child is sick, the whole family is sick, and that the hard work does not end at hospital/House discharge. The Navigators provide comprehensive prescriptive services including, but not limited to, medical condition education/coordination, case management, therapeutic activities, and community-based resource linkage as needed. The goal is to help families before, during, and after their child's medical crisis for better long-term health and wellness outcomes. Wellness Navigators are embedded across the RMHC program continuum of services. Whether in the House, the Family Room, or the House to Home Program, a Navigator is there to keep families close and connected.



Programs



Ronald McDonald House

The Ronald McDonald House provides a 'home away from home' for families with critically ill children, ensuring they can stay close during medical treatment without the added financial burden. This 28 bedroom facility across the street from Children's Hospital at Erlanger provides a private room, hot food daily, and laundry services to our families.



The Family Room

The Ronald McDonald Family Room is a day respite area for those who are providing "around the clock" care for their loved ones at Erlanger. Located on the third floor, the Family Room is a space for families to take a shower, catch up on laundry, or grab a snack without ever leaving the hospital.



House to Home

Part of the RMHC Continuum of Care, our House to Home Program supports families throughout their child's wellness journey. Whether you're a local Bradley County resident or recently discharged from RMHC of Greater Chattanooga, we work with community based agencies to offer comprehensive medical related aftercare navigation services.

This program is partially funded through a partnership with the United Way of the Ocoee Region, helping us extend our impact in the community.

Thank You

to our generous donors who
make our mission possible

Dear Friends and Supporters,

On behalf of our Board of Directors and staff, thank you for your generous financial support throughout 2025. Your commitment to Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Chattanooga has made a profound difference in the lives of the families we serve.

Because of your investment, families facing some of the most difficult moments of their lives navigating diagnoses such as cancer, respiratory illness, prematurity, neurological conditions, heart disease, and birth defects found comfort, care, and a place to stay close to their child's bedside. During times marked by emotional, physical, and financial strain, your support provided stability, compassion, and hope.

Your generosity ensures that families can focus on what matters most: the health and healing of their child. Simply put, you are an essential part of every family's journey.

As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, we invite you to continue this meaningful impact by supporting our annual HOPE Campaign with a goal of \$210,000—helping provide 1,400 nights of comfort and serving hundreds of families in need.

Together, we can continue to provide hope, healing, and a place to call home when it matters most.

Thank you for standing with us and for believing in our mission.

With sincere appreciation,

Board of Directors and Staff

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Chattanooga

Scan to see our donors
that make it happen





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2025





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*We believe when families are
together, they cope better.*