

Ronald McDonald House Houston Hospital Programs Continue to Grow!

Since May of 2001 when the very first Ronald McDonald House Houston Family Room opened inside of Texas Children's Hospital, our Hospital Programs have successfully grown operations to include partnerships with two more highly respected hospitals: Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital and most recently, the Children's Cancer Hospital at M.D. Anderson.

Hospital Programs operate within the walls of the hospitals, offering support to families with seriously ill children just a few steps away from where their child is being treated. Whether it is a newborn transferred to the Neonatal Intensive Care unit, a teen rushed in for treatment in the Pediatric ICU or a child going through cancer treatment, Ronald McDonald House Houston is there to offer a *home away from home*. The RMH Houston family includes a 20 bedroom House in Texas Children's Hospital and a 14 bedroom House in Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital. We also have four (soon to be five!) Family Rooms and a Cookie Corner in the Texas Medical Center.

At the beginning of 2012, our House inside **Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital** expanded to the 8th floor to serve families with children treated in the neonatal special care unit and the acute care/observation area. Our lounge features a coffee/tea beverage bar, snack pantry, microwave, refrigerator, and dining tables.

Later in the year we opened a Family Room inside the new **Texas Children's Pavilion for Women**. Parents and guests of babies being treated in the Neonatal Intensive Care unit of this new hospital will find a cozy and welcoming respite complete with all the amenities of a Ronald McDonald Family Room, including visits by volunteers with freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. This is especially nice since Mom and baby are able to stay together on this patient floor.

Lastly, we are thrilled to share that we are in the planning stages for a Ronald McDonald Family Room at the **Children's Cancer Hospital at M.D. Anderson**. This much anticipated Family Room will provide guests with a kitchen and dining area, a business and resource center, and a waiting area for Pediatric Intensive Care. Our largest Family Room area to date is expected to open in April 2013 and will be located on the pediatric patient care floor that we serve. Parents will find the Family Room to be a place nearby where they can fix a quick meal, grab a snack, talk with a volunteer, visit with other families, or just sit and relax. They will be able to use the two adjacent sleep rooms for daytime napping or overnight stays. The business and resource center will provide a quiet respite to read, work on the computer, or handle other business. Ronald McDonald House Houston volunteers will host the coffee bar and support families in the waiting area.

What can you do to help? A huge part of the success of Ronald McDonald House Houston is our fabulous volunteers! Shift volunteers host the Houses and Family Rooms. They keep things neat, organized and clean. They stock supplies, bake

cookies, and greet and check families in and out from sleep rooms, all while providing comfort, companionship and support to families going through a difficult time. We are in constant need of volunteers. Please commit to volunteering in 2013.

Volunteers interested in helping at any of our Hospital Program locations should visit the volunteer section of our website: www.rmhhouston.org/Volunteer. All other questions about hospital programs should be directed to Nanci Allen, Director of Hospital Programs at 832-824-8621 or nallen@rmhhouston.org.