

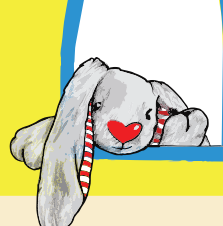


Ronald McDonald House Charities Ireland

Keeping families close™

NEWSLETTER MAY 2023

Staying close is what matters most.



CEO's Message



JOE KENNY

Hello everyone and welcome to our House Newsletter

Before you get stuck in to all of the news and developments from the past few months, firstly, I'd love to share with you the progress we're making towards our future.

We have been busy working in the background with all things "New House". Progress is slow, but steady and we are on track to open our doors in Q1 2025 alongside the New Children's Hospital. We have been making our way through the tender stages of the build and working with our colleagues at Children's Health Ireland. You can see the current progress of the hospital here, as well as our site, circled. Things are certainly taking shape!

Back to today, we still have 20 families everynight staying at our current House that need us and looking after them is our priority. You'll find this Newsletter focuses on our New Wellness Programme, an extension of our services that we have wanted to implement for some time.

Created in conjunction with Donna Reilly People & Wellness, a bespoke Programme was created, bringing weekly sessions and activities to the House which offer our parents and siblings something special, and positive focussed, during their time with us. These workshops and events have been so well received and we will endeavour to adapt and grow our "We've Got You Programme" to ensure we are caring for our families as best we can.

Apart from that, it goes without saying that the continued support and compassion you show towards our House and the families living here never fails to amaze us. Thank you for your continued heartfelt support. Our families benefit from your generosity daily, by being close to the most important people in their lives, each other.



RMHC IRELAND SITE

We've Got You Wellness Programme



Mel getting ready for some healing Reiki sessions



Yoga instructor, Laura, welcoming our families



Sarah Naylor has been supporting the Wellness Programme through the many relaxation and beauty workshops that have been held at the house in recent months

"I really didn't know what to expect the first day I walked into the House considering I knew how serious the situations going on inside were. I was so pleasantly surprised to see how beautiful, bright, bubbly, happy and warm it actually was.

The staff inside were buzzing around, helping in any way they could. There were families everywhere enjoying each other, acting like any other family does. There were supporters delivering donations and teams of Volunteers in the kitchen cooking up a storm. Everyone was chatting and laughing. I distinctly remember the sun beaming through the big window in the Family Room lighting up all of the photographs of the children who had been through the House before.

I thought the House had this kind of magic about it and I knew from that very first visit I was where I was meant to be.

I am truly honoured and humbled to be apart of the Wellness Programme. I believe the Programme helps to give the parents staying at the House back a little bit of me time, a safe space where they can put themselves first for a few brief moments. Where they can talk to another adult who doesn't know anything about them. I take their lead and we speak about whatever it is they need to that day. It's a time where they can be themselves, not just the parent of a sick child which is so important, even for just 30mins that week.

If they don't want to talk and they just want to rest they have an opportunity to do that too. I'm there to help them feel good and do something for them at a time when they're doing so much for others.

As a part of the Programme I get to spend time with the parents on a one to one and listen to their stories. As a professional it's my job to be positive and happy and helpful because that's what they need. But seeing what these children and their families go through shatters my heart into a thousand pieces. As a person I am truly honoured to be able to help in anyway that I can".

"I've done facials, massages, makeup classes, manicures, eyebrows and everything else in the House. But the most important thing I do there is listen with an open heart"



Sarah, getting ready to pamper our families

Tracey Wilkie, Aria-Rose's Mum

"The three most powerful words I've heard this year were "We've Got You", the slogan of The Ronald McDonald House Wellness Programme. The Wellness Programme brings parents together to get involved in something outside illnesses and hospitals. It makes you feel seen. The Ronald McDonald House see us, our family situation, the whole unit and that's its importance and its special-ness."



Tracey and Sarah

'Donna Reilly People & Wellness' relished facilitating and creating this ambitious project from it's infancy to it's current success

"Programme development commenced in February 2022. We spent months researching the House, the families and their unique wellbeing needs. From there we developed the appropriate topics, workshops and facilitators resulting in the launch of the Programme in September 2022.

The ultimate aim of the "We've Got You" Wellness Programme is to give families staying at the House some time-out to focus on themselves, to invest in themselves and to boost and build their wellbeing.

We carefully design each workshop to ensure it is tailored to the specific needs of each family member. The Programme covers what we call "external" wellbeing like facials, haircare, manicures etc., and, also "internal" wellbeing like reiki, mindfulness, kids messy play, parenting & guilt workshops etc. We select facilitators we know will provide the best support to the families in the House.

Personally, it has been a huge honour to lead this Programme. Having met the parents, it is a privilege to know that the Programme we have created is in some way helping them in their journey in the House. It has been such a success and we would like to thank Sharon and all in the House for supporting and championing the Programme".

"Donna Reilly People & Wellness are honoured to manage the 'We've Got You' Well being Programme with Ronald McDonald House Charities".



Donna Reilly
We've Got You
Programme Co-Ordinator

Sharon Keogh House News



I am 2 years in my role of House Operations Manager last month and almost 5 years in the House. I'm still humbled daily by the amazing families I meet and the stories that are shared.

So far in 2023 we've had 90 families stay with us, each with their own unique journey. Getting to know our families and understanding their needs is key to the services we provide, as our House is their home while their child is sick in hospital.

In September 2022 we introduced a fantastic new Wellness Programme which focuses on the mental health and wellbeing of all family members, offering an array of workshops, support services and relaxing activities.

Our Cooking for Families programme is also in full swing, with daily slots booked up until well into the summer! This is an ever popular volunteering experience, and brings the heart of the house alive with daily culinary delights produced by different Volunteers from many different corporate companies and groups. There is nothing like the smell of a wholesome home cooked meal wafting around the House daily, and having it handed up to you makes it even better still!

Click to book your slot!



Volunteers & Families, cooking up a storm in our House Kitchen.



A lovely message from one of our Families

DROP EVERYTHING! €100,000 RAISED!

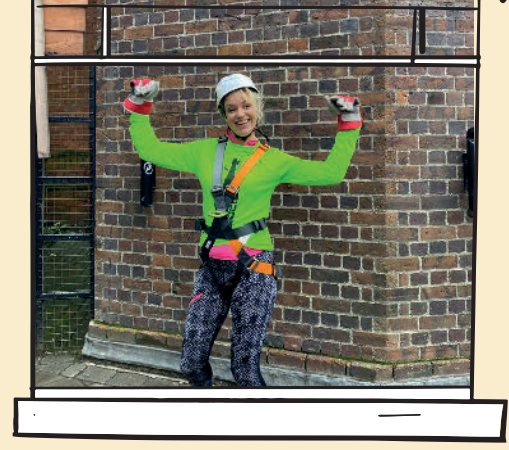
If you were passing through Smithfield on Friday, April 28th, you may have spotted one of the 120 Ronald McDonald House Heroes abseiling down the Smithfield Chimney.

On the day our abseilers began their challenge by climbing the 244 steps inside the chimney to it's top. After this accomplishment they were met with the very real prospect of abseiling 190 feet downward into Smithfield Square! Having done the abseil myself, let me tell you this wasn't for the fainthearted!

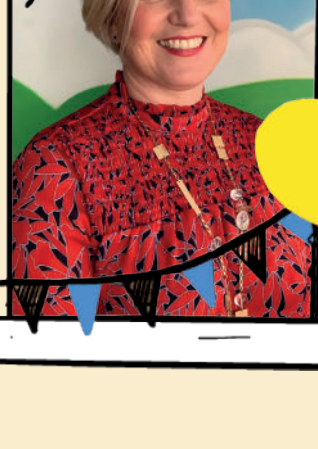
Throughout the day pairs of abseilers descended into Smithfield Square, decked in branded neon t-shirts and (mostly) smiles for one of our biggest fundraisers of the year.



LOUISE QUAIL
CORPORATE NEWS



JOANNE PRETSELL COMMUNITY NEWS



We were thrilled to receive so many donations from sports themed fundraisers over the past few months.

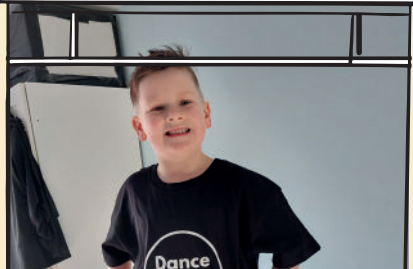
We had the amazing QPR GAA Club that got the whole community behind them and raised almost €15,000. Just incredible!

We had no end of marathon runners coming to us with cheques recently. Runners arrived to our door with donations from our own Dublin Marathon and all the way to Amsterdam and Tokyo!

Beyond sports we have a few beauty based fundraisers with the Beauty Chalet, Carlow, leading the charge with almost €4,000 raised for our families.

The memorial birthday celebration for Oscar was a great success and we thank the Roche family for their continued support.

The community fundraiser was spotted at the Cumann Rince Naisuinta at Tallaght recruiting dancers for the Dance for Sick Kids campaign in September.



Dance for Sick Kids
Sept 24th - Sept 30th
Sign up Today!



QPR club fundraiser for the Lawlor family