

# SECURING THE PROMISE

WINTER 2025



**Le Bonheur  
on the Move**

## Health in Every Corner

Le Bonheur reaches out  
to the community

**Le Bonheur**  
Children's Hospital

*Le Bonheur Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., treats more than 500,000 children each year through community programs, in regional clinics and 311 beds that feature state-of-the-art technology and family-friendly resources. Our medical staff of more than 240 physicians provide care in 45 subspecialties.*

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*In this issue:*



**2 ALL ABOARD**  
*Le Bonheur's Mobile Unit provides essential access to health care*



**6 EMPOWERING NEW MOMS AT EVERY STEP**  
*Nurse-Family Partnership improves birth outcomes, child cognitive development*



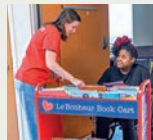
**12 PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS**  
*Memphis CHILD helps families access the resources they need*



**16 EMPOWERED TO ACT**  
*Le Bonheur fights for families affected by violence, traumatic injury*



**18 PLAYING IT SAFE**  
*Safe Kids Mid-South educates, empowers communities to prevent childhood injuries*



**20 A HEART FOR READING**  
*Le Bonheur promotes a culture of literacy with books*



**24 FINDING ANSWERS AND COMFORT**  
*Basketball player dreams of returning to the court after treatment*



**26 BREATHING EASY**  
*Risk-based approach changes health care use, outcomes for children with high-risk asthma*



**29 MEETING CHILDREN WHERE THEY ARE**  
*Le Bonheur's school-based health programs promote student wellness, independence*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

As a practicing surgeon for more than 25 years, I know that medicine takes more than what happens in the operating room or even within the four walls of the hospital. At Le Bonheur Children's, we are proud to address the needs of patients and their families not only in the hospital or clinic but right in their very own communities — at school, in play and even at home.

Part of our commitment to the more than 500,000 kids we treat at Le Bonheur each year is to care for each of them mind, body and spirit. We are proud to seek innovative solutions to provide the best care possible to every child who walks through our doors.

From encouraging literacy through the distribution of free books, to ensuring patients are up to date on routine vaccinations, to helping babies practice safe sleep and providing resources for victims of violence, our commitment to kids is unwavering.

In this issue, I hope you'll enjoy reading stories about the difference you help make for children and their families through our community programming.

Because of your support, more children will be able to receive the help and resources they need to thrive that only Le Bonheur can provide. Thank you for helping us care for kids.

Sincerely,



Trey Eubanks, MD, FACS

President and Surgeon-in-Chief

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital



Donor funding is critical to the success of Le Bonheur's community programs. Help support children and their families by scanning the QR code to give today.

# All Aboard

*Le Bonheur's Mobile Unit provides essential access to health care*



*Each student who visits the Le Bonheur on the Move mobile unit receives a free book. From left, Dempsey Lovelace, Kason Peters and Meredith Northcott discuss their book choices with Morgan Mahan, APRN.*

**Myriad barriers exist for parents trying to seek medical care for their children. Scheduling, work, school and distance from a provider with availability can make routine health care nearly impossible for some families. For those living in rural areas, access to affordable care can often be an insurmountable barrier.**

In 2009, then Le Bonheur President Meri Armour identified the need to increase access to health care for children in West Tennessee. Partnering with the Children’s Health Fund, Le Bonheur became part of a national network of mobile health providers for children and began providing school-based health visits to underserved and underinsured West Tennessee children.

Armour approached Le Bonheur hospitalist Cynthia Cross, MD, who agreed to serve as medical director of a new initiative called Le Bonheur on the Move (LOM). Since its inception more than 15 years ago, the mobile unit has traveled thousands of miles to counties across West Tennessee providing much needed health care to children spanning elementary to high school age. From sick visits to well child care to routine childhood vaccines, Le Bonheur on the Move provides comprehensive pediatric health care and eliminates barriers to care.

In the 2023-2024 school year, the LOM mobile health program served 39 schools and 822 children including 120 children with RN Health Education via the 85210 program, 53 families with Behavioral Health Counseling, 186 families with Health Navigation services, and more than 200 families with RN Care Coordination and referral tracking.

LOM operates a mobile medical unit during the school year with rural public schools in Crockett, Dyer, Obion, Lauderdale, Tipton, Gibson, McNairy, Haywood and Decatur counties in West Tennessee.

Children from age 4-17, the majority of whom are enrolled in the state of Tennessee’s Medicaid program called TennCare, are sent home with a consent packet that parents complete prior to their child’s appointment.

In the 2023-2024 school year, the Le Bonheur on the Move mobile health program served 39 schools and 822 children including 120 children with RN Health Education via the 85210 program, 53 families with Behavioral Health Counseling, 186 families with Health Navigation services, and more than 200 families with RN Care Coordination and referral tracking. LOM operates a mobile medical unit during the school year with rural public schools in Crockett, Dyer, Obion, Lauderdale, Tipton, Gibson, McNairy, Haywood and Decatur counties in West Tennessee.



*Le Bonheur on the Move visits schools across West Tennessee four days a week. The team is comprised of (left-right): Julie McKee, MSN, RN, CCM, Supervisor of Community Health/Project Director of HRSA Delta Grant; LaToya Spinks, LBSW, LSSW, Social Work Navigator; Morgan Mahan, APRN, CPNP-PC, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Mobile Medical Unit; Tracey Statler, LPN, Licensed Practical Nurse Mobile Medical Unit; Celina Williamson, Mobile Medical Unit Driver; Kimber Robison, LPN, Licensed Practical Nurse Mobile Medical Unit; Kayley Jones, BSN, RN Health Educator; Evette Higgs, LMSW, Behavioral Health Counselor; Kristen Hemby, BSN, RN, Supervisor of Le Bonheur on the Move; and Tonya Polk, MSN, RN, Clinical Case Coordinator.*

## Mobile Health

Four days per week, the Le Bonheur on the Move team, which includes nurses, social workers, a nurse practitioner and a behavioral health counselor, visit schools across West Tennessee to care for kids. Children climb aboard the mobile unit in their school's parking lot for a routine health screening that includes hearing and vision tests and a hunger screening.

Cindy Hogg, BSN, RN, director of Health Services for Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach, said LOM helps reach kids who are either uninsured or underinsured and provides them with the comprehensive care they need.

"The Le Bonheur brand and name carry so much trust and mean so much in West Tennessee," Hogg said. "We have a duty to do the best and right thing all the time for kids and ensure they have access to the care they need."

While LOM is not meant to replace regular visits with a local pediatrician, Hogg and her team understand that for some families, attending a doctor's appointment can be challenging and the mobile unit can help bridge the gap.

"Sometimes patients are assigned a primary care provider by TennCare in the next county over or children in the same family are sent to different providers," Hogg said. "This can be a hardship for families, and we have a social work team that can help families navigate TennCare and access the resources they need."



Second grader Dempsey Lovelace undergoes a routine hearing test as part of his exam during Le Bonheur on the Move's visit to Haywood Elementary School.



Cindy Hogg, BSN, RN, director of Health Services for Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach; Trey Eubanks, MD, FACS, Le Bonheur president and surgeon-in-chief; and Chelcie Oseni, MBA, BSN, RN, clinical manager of School Health for Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach, attend the groundbreaking of the Stanton Community Center.

***"Le Bonheur on the Move helped us connect with the counseling services that we needed for A'mir to thrive. Evette has helped A'mir cope and be able to deal with the feelings of losing his mom. He is able to process his grief without it making him sad."***

Stacy Grant, grandmother of Le Bonheur on the Move patient A'mir Jones

counselor, is an integral part of the LOM team.

Higgs has made a difference in the lives of kids like A'mir Jones. Last year, kindergartener A'mir climbed aboard the Le Bonheur on the Move mobile medical unit when it visited Dyersburg Primary School. At his appointment, A'mir's care team raised health concerns and then addressed the feelings of anxiety he was experiencing. Having lost his mom two years prior, A'mir lives with his grandmother, Stacy Grant, and was struggling to cope with the feelings caused by his mother's death.

Following A'mir's LOM appointment, he was referred to Higgs for care. A'mir felt comfortable being open with Higgs and sharing his fears and anxieties.

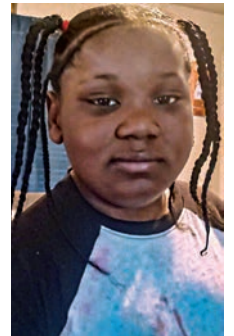
***"Our program is important to rural communities because we are not trying to replace the good work that is going on in these communities, we are simply offering another set of resources that parents can trust. When the LOM mobile medical unit arrives at the school, parents, teachers and community leaders can be assured that their children are in great hands."***

Julie McKee, MSN, RN, CCM, Supervisor of Community Health/Project Director of HRSA Delta Grant

While well-child visits make up the bulk of LOM's cases, the routine check ups often lead to diagnoses that necessitate a specialist referral. The most common referrals are for cardiology, pulmonary and neurological services, and LOM nurses follow up with families both to ensure the patient gets a timely specialist appointment and to learn the outcomes.

## Behavioral Health Helps

In the past few years, the need for behavioral and mental health services — including treatment for anxiety and depression — has grown exponentially. Social workers are able to connect families with the resources they need, which is one reason Evette Higgs, LMSW, a behavioral health



A'mir Jones received a behavioral health referral after a routine well child visit with Le Bonheur on the Move.

“Le Bonheur on the Move helped us connect with the counseling services that we needed for A’mir to thrive,” Grant said. “Evette has helped A’mir cope and be able to deal with the feelings of losing his mom. He is able to process his grief without it making him sad.”

## Partnering for Success

Supervisor of Community Health/Project Director of HRSA Delta Grant Julie McKee, MSN, RN, CCM, said LOM seeks to partner and collaborate with local resources in each area to connect children and families to ongoing, necessary care that may have otherwise gone unaddressed.

“Our program is important to rural communities because we are not trying to replace the good work that is going on in these communities, we are simply offering another set of resources that parents can trust,”

McKee said. “When the LOM mobile medical unit arrives at the school, parents, teachers and community leaders can be assured that their children are in great hands.”

To meet the growing need for families moving to West Tennessee’s Stanton area with the opening of the Ford Blue Oval site, Le Bonheur on the Move will be on site monthly to care for children at the local community center. Kids will be able to have sick and well-child visits.

“Ford Philanthropy puts services together to create a community initiative to help people impacted by a new plant who might otherwise not see ‘upward mobility’, and they do this by forming a community center with all types of community services,” Hogg said. “We will continue to participate in community events such as the Chow-Chow Festival in Stanton, where we provide health education and information about the services our organization can provide.”

Le Bonheur also received a generous grant from Ford Philanthropy to purchase equipment and supplies for pediatric programming across West Tennessee.

As the region grows, both Cross and Hogg would like to see the addition of a second mobile unit and the capacity to serve students five days a week. ❤️



*Meredith Northcott has a routine blood test performed at a Le Bonheur on the Move visit to her school, Haywood Elementary.*

# History of Le Bonheur Community Outreach

**Since 1985**, Le Bonheur Community Outreach has provided a coordinated, integrated community practice that provides equal access to high quality care through engagement, education, prevention and intervention to improve the health and well-being of all children and families. The program began when Le Bonheur identified the need to reduce a growing number of children coming to the hospital’s Emergency Department with injuries caused by abuse. Grant funding requests were submitted to address child abuse prevention and treatment for pediatric victims in the community.

As additional needs in the community were identified, Le Bonheur Community Outreach grew. From schools, to homes, to clinics, Le Bonheur is committed to meeting the needs of children and families where they are.

Key to the program’s success are the long-established partnerships throughout the region, including across West Tennessee, and a strong commitment to health equity and serving communities of need. With 225 Associates, Le Bonheur Community Outreach operates 25 evidence-based or best-practice community health programs, reaching more than 50,000 individuals annually.

“Community partners are essential to our accomplishments in Le Bonheur Community Outreach programs,” said Jennilyn Utkov, BSN, RN, MBA, Vice President of Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach. “I’m so proud that our system allows us to do this important community work. We not only look at the acute health needs of children, but at the overall health and we have invested in quality programs to improve kids’ lives.”

According to Utkov, at the core of the 25 community programs is a solid plan for the administration of these programs. From grant administration to development and program evaluation, it is truly a collaborative effort from a team of passionate professionals.



Donor funding is critical to the success of Le Bonheur’s community programs. Help support children and their families by scanning the QR code to give today.

# EMPOWERING NEW



Led by Nurse-Family Partnership participants Sydney Izquierdo and her daughter Marianna, fellow NFP parents and toddlers line up in anticipation of their graduation from the program.



# MOMS AT EVERY STEP

*Nurse-Family Partnership improves birth outcomes, child cognitive development*

**W**hen Destaynae Jameson talks about Katie Montgomery, the nurse supporting her through Le Bonheur's Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program, her eyes grow bright and a wide smile breaks out across her face.

"My nurse is basically a part of my family at this point — she's a friend," said Jameson, who first met Montgomery in fall of 2022 after enrolling in NFP. "Katie is somebody I would invite to my baby's christening, my baby's birthday party ... she's on the guest list, and I say that because she looks after me as if I'm a sister or a friend. I can talk to my nurse about anything; there's no such thing as a dumb question. Even if I just want to talk about life stuff, Katie is there."

For Jameson, getting connected with NFP was a matter of being in the right place at the right time. While working for the Memphis New Mothers Study, she became pregnant with her first child and a nurse colleague suggested she look into Nurse-Family Partnership — an evidence-based home visitation program for first-time mothers. NFP participants are enrolled prenatally prior to their 29th week of pregnancy and regularly receive free, one-on-one in-home visits with a Le Bonheur nurse until their child's second birthday.

## Le Bonheur's Nurse-Family Partnership aims to:

- **Improve pregnancy outcomes** by helping women engage in good preventive health practices, including obtaining thorough prenatal care, improving their diets, and reducing use of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances.
- **Improve child health and development** by helping parents provide responsible and competent care, educating clients about child growth and development, and performing child development assessment screenings.
- **Improve families' economic self-sufficiency** by helping parents develop a vision for their future, plan future pregnancies, continue their education, find work, and connect with community resources.

“Our nurses walk alongside our moms as they journey through pregnancy into motherhood, empowering them, educating them and supporting them every step of the way until their baby turns 2 years old,” said Charol Hewitt, NFP’s Lead Community Home Visitation Program Educator. “I also love that NFP nurses can accompany clients to OB/GYN and pediatrician appointments. This program provides support beyond the walls of the hospital and beyond the walls of each family’s home, and it’s 100% free to every client who enrolls.”

Despite her co-worker’s endorsement and NFP’s perceived perks, Jameson initially felt unsure about signing up as she did not know if, or how, the program would benefit her and her family.

***“Our nurses walk alongside our moms as they journey through pregnancy into motherhood, empowering them, educating them and supporting them every step of the way until their baby turns two years old. This program provides support beyond the walls of the hospital and beyond the walls of each family’s home, and it’s 100% free to every client who enrolls.”***

— Charol Hewitt, Lead NFP Community Home Visitation Program Educator and NFP graduate

“I personally did not think I was in need when I joined the program, so my nurse helped me to understand that, as a first-time mom, needs look different for everybody,” said Jameson. “I didn’t know I needed emotional support, breastfeeding support, hands-on support, that one-on-one experience — and NFP is literally just support for the mom in any way, shape or form she sees fit. Yes, the nurse is there to make sure baby’s okay, but really, they are there to make sure mom is okay, transitioning okay and getting used to being a mom.”

## Expanding NFP Support Across West Tennessee

Funded through state, federal and private foundation grants, and with support from the Nurse-Family Partnership Incentive Fund, Le Bonheur’s Nurse-Family Partnership program is backed by more than 40 years of scientifically proven outcomes for mom and baby. The program has served more than 1,300 families since its establishment in 2010, and its reach has expanded exponentially in recent years. What began as one team of four nurse home visitors has grown to two teams of eight nurses serving Shelby County and a third eight-person team serving families in Fayette, Haywood, Madison and Tipton Counties. According to NFP Clinical Director Becky Carroll, MSN, RN, the newly expanded teams will have the capacity to serve 600 families concurrently when the program is fully staffed. Additionally, the

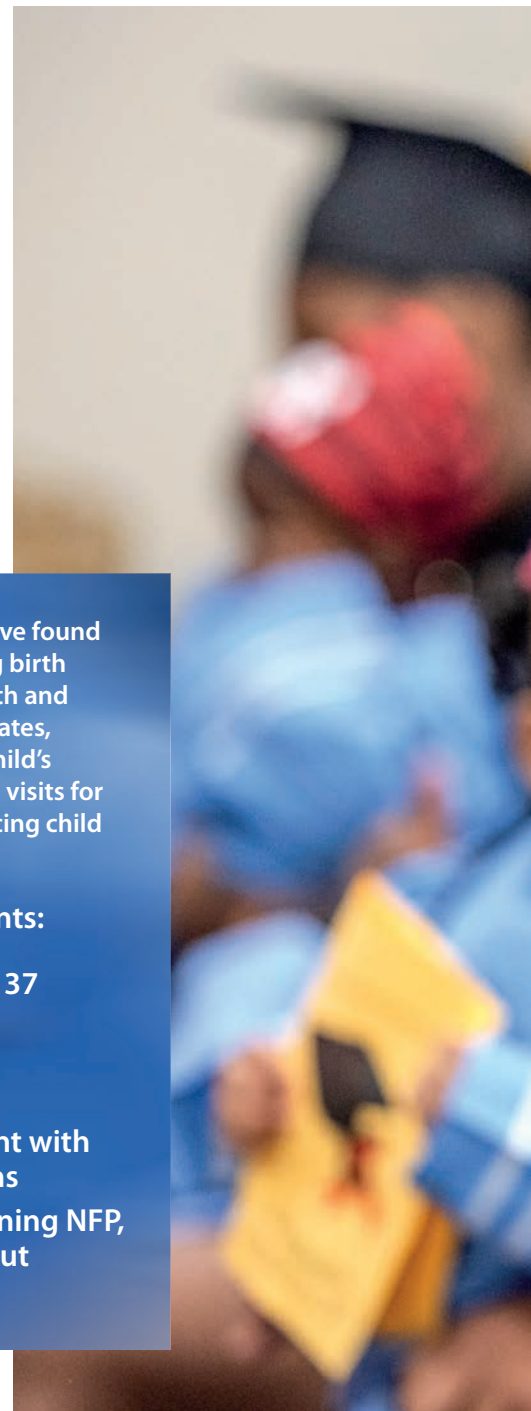
program’s expansion to surrounding counties in West Tennessee is better positioning Le Bonheur to support families in rural communities facing health disparities around maternal-fetal outcomes.

“There are so many high-risk, underserved moms out there who do not

Nurse-Family Partnership studies have found the program successful in improving birth outcomes, improving maternal health and well-being, reducing preterm birth rates, reducing welfare use, improving a child’s cognitive development, reducing ER visits for accidents and poisonings, and reducing child abuse and neglect.

### Of Le Bonheur’s NFP participants:

- 88% of babies were born at 37 weeks or later
- 76% of mothers initiated breastfeeding
- 86% of toddlers were current with immunizations at 24 months
- 97% of clients said since joining NFP, they feel more positive about parenting



know how to navigate the medical system, and having someone walk alongside them, teach them and empower them to advocate for themselves is our #1 goal," said NFP Clinical Manager Carrie Hetzler, BSN, RN. "First-time parenthood is an overwhelming transition for everyone, no matter who you are, and

some of our clients have absolutely no support system whatsoever. Everybody needs someone, and our NFP nurses come into the home to provide support, encouragement, resources and help with goal-setting through the first two years of a baby's life."

Carroll is also quick to emphasize that

while NFP nurses undergo comprehensive training and use an evidence-based curriculum designed to promote positive birth outcomes, the program is heavily personalized to meet the needs of each individual client.

"We're not walking in the homes and



*NFP mom Denise Stewart and daughter ZeMira Howard eagerly await their moment to walk across the stage and celebrate more than two years of partnership with their family's dedicated nurse. Clients enroll in NFP prior to their 29th week of pregnancy and graduate from the program following their child's second birthday.*

telling our clients what to do," said Carroll. "We're walking alongside them, finding out what's important to them and structuring our care and support accordingly. It really is a partnership."

## Changing Lives One Milestone at a Time

For Jameson, what began as a tentative step toward prenatal support became a life-changing partnership in more ways than one. Following the birth of her daughter, Gracyn, in 2023, Jameson underwent an extended hospital stay due to complications from preeclampsia. When she and her daughter returned home, Nurse Katie was right there.

"She helped me adapt to motherhood and manage my medications, as well as taking care of a newborn," said Jameson. "It made life so much easier having that extra support and help. Katie made me know I

could succeed even during those times when I felt like I was going to fail."

Today, Gracyn is an active, healthy toddler who will celebrate her second birthday in February. According to Jameson, the only downside of her daughter's 2-year milestone is their family's subsequent graduation from the Nurse-Family Partnership program — an occasion that can feel bittersweet for NFP moms and nurses alike. Even so, the bonds formed between program nurses and the parents and children they support often extend far beyond each family's graduation date.

"When your clients are walking across that stage and you remember the moment you first met that family, and had the honor of being welcomed into their home, getting to know them during their pregnancy and watching them grow as parents — it's so amazing and impactful," said Carroll, who began her career with NFP as a nurse home

visitor before growing into the roles of supervisor, clinical manager and today, clinical director. "For me, the happiest and most heartfelt days are when we have a graduation and see all these clients where we've made a difference in their lives and learned so much from one another."

## Creating a Pipeline of Program Ambassadors

While Jameson's nurse-client relationship with Nurse Katie will draw to a close this spring, these days the two have many new opportunities to cross paths. In May 2024, Jameson joined Le Bonheur's Nurse-Family Partnership team as the program's newest Community Home Visitation Program Educator, managing outreach, education, advocacy and recruitment initiatives for prospective NFP clients in the program's newly served counties of Tipton, Madison, Haywood and Fayette. Jameson's profoundly



*Destaynae Jameson, left, views her family's designated NFP nurse, Katie Montgomery, right, as a member of the family. Katie began partnering with the Jameson family during Destaynae's first pregnancy with Gracyn, center, and will continue holding regular home visits until Gracyn and Destaynae graduate Le Bonheur's Nurse-Family Partnership in spring of 2025.*

enriching experience as a program participant makes her a remarkable ambassador for potential clients who are unsure if NFP might be the right fit for them.

“One thing I tell every expecting mom is that help looks different for everybody because this program is so personalized to the individual, and it’s okay to ask for and accept that help,” said Jameson. “You won’t be looked down upon because you’re receiving help, getting support and getting advice — just like going to school. In school, we get help from our teachers, and that’s what my nurse was for me. She was my teacher.”

The Nurse-Family Partnership’s efficacy and lasting positive impact on first-time mothers has gained the program more than one new ambassador. Charol Hewitt, who serves as Jameson’s counterpart in the Lead Community Home Visitation Program Educator role, also got her start with NFP as a participant. Hewitt signed up for the program at a community baby shower when she was 24-weeks pregnant; little did she know how transformational NFP would be for her both personally and professionally. When Hewitt’s nurse encouraged her to share a testimonial with prospective participants, the experience quickly sparked an interest in championing for the program in an official capacity.

“I loved talking to people about NFP so much that after one speaking engagement, I told my friends and family members, ‘I’m going to work for them someday,’” said Hewitt, whose dream came to fruition when she assumed the program educator role in February of 2022.

Like Jameson, Hewitt was unsure how participation in Nurse-Family Partnership



Charol Hewitt, center, serves as Le Bonheur’s Lead Nurse-Family Partnership Community Home Visitation Program Educator. Mom to two active sons, Gavin and Landon, Charol graduated from NFP after Gavin’s second birthday and draws on her own experiences with the program to help engage new and prospective clients.

would ultimately help her and her family, but the benefits have been far-reaching and beyond anything she imagined. In addition to support with clinical concerns, such as gestational hypertension, and creation of a birth plan, NFP provided Hewitt with facts, tangible resources and evidence-based parenting tips that served to debunk false

***“When my first son, Gavin, was born, my nurse continued to remind me that before I was a mom, I was Charol, and that I can accomplish and succeed in so many things. Through her empowerment, I’ve discovered new talents, conquered some pretty tall mountains and been able to achieve so much more than I ever thought possible.”***

— Charol Hewitt, Lead NFP Community Home Visitation Program Educator and NFP graduate

truths and old-wives tales she had learned in other circles.

“There is a lot of misinformation circulating about motherhood that’s simply not true, and the facts I learned from my nurse were invaluable,” said Hewitt. “The readings and materials my family received from the program are resources I still use when parenting.”

Hewitt also credits NFP with helping her feel better prepared to navigate her second pregnancy, despite no longer having access to a dedicated nurse partner. Among other things, she cites NFP as the likely reason she did not experience gestational hypertension during her second pregnancy, and credits the program for helping her husband become a stronger support person during labor. Both Hewitt and Jameson, who is expecting her second child any day now, view the Nurse-Family Partnership as a “life-changing” opportunity

and take seriously their chance to connect other mothers with the umbrella of support and empowerment offered through NFP.

“When my first son, Gavin, was born, I really thought that was it — I can just be a mom, I can’t do anything else,” said Hewitt. “My nurse continued to remind me that before I was a mom, I was Charol, and that I can accomplish and succeed in so many things. Through her empowerment, I’ve discovered new talents, conquered some pretty tall mountains and been able to achieve so much more than I ever thought possible. And it’s that—the empowerment — I hope to pass along to every mom who follows after.” 



*The Memphis CHILD team works with patients and their families to provide medical, legal and educational resources, pictured (l-r): Tori Long, education advocate; Emilee Dobish, MD, Memphis CHILD medical champion; Katy Ramsey-Mason (standing inside heart), JD, director of the U of M Medical-Legal Partnership Clinic; Asia Goodman (sitting in multi-color cardigan), Strong Families social worker; Haley Greenwell (top of heart), program manager; Jo Rockett (sitting in black), intake coordinator; Tim Flack, JD, senior attorney; Whitney Lee, social worker; and Lainey Goodwill, JD, staff attorney.*

# Partnering for Success

*Memphis CHILD helps families access the resources they need*

For Tim Flack, JD, senior attorney of Memphis Children’s Health Law Directive (Memphis CHILD), working for Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital’s medical-legal partnership is near and dear to his heart. His oldest daughter, Madeline, has been a patient at Le Bonheur since 10 months of age when she was diagnosed with four congenital heart defects. Since that time, the Flack family has volunteered on the hospital’s Family Partners Council among other initiatives.

“Working at Memphis CHILD allows me to practice patient- and family-centered care more directly than I ever have, using what I was professionally trained to do,” said Flack.

“The collaboration we have with community partners allows us to directly address the legal barriers to health care for the children in our community.”

Launched in 2015, Memphis CHILD is a medical-legal partnership (MLP) that helps low-income families in Shelby County with legal matters affecting the health or well-being of Le Bonheur patients. Medical-legal partnerships place attorneys into health care settings to address legal issues impacting the health of patients. With some funding provided by Le Bonheur and the Memphis CHILD partner organizations, most of the partnership’s funding comes from grants. Any physician, nurse,

social worker, therapist or employee who works in a Le Bonheur facility can refer the patient's family to Memphis CHILD. More than 3,900 referrals have been made since the program began.

Top case areas for Memphis CHILD include Social Security Income (SSI) benefits, education concerns, housing issues, conservatorships and family law.

Each partner, including Memphis Area Legal Services (MALS), University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, Le Bonheur, University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) and West Tennessee Legal Services, plays a unique role in the collaboration to provide comprehensive legal services for kids and families. Memphis CHILD staff include attorneys, social workers, education advocates, law students and professors, a medical champion physician and medical residents.

"Partnership is crucial in the effort to address social determinants of health and overcome the legal obstacles to child health and healing," said Flack. "Without Memphis CHILD, many of our clients wouldn't have access to the resources and services we provide."

## A LEGAL LIFELINE

Memphis CHILD is dedicated to helping families navigate legal and medical systems which can seem insurmountable for many. With many clients living in poverty and surviving on incomes of less than \$10,000 annually, government funding can be a vital lifeline for families. The MLP helps families appeal denials for SSI benefits and TennCare insurance rejections of physician-ordered medications and services. Memphis CHILD social workers provide recommendations for community resources and assist qualified families with applying for food stamps (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Families First (TANF) and other government benefits.

Memphis CHILD also assists with family law matters including securing custody and guardianship for children. For families with children who lack the capacity to make their own decisions as an adult, Flack and Memphis CHILD attorneys help



*Memphis CHILD helped Michael Wooten establish paternity and gain custody of his 7-year-old daughter, Tamia. Memphis CHILD Program Manager Haley Greenwell, LMSW, helped Wooten ensure Tamia was able to enroll in school and establish an IEP to address her learning needs.*

them establish conservatorships to ensure medical needs continue to be met after the patient reaches their 18th birthday.

"Obtaining a written and legally binding conservatorship is cost prohibitive for many families," Flack said. "We're able to counsel them, free of charge, on choosing a friend or family member to be a standby conservator and help them face the reality that at some point in the future they may not be able to take care of their child, but with a standby or co-conservatorship, their child will be prepared and cared for."

## HELP WITH HEALTHY HOUSING

Memphis CHILD Program Manager Haley Greenwell, LMSW, started as the MLP's social worker in 2022 and recognizes the high volume of need in the community. In her role, she helps the program evolve to improve services and address new issues.

In 2024, Memphis CHILD received a grant from the state of Tennessee to start the "Strong Families Housing Initiative," a program intended to serve pregnant women affiliated with Le Bonheur who are experiencing housing insecurity. The Initiative promotes healthy pregnancies and birth outcomes by addressing the social determinants of health surrounding pregnancy, parenthood and housing stability.

Memphis CHILD also partners with local agencies, such as Green and Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) and Environmental Technical Services (ETS), to provide healthy homes assessments, conduct home mold and lead testing, and improve conditions for renters.

"Our purpose is to alleviate barriers to getting appropriate medical care or access to much-needed resources," Greenwell said. "The families we assist are low income and unable to afford the legal services they need, so being able to provide free assistance through Memphis CHILD makes a huge difference for the kids in our community."

## WRAPAROUND CARE

For many clients, needs span across several areas of assistance and thanks to a plethora of resources, Memphis CHILD is able to provide coordinated care.

Michael Wooten was referred to Memphis CHILD for help enrolling his daughter, Tamia, in a special education Pre-K classroom as he lacked documentation supporting paternity and custody.

A Memphis CHILD attorney from MALS worked with Wooten to establish paternity and custody of Tamia, as her mother passed away and Wooten was not listed on the birth certificate. Greenwell served as the liaison between the attorney and Wooten, even accompanying him to juvenile court offices. While the attorney was able to establish paternity and custody, Greenwell assisted Wooten in the process of obtaining a birth certificate for his daughter through Tennessee Department of Vital Records, allowing the client to be listed as the father and changing the daughter's last name to his.

Greenwell also assisted Wooten in obtaining an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and connected him with Flack to assist with issues related to Tamia's SSI benefits.

## MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP

As part of the medical-legal partnership, Le Bonheur Hospitalist and UTHSC Associate Professor Emilee Dobish, MD, spearheads the University of Tennessee Health Science Center's role in the Memphis CHILD collaboration. Dobish serves as medical champion, promoting the program with Le Bonheur's medical staff and serving as a resource for cases to interpret medical data.

"It's important for us to have a conversation about how the diagnosis impacts the child," said Dobish. "Engagement from all medical disciplines is vital to break down legal barriers for families. Prior to this MLP, the legal issues would never have been on a physician's radar."

In March, Dobish and Greenwell partnered with UTHSC Pediatric Chief Resident Ramie Glick, MD, to establish a program called "SSI Clinic" in which medical residents are paired with Le Bonheur patients to complete "Child Disability Reports," a substantial part of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) applications. Completing the Disability Report involves reading medical records, explaining diagnoses and reporting tests and procedures which can often be tough

***"Being the medical champion for Memphis CHILD has broadened my understanding of the lives of my patients and families outside of their medical condition. It has changed how I interact with families, as I have a more holistic approach to thinking through the patient and diagnosis. For our medical residents, participating in Memphis CHILD provides them with a better understanding of how to advocate for their patients, as pediatricians are often some of the strongest advocates for change."***

Emilee Dobish, MD, Memphis CHILD medical champion



Tim Flack, JD, and Emilee Dobish, MD, partner through Memphis CHILD to ensure families at Le Bonheur have access to the care and resources they need.

for families to navigate.

With the assistance of medical residents, families are able to submit more accurate applications with a stronger chance of being approved. Residents also benefit as they gain a better understanding of the barriers facing patients as they attempt to access resources as well as the implications of medical documentation outside of direct patient care.

"Being the medical champion for Memphis CHILD has broadened my understanding of the lives of my patients and families outside of their medical condition. It has changed how I interact with families, as I have a more holistic approach to thinking through the patient and diagnosis," Dobish said. "For our medical residents, participating in Memphis CHILD provides them with a better understanding of how to advocate for their patients, as pediatricians are often some of the strongest advocates for change."

While Dobish helps the next generation of doctors learn critical skills to help patients and their families, Katy Ramsey Mason, JD, director of the Medical-Legal Partnership Clinic and University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law associate professor, leads the way with educating law students.

Through the law school's portion of Memphis CHILD, law



students help Mason represent families in education matters, housing issues and conservatorships. Students simultaneously provide free legal services while receiving an education on the intersection of law and health.

As gun violence continues to plague the Memphis community, Mason identified the need for assistance in helping families. Thanks to a grant from Everytown for Gun Safety, Everytown Legal Fellow Abigail Weiss joined Mason's team in March 2024. Weiss works on typical medical-legal partnership cases, but focuses on families who have experienced gun violence, either directly or in their communities. She also handles a variety of civil legal issues intersecting with gun violence, including housing, education and benefits cases.

### ADVOCACY IN THE CLASSROOM

Education assistance is a top reason patient families seek help, with more than 40% of 2024's referrals to Memphis CHILD related to education.

"Our education practice has expanded considerably since I started at Memphis CHILD in 2018 because there is such a huge demand for legal assistance related to children receiving the special education services they're entitled to," Mason said. "Through Le Bonheur's addition of social workers and advocates focused on education, we have been able to accomplish more. They resolve the issues that don't require a lawyer, but elevate the issues that do need a lawyer's intervention when necessary."

A former special education teacher, Memphis Child Education Advocate Tori Long informs clients of their educational rights, provides resources and attends meetings along with the family. Families referred to Memphis CHILD for education issues are seeking assistance as they know their child needs support, but they often do not know, or are unsuccessful in securing what their child needs.

Long helps families advocate for IEP evaluations for children with disabilities in the public school setting to determine appropriate access to special education services. While an IEP creates a plan for specialized learning, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities in schools that receive federal

funding. 504 Plans provide accommodation for students with disabilities so they may learn in a typical classroom.

"Clients are most often referred either because they are struggling to get an IEP or 504 Plan in place for their child, or their child has an IEP or 504 Plan, but it is not being implemented with fidelity. Lack of fidelity may look like a student not receiving the accommodations, services or supports they are legally entitled to receive," Long said. "I like to approach my work with patients' schools with a collaborative and solution-based mindset. At the end of the day, my clients just want to know that their child is safe and supported at school."

Long occasionally has to utilize the state's dispute resolution process, but most school staff she works with are willing to learn, listen and improve.

Last year, Leslye Stanback came to Memphis CHILD seeking assistance for her son, Markel. She wanted to enroll Markel in a local postsecondary vocational school that specializes in preparing students who have graduated with

a special education diploma for life after high school through teaching independent living skills, going on community outings, and preparing students for employment.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), eligible students may receive special education services until age 22, and postsecondary transition planning is a required component of every IEP. Yet these services were not being provided to Markel.

After many meetings and phone calls, Long was able to help Markel enroll at the specialized postsecondary vocational school.

"When I heard this news, I held back tears of relief that Markel would

finally receive the quality education he deserves," Stanback said. "I am so grateful for Memphis CHILD's help because without it I probably would have given up."

Many families who come to Memphis CHILD for assistance echo this sentiment as they have been fiercely advocating for their children for many years. Thanks to compassionate Memphis CHILD staff, children and their families are getting access to the resources and wraparound services they need to thrive. ❤️



*Leslye Stanback and her son, Markel, received help from Memphis CHILD and Education Advocate Tori Long. More than 40% of cases referred to Memphis CHILD are for an educational issue.*

# EMPOWERED TO ACT

## *Le Bonheur fights for families affected by violence, traumatic injury*

### **An Empowered Community Helps Neighbors**

In the aftermath of the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary mass shooting, physicians around the country recognized an opportunity that could have potentially saved lives amid the tragedy — training non-medical members of the community to help someone who is bleeding profusely.

This realization sparked an idea that turned into “Stop the Bleed,” a national program created by the American College of Surgeons. This program empowers ordinary citizens with no medical background by teaching them how to administer support during a bleeding emergency until emergency medical services (EMS) can arrive.

Le Bonheur’s Trauma team is led by Pediatric Surgeon Regan Williams, MD, and includes Anissa Cooper, MSN, RN, Trauma program director; Cheyenne Plesofsky, MPH, community violence advocacy

fellow; and John Wright, EMS outreach coordinator.

This team brings Stop the Bleed to Memphis residents and teaches the community how to help anyone with severe bleeding — from gunshot and knife wounds to ATV or automobile accidents.

“We really do need to empower public citizens to provide help when bleeding occurs,” said Williams. “It will help save lives and at least gives the patient more time to get to the hospital.”

Feedback from those who have gone through the training has been positive and encouraging. According to Plesofsky, a woman trained through Le Bonheur’s Stop the Bleed program was able to save a life using the tools she learned. Completing training with these professionals allows someone with no medical background to act with confidence when facing a high-stress situation with heavy blood loss.

“For any type of injury with profuse bleeding, this training was put together to teach laypeople life-changing techniques,” says Cooper.



*Medical Director of Trauma Services Regan Williams, MD, leads Stop the Bleed training. This program trains members of the community on how to help in a bleeding emergency.*

When training is properly applied, it can decrease the risk of serious blood loss, meaning the patient often arrives at the hospital with the possibility of a better outcome.

“Stop the Bleed is a great tool for people to feel empowered to do something,” said Plesofsky. “That sense of empowerment grows within a community, and the positivity is contagious. When people feel confident in their training, they are eager to jump into action to help a neighbor.”

## Trauma Team’s Vast Outreach

In 2023, Le Bonheur’s Trauma team led 269 participants through Stop the Bleed training.

To reach as many people as possible, the trauma team also partners with community organizations that address at-risk youth in areas of high violence through the Shelby County Ceasefire Program. This program was created by the U.S. Attorney General’s Office in collaboration with county and state-level law enforcement as an alternative to juvenile detention. The program gives youth with first-time gun charges an opportunity to attend classes with instructors from groups like the Le Bonheur Trauma Team in hopes of creating a deeper understanding of the long-term negative impacts of guns and violence.

The trauma team also trains staff members of the BLOC Squad, an intervention program providing mentoring to at-risk youth. Members of the BLOC Squad are embedded within neighborhoods with the goal of interrupting the cycle of violence.

Staff from the trauma team offer training at high schools, health fairs, apartment buildings and community events to greater spread their message of making good choices and helping those in need.

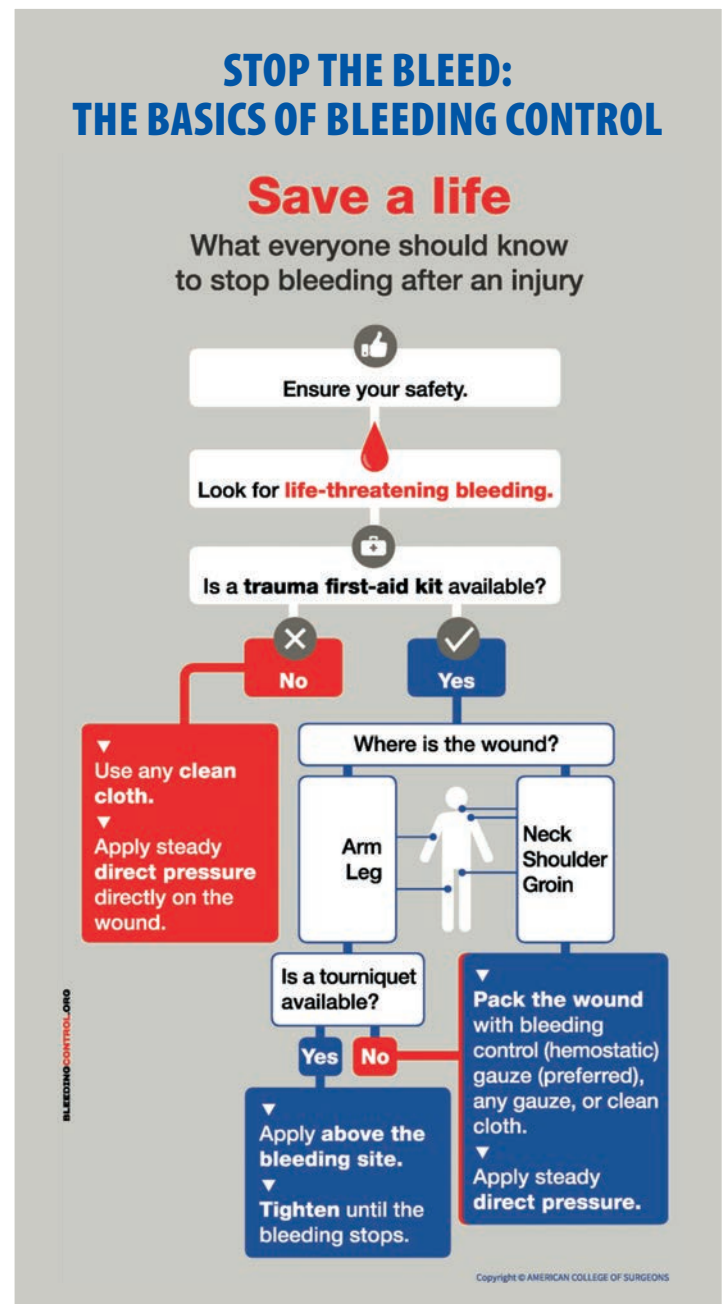
## Response to Trauma

According to the Tennessee Department of Health, firearm deaths are the leading external cause of death among Tennessee children. Although the physical trauma is top of mind in these situations, Le Bonheur is also supporting children’s mental health.

To better serve children who are victims of violence, Le Bonheur developed SHIFT: Supporting and Healing Individuals From Trauma. This program supports patients and families impacted by violence with a wide range of services.


“SHIFT provides wraparound services not just to the injured child, but to the entire family,” said Lydia Walker, LMSW, SHIFT program manager. “Every child is a part of an ecosystem of a broader family, community and social factors that impact their health, so we want to address as many of those layers as we can.”

When a child endures physical, violent trauma, the SHIFT team meets with the patient and family to offer services tailored to their



specific needs; and if support is accepted, mental health counseling is prioritized.

As of September 2024, 199 families have enrolled in SHIFT since its inception in 2022. Along with counseling, families are provided with any type of care that may prove beneficial throughout that child’s journey to healing. SHIFT staff have provided transportation, coordinated homebound educational services, collaborated with schools when children are ready to return to the classroom and so much more.

“Our goal is to help children recover both physically and emotionally,” said Trauma Director Williams. “By prioritizing mental health counseling, we are equipping children and families with the tools they need to thrive when they leave the hospital.” 

# PLAYING IT SAFE

## Safe Kids Mid-South educates, empowers communities to prevent childhood injuries

No two days on the job are alike for Jennifer Taylor, manager of Injury Prevention and Le Bonheur-led Safe Kids Mid-South — the hospital’s proactive approach to childhood injury prevention.

Any given workday might find her delivering a community presentation on proper gun storage, conducting an infant car seat safety check, writing a Practical Parenting blog post on fireworks safety, leading an orientation for hospital social workers or bringing Clifford the Big Red Dog to a local grade school for a demonstration on pedestrian safety. A seasoned outreach educator, teacher and former critical care child life specialist who recently celebrated 19 years with Le Bonheur, Taylor assumed leadership of Safe Kids Mid-South in 2021 and views each day as a new opportunity to make homes, schools and streets a safer place for children.

“Most people are surprised to learn that preventable injuries are the No. 1 killer of kids in the U.S.,” said Taylor, who works closely with community partners across the Mid-South to raise awareness, provide education programs

and initiate public policy changes to reduce childhood injuries. “Every year, nearly 10,000 children come to Le Bonheur’s Emergency Department with an injury that could have been prevented.

Safe Kids Mid-South is our solution to address risk and determine prevention strategies, teaching kids and families about the leading causes of preventable injuries at home, on the road and during play.”

While Safe Kids focuses its prevention efforts on the four overarching areas of 1) car and road safety, 2) home safety, 3) sports and play safety and 4) emergency preparedness, the program’s offerings manifest in countless ways. Car and road safety education, for instance, could take the form of a Safe Kids-sponsored bicycle helmet fitting station, crossing guard appreciation event, replacement car seat following a motor vehicle accident or safe driving demonstration at an area high school, just to name a few. By example,

Taylor teamed up with Memphis Police Department and Memphis East T-STEM Academy in spring 2024 to lead a presentation on the perils of distracted and impaired driving for students gearing up for prom and graduation.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of unintentional injury among children ages 1 to 19. When properly installed and used, child safety seats can reduce the risk of injury in a motor vehicle crash. On average, **50% of child safety seats are installed incorrectly**, which is why Safe Kids Mid-South frequently hosts Car Seat Check events to ensure proper installation.



From left to right, Jennifer Taylor, Manager of Injury Prevention and Safe Kids Mid-South at Le Bonheur, Donna Walker, Academic Director of The Freshman Academy at Memphis East, and Officer Katie Ward with Memphis Police Department, install a crashed car on the front lawn of Memphis East and prepare to speak to students about the risks of distracted and impaired driving.



Representatives from Safe Kids Mid-South, Healthy Families, Nurse-Family Partnership and other Le Bonheur Community Outreach programs join forces to host baby safety showers, providing education, resources and training to new and expectant parents.

“Every year, nearly 10,000 children come to Le Bonheur’s Emergency Department with an injury that could have been prevented. Safe Kids Mid-South is our solution to address risk and determine prevention strategies, teaching kids and families about the leading causes of preventable injuries at home, on the road and during play.”

Jennifer Taylor, Le Bonheur Manager of Injury Prevention and Safe Kids Mid-South



Le Bonheur Manager of Injury Prevention and Safe Kids Mid-South Jennifer Taylor shares information on injury prevention, child safety, community resources and training events with school-based nurses attending Le Bonheur’s annual back-to-school School Nurse Conference.

Memphis East educators deemed the presentation so impactful that Safe Kids was asked to return in the fall for a demonstration on seatbelt safety. “Memphis East T-STEM Academy has a long-time outstanding partnership with Le Bonheur



Hundreds of children took part in the Mid-South’s “World’s Largest Swim Lesson” on June 20, joining an estimated 35,000 participants across 600 locations for a community swim lesson emphasizing the importance of learning to swim to prevent drowning. The Memphis-based event was made possible by Splash Mid-South, a community-wide initiative that has provided access to water safety instruction, swim lessons, swim teams and aquatics careers to thousands of at-risk youth.

Children’s Hospital and Safe Kids Mid-South, and we are beyond grateful to Jennifer Taylor for all the essential work she has done to educate students, their families and our community in wellness,” said Donna Walker, Academic Director of The Freshman Academy at Memphis East. “We serve as proud partners in the worthwhile effort to decrease unintentional injuries through initiatives around distracted driving, speeding, bicycle safety, pedestrian safety and other critical topics.” ❤️



Donor funding is critical to the success of Le Bonheur’s community programs. Help support children and their families by scanning the QR code to give today.

# A Heart for Reading

## *Le Bonheur promotes a culture of literacy with books*

Exploring outer space. Journeying on a boat to a faraway island. Learning new facts about your favorite animal. Books have the unique ability to transform, to take readers on new adventures, to entertain and to teach new things.

Research has shown promoting a culture of early literacy has a powerful effect on families and children that improves their home environment, their language skills and parent-child relationships during the crucial time of early brain development.

Thanks to a multi-disciplinary approach across the hospital, Le Bonheur Children's serves as a national leader in literacy, distributing more than 10,000 free books annually to patients and families.

### **Reach Out and Read**

One channel for free book distribution is Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and The University of Tennessee Health Science Center's participation in a local Reach Out

*Clinical Director of UT Le Bonheur Pediatric Specialists (ULPS) General Pediatrics and Division Chief of Outpatient Pediatrics Jason Yaun, MD, reads to his patient, Dakari Haymore, at a Le Bonheur clinic visit.*



and Read program, which gives young children a foundation for success by incorporating books into pediatric care settings and encouraging families to read aloud together. Reach Out and Read's evidence-based program builds on the unique relationship between parents and medical providers to develop critical early reading skills in children, beginning in infancy.



*Le Bonheur Volunteer Chloe Coughlan pushes the Roll Out and Read book cart through the hospital and distributes free books to patients.*

When Clinical Director of UT Le Bonheur Pediatric Specialists (ULPS) General Pediatrics and Division Chief of Outpatient Pediatrics Jason Yaun, MD, was presented with the opportunity more than 10 years ago to marry his two passions of reading and medicine, he jumped at the chance. In January 2014, Yaun was serving as University of Tennessee Health Science Center chief resident and caring for patients at Le Bonheur when he established the Reach Out and Read program in Le Bonheur's general pediatrics clinic.

"Literacy was so important in my childhood and in my journey to becoming a physician," Yaun said. "I saw my parents reading daily, and I was a very voracious reader as a kid — I'd get in trouble for reading at night when I should be sleeping. When I was a resident, I learned more about the scientific research behind reading and its benefits. With the cost of health care, giving a kid a book is a low-cost endeavor that can have a huge impact on children and their overall health and well-being."

As part of the Reach Out and Read program, doctors gift free books to children at well-child visits from birth to age 5, with more than 3,500 books distributed annually through the program at Le Bonheur. According to Yaun, the program capitalizes on a few important parts of pediatrics: language, academics and thinking holistically about

***"Literacy was so important in my childhood and in my journey to becoming a physician. I saw my parents reading daily and I was a very voracious reader as a kid — I'd get in trouble for reading at night when I should be sleeping. When I was a resident, I learned more about the scientific research behind reading and its benefits. With the cost of health care, giving a kid a book is a low-cost endeavor that can have a huge impact on children."***

Jason Yaun, MD, Clinical Director of ULPS General Pediatrics and Division Chief of Outpatient Pediatrics

children and families.

"Data shows more books in the home and increased reading time lead to improvements in vocabulary and readiness for kindergarten," Yaun said. "There are also benefits from a social and emotional standpoint as books are a fun shared activity with a caregiver."

Many of the children who come to Le Bonheur do not have access to books of their own and receiving a free book is exciting and fun.

Distributing books in clinic is not just beneficial for patients and their families, but also provides emotional and social benefits for physicians.

“As doctors, we love being able to distribute books and have a fun moment in the patient visit,” Yaun said. “Studies show that doing so helps prevent physician burnout and gives us a tool to engage with the patient. When doctors encourage literacy, children often read more as we are seen as a trusted source.”

### Books as a Care Tool

Books are also an important tool utilized by Child Life specialists across the hospital to help support a patient’s development, navigate a diagnosis or normalize the hospital environment.

“Child Life specialists have access to books that are focused on different medical diagnoses, procedures and situations that children and families are



*During his doctor’s appointment at Le Bonheur, Dakari Haymore received a free book as part of Le Bonheur’s Reach Out and Read program.*

facing,” said Le Bonheur Director of Child Life Jessica Liles. “Many children learn through stories, so having access to developmentally appropriate resources that explain medical diagnoses or procedures is important. We also have books that talk about what children might be processing emotionally, in relation to the medical care of themselves or someone they love.”

### Volunteers Deliver Books

In addition to receiving a free book at a Le Bonheur clinic visit, patients and families can also access books from the volunteer-led book cart called “Roll Out and Read.” Several times per week, volunteers lovingly stock the cart

Candace Hammond was seeking a way to honor the memory of her daughter, Lynnleigh Claire Hammond, who was a patient at Le Bonheur, while helping other children and their families who spend time at the hospital.

As an elementary school teacher for 17 years, Hammond understands the value of literacy and had started planning a special family library for Lynnleigh before she was born.

“There is a magic in books and in the ability to read and write. Literacy helps people, not just children, grow in so many ways,” Hammond said. “Just because a child is a patient at Le Bonheur, it doesn’t mean small things — like reading — can’t be done to bring a sense of normalcy to a family’s life.”

With that in mind, Candace and her husband, Austin, found the perfect way to honor Lynnleigh and made a generous gift to Le Bonheur’s Literacy Fund.

“We feel that by helping with Le Bonheur’s literacy program, we are allowing patients and their families to escape the walls of the hospital and to have adventures when physically they might not be able to do so.”



*Lynnleigh Claire Hammond was a heart patient at Le Bonheur. Her parents, Candace and Austin, have honored her memory by contributing to Le Bonheur’s Literacy Fund.*

**Help patients and their families thrive by donating to Le Bonheur’s Literacy Fund today!**





with brand-new books — with reading levels spanning from infant to 12th grade — and wheel the cart to rooms throughout the hospital.

From January to September 2024, more than 2,700 free books were distributed to kids at Le Bonheur via the book cart.


“Patients are so excited to select a free book from our book cart,” Le Bonheur Volunteer Coordinator Hannah Rafieetary said. “Reading can help soothe our infant and toddler patients by providing a calm voice and positive stimulation; for older patients, reading can help transport them to different worlds and provide a welcome distraction from what they are experiencing, whether it be a new diagnosis, being in a scary, unfamiliar environment, or waiting for an appointment.”

Volunteers not only read to patients and distribute books, but also assist families in signing up for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, which sends kids a free book to their home each month from birth to age five.

As the culture of literacy has grown at Le Bonheur, so have book distribution opportunities. Children at regional clinics in Jackson, Tenn., and Tupelo, Miss., also receive books at their visits. Free books are available to patients and their families in the Emergency Department waiting room in a vending machine provided by Literacy Mid-South.

New last year, Family Resource Center coordinator Erin Lasley hosts a story time with a new book read each week. The

session incorporates music therapy, and patients or siblings who attend the story time are able to keep a book by the same author.

Book giveaways also take place at Le Bonheur around the holidays, Halloween and to celebrate Literacy Day. Le Bonheur’s Literacy Committee hopes to find even more opportunities to distribute books in the future and continue to cultivate a love of reading across the hospital. 



*Le Bonheur Volunteer Chloe Coughlan helps Zhamiya Martin, a patient, select a book from the Roll Out and Read book cart.*

# Finding Answers and Comfort



FedExFamilyHouse

## *Basketball player dreams of returning to the court after treatment*

**Thanks to her passion for basketball, 10-year-old Hailey Henry knows a thing or two about facing challenges and working through adversity. But when doctors discovered a brain tumor in June of 2024, the obstacles she faced were no longer on the court.**

After playing a basketball game against tough opponents who were bigger and older than her, Hailey complained of a headache. Her mother, Miranda, noticed a knot forming, but assumed that like most childhood bumps and bruises, it would go away soon enough.

When the headache persisted after a few days, Miranda took her daughter to see their pediatrician, who referred them to a pediatric neurologist near their home in East Tennessee. Two MRIs later, the family received the news no family is ever prepared to hear: Hailey had a brain tumor.

At that point, with only basic information, Miranda sprang into action, talking to friends and researching options for Hailey. It didn't take long before she was referred to Le Bonheur and Neuroscience Institute Co-Director Paul Klimo, MD.

"Hailey absolutely loves him," Miranda said of Klimo. "We think the world of him, and I'd drive a hundred hours to make sure he was treating Hailey."

While they don't have to drive a hundred hours to Le Bonheur, Miranda and Hailey do drive about 450 miles for each trip, which

means they need lodging while in Memphis. FedExFamilyHouse offers them comfort while in town for Hailey's appointments, as well as relieving the financial and logistical burden that comes along with traveling.

FedExFamilyHouse is a home-away-from-home for patients and their families when they travel from out of town for appointments and procedures at Le Bonheur. The facility has 75 rooms and suites for families to comfortably stay near the hospital, free of charge.

After additional testing and appointments, doctors initially suspected Hailey had a papilloma choroid plexus tumor, a benign tumor that would require surgery. However, during that surgery Dr. Klimo immediately realized that was not what they were dealing with. As hard as it was to fathom, it would take even more tests and research to determine exactly what Hailey was battling.

Eventually doctors were confident in the diagnosis — Hailey had a subependymal giant cell astrocytoma (SEGA), a rare, genetic, benign brain tumor that occurs in the fluid-filled spaces of the brain. While treatable, this type of tumor is not curable, and it can potentially come back and affect different organs in her body.

While this has been a wild ride, the family is thankful for every blessing — beginning with that bump on her head after the ballgame. That tough game and subsequent headache led to her diagnosis, saving Hailey's life.

Time after time, Hailey proves to be a trooper, and the family is thankful for the



*Ten-year-old Hailey Henry receives care at Le Bonheur's Neuroscience Institute. She and her mom, Miranda, stay at FedExFamilyHouse when they travel to Memphis from their East Tennessee home for care.*



*Hailey at FedExFamilyHouse, where her mom stayed nearby after Hailey's surgery at Le Bonheur Children's.*



*Hailey was all smiles to find her Le Bonheur hospital room decorated for her 10th birthday.*

support from Le Bonheur every step of the way. Miranda will never forget Hailey's face when she returned to her hospital room one day the week after surgery to find basketball decorations, balloons and gifts to celebrate her birthday. No little girl wants to spend her 10th birthday in the hospital, but Le Bonheur nurses made sure it was a special day filled with smiles and happy memories.

Post-surgery, Hailey is under the care of five doctors, and she'll have regular scans to catch any new tumors as quickly as possible. While they don't yet know how often scans will be required, Miranda and Hailey do know these trips to Le Bonheur will be comfortable and home-like thanks to FedExFamilyHouse.

"It was amazing to be so close and shuttled back and forth the week of Hailey's surgery," said Miranda. "The staff at FedExFamilyHouse are amazing and sweet, and it was so nice to have a comfortable place to stay."

Hailey dreams of returning to the court, but for now, her priority is healing and following the instructions of her doctors. The family doesn't know what the future holds for Hailey, but they do know everyone at Le Bonheur and FedExFamilyHouse will be in their corner.



*Hailey leaving Le Bonheur post-surgery in August 2024.*

# BREATHING EASY

*Risk-based approach changes health care use, outcomes for children with high-risk asthma*

**L**e Bonheur's risk-based innovation program Changing High-Risk Asthma in Memphis through Partnership (CHAMP) significantly decreased health care use related to asthma by targeting barriers to asthma care, according to research published in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*. After one year of enrollment in the program, results analyzing 945 children included a 48% reduction in Emergency

Department (ED) visits, 68% reduction in inpatient and observation visits, 42% reduction in urgent care visits and 53% reduction in asthma exacerbations.

Asthma exacerbations per patient significantly decreased from 2.97 to 1.4.

"Children in Shelby County, which includes the Memphis metro area, have disproportionately high asthma-related health care resource use compared with other regions in Tennessee," said Christie

Michael, MD, Le Bonheur allergist/immunologist and medical director for the CHAMP program. "Our results show that taking down the walls of the clinic and going to where kids live, play and go to school has been a success."

The study analyzed data for children who had completed one full year of the program between January 2013 and Dec. 31, 2022. Of 1,348 children enrolled, 945 completed a full year of the program. The demographics of the participants were 63% male and 90% Black with a mean age of 6.8 years.

The CHAMP program was developed with a goal of improving asthma care and reducing risk of exacerbation for patients with high-risk asthma, who have significantly increased morbidity and mortality and, consequently, higher use and cost of health care. High-risk asthma can be defined in a few ways, including asthma that causes higher health care use, is poorly controlled despite appropriate medical management or is controlled but requires the maximum medications available. The areas around Le Bonheur have the highest rate of ED visits and hospitalizations for asthma in the state, which is twice as high for kids with Medicaid compared to those with private insurance.

CHAMP seeks to change the standard for caring for these kids by addressing key factors that lead to high health care use and exacerbation of asthma. A dedicated medical care team works to provide the best outcomes for these children by working outside of the traditional paradigms of health care and working with kids and families inside their homes, at their schools and at all hours of day and night.





A crucial part of the CHAMP program is home visits by community health educators (CHEs). CHEs like Tammy Lewis (above left) meet with patients in their home to provide education and support for children with high-risk asthma and their families.

## Seeds of Change

As a physician caring for this population of patients with high-risk asthma, Michael and her team spent years thinking: “Doesn’t anyone know that we need a more complete picture of a patient in order to best care for them?”

“These high-risk asthma patients would come to see us in clinic, and it was evident that we care about them, but once they left, we might as well be on Mars,” said Michael. “We were looking at people in snapshots rather than taking into account all risk factors they faced.”

The CHAMP program evolved over time, getting a jumpstart from a Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) grant in 2012. Patients with high-risk asthma are eligible for the program if they are residents of Shelby County, aged 2-18 years and enrolled in Medicaid or TennCare. For the program, high-risk asthma means the patient has had one of the following: three or more asthma-related ED or urgent care

visits in the previous year; two or more asthma-related hospitalizations in the previous year; and/or any admission to the intensive care unit (ICU).

**“Our results show that taking down the walls of the clinic and going to where kids live, play and go to school has been a success.”**

Christie Michael, MD  
Pediatric allergist/immunologist and  
medical director of the CHAMP program

Each day, CHAMP receives a report through the electronic medical record (EMR) of all pediatric patients admitted to Le Bonheur Children’s affiliated Methodist Healthcare system or urgent care facility due to a breathing problem. This way, patients and families can be reached and engaged in the program quickly and successfully.

## Keys to Success

Key issues for this population that CHAMP needed to address in order to change outcomes were determined by literature review, expert opinion and the consensus of team members with extensive experience working with this population. These areas included access to care, fragmented care, insufficient asthma education and social needs/social determinants of health.

Children with high-risk asthma can have multiple issues accessing care, from keeping consistent appointments with primary care providers and specialists to transportation for appointments and medication refills. The ED can become the default when options for acute outpatient or after-hours help are limited.

One of the greatest keys to success has been the implementation of a 24/7 CHAMP call line, which caregivers can call for guidance on care at home and ask if escalation to urgent care or ED is needed. Results showed that from November



*The dedicated CHAMP Clinic provides a one-stop shop for all of a patient's needs to avoid multiple specialist visits. Above, Pediatric Allergy/Immunology Nurse Practitioner Regina Perry, MSN, APRN-BC, examines a patient in CHAMP Clinic.*

2013 to December 2022, 415 unique participants made 1,053 calls with 58% of calls coming after hours. Immediate asthma-related breathing issues made up 67% of calls, and 52% of calls led to resolution without a visit to a medical facility.

Coordination of care among all providers is vital for improved outcomes and to eliminate confusion for caregivers. With CHAMP, care takes place through a dedicated medical team, which leads and ensures coordination. In addition

to specialist visits care includes home visits from community health educators (CHEs) as well as a respiratory therapist who communicates a child's asthma action plan with school nurses and PCPs. CHAMP also created the innovative asthma repository, so that CHAMP providers can download claims data for their patients from TennCare. This allows providers to see all medical encounters and whether prescriptions are filled.

"The asthma data repository allows care coordination between medical and community teams for a child," said Michael. "With this information we have access to a more complete picture of a given patient's asthma care and outcomes, and the CHEs can contact caregivers to help resolve any prescription refill issues."

This dedicated care team also works together to emphasize proper asthma education so that caregivers are familiar with exacerbation triggers and a child's asthma symptoms. In addition to the asthma action plan created in clinic and shared with schools, CHEs reinforce asthma education and medication use during home visits by building relationships with each family. Through CHAMP, families can also be connected with Le Bonheur's community services and partners who can provide medical-legal services or help with addressing environmental triggers.

"CHEs have relationships with

families and can be an extra set of eyes to help us know about any needs — utility bill payments, food shortages or the need for asthma education reinforcement," said Michael.


## Future Sustainability

The CHAMP program represents an innovative way to care for children with chronic disease that not only improves their outcomes but could also lower the cost of health care for each child. After a third-party evaluation of the CHAMP program following the original three-year grant period with the CMS, health care costs were reduced by \$545 per child per quarter with a total reduction of \$2,180 per year.

Financial stability continues to be a challenge for the program, which Michael says they are seeking to address in new and innovative ways.

"Our key to sustainability lies in both optimizing the number of patients we can serve and determining sustainable funding. We are actively working to establish relationships with insurance companies to show the positive outcomes and lowered costs of our program," said Michael.

For the future, Michael hopes that CHAMP could have the opportunity to expand to patients with private insurance or go out into the region to smaller counties outside of the Memphis area. Michael believes that the CHAMP model could even be used to address other chronic childhood illnesses, such as diabetes.

"The idea is to find the people who really need the program and scale our program to achieve desired outcomes for the largest possible number of patients and families," said Michael. 

## Changing High-Risk Asthma in Memphis through Partnership (CHAMP) results

After one year of enrollment, analysis of 945 children showed:

- **48%** reduction in Emergency Department visits
- **68%** reduction in inpatient and observation visits
- **42%** reduction in urgent care visits
- **53%** reduction in asthma exacerbations



Donor funding is critical to the success of Le Bonheur's community programs. Help support children and their families by scanning the QR code to give today.

# MEETING CHILDREN WHERE THEY ARE

## Le Bonheur's school-based health programs promote student wellness, independence



**One of the many ways Le Bonheur Children's is improving health outcomes, addressing disparities and promoting healthier lifestyles for students across West Tennessee is by meeting these kids where they so often are: at school.**

Le Bonheur's school-based health services — including its robust school nursing and school-based therapy programs — focus on well-being for a whole community and provide essential support for children navigating a wide range of acute health concerns and chronic conditions. Grounded in a “whole child” wellness model that grants nurses and therapists greater insights into each student's respective needs, these programs address components ranging from physical health and emotional well-being to family engagement, nutrition, physical environment and social determinants of health.

### **Expert Nursing for School Communities**

Cindy Hogg, BSN, RN, Director of Health Services at Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach (MLCO), has witnessed firsthand how evidence-based nursing care in the school setting improves children's health and, by extension, their ability to thrive in the classroom. A career nurse for 39 years and counting, Hogg understands the unique challenges children face today.

“The majority of kids in school are healthy — but are they really coming to school ready to learn, with all of their physical, social and emotional needs met?” said Hogg. For many students, especially those growing up in poverty or underserved communities, the answer is no. Beyond physical health concerns, students may struggle with emotional and social issues that make it difficult to focus on education. Le Bonheur's school nursing program is designed to address these barriers by providing health services directly within the learning environment.

Staffed by 25 Le Bonheur nurses, the hospital's school nursing program has served

Tipton County Schools for 24 years, providing more than 40,000 care encounters annually to the district's 10,000 students. Le Bonheur's school nurses also serve approximately 4,000 students in Memphis through two charter school districts and one faith-based school.

“On more than a few occasions, parents have praised the decision to contract with Le Bonheur for the provision of a nurse in each of our schools,” said Dr. John Combs, Superintendent of Tipton County Schools. “Our school nurses offer more than just aid to our kids; they are instrumental in providing a sense of well-being to the entire student body.”

From administering medications and providing first aid to helping students manage chronic conditions such as asthma, allergies, diabetes, spina bifida and seizure disorders, these nurses help students stay well and in class, allowing educators to focus on teaching by offering dedicated support when health problems arise. This work extends beyond the schools themselves; nurses also engage and educate families, helping parents better manage their children's health at home and connecting them with specialized services as needs arise.

“Some people may not realize that we take care of acutely ill, medically fragile children in the school environment,” said Hogg. “The school nursing landscape has changed so much in the past 25 years; we have kids coming to school who may be on chemo, or require a catheterization or G-tube feeding. Our job is to ensure our nurses have the proper training and resources to provide the necessary interventions in the school setting.”

Recognizing the need for ongoing education and support for school-based nurses, especially those practicing in underserved communities, Le Bonheur recently hosted a back-to-school conference attended by more than 100 school nurses from across West Tennessee. Sponsored by the Meri Armour Fund — an endowment founded to secure Le Bonheur's future, train the next generation of caregivers and honor the legacy of the hospital's 8th president and

*Le Bonheur school nurses like Patricia McGraw care for approximately 14,000 students each year through a partnership with Tipton County Schools and select Memphis schools. In Tipton County alone, Le Bonheur nurses provide more than 40,000 care encounters annually.*

CEO — the conference addressed potential gaps in training, covering topics ranging from vaping to asthma management and cardiac health in student athletes. The event also featured practical, hands-on skills sessions on managing tracheostomies, feeding tubes, and other complex medical devices common in schools today.

“We can’t tell a child with a complex need they can’t come to school because there’s no nursing care,” said Hogg. “Schools and nurses seeking guidance were coming to us, asking, ‘Where do we go for help?’ The conference was Le Bonheur’s response — a way to ensure that no student is left behind due to a lack of health resources in their school.”



Earlier this year, Le Bonheur hosted a back-to-school conference for school nurses across West Tennessee, providing education on topics such as vaping, asthma, cardiac health for student athletes and management of complex medical devices commonly seen in schools today.

For Hogg, the most rewarding part of this work lies in the success stories she’s witnessed over the years — from the new hires who fall in love with nursing to the children with chronic conditions who learn to live independently.

“Seeing a child who has experienced health struggles grow and take control of their illness, learning to live with it, manage it and thrive despite the obstacles, is a very powerful and rewarding experience,” said Hogg.

### Empowering Students with School-Based Therapy

Beyond school-based nursing, Le Bonheur has been delivering school-based therapy (SBT) services to students across Memphis and rural West Tennessee for over a decade. This program, which annually serves 600-700 kids, embeds therapeutic interventions directly into the school setting, allowing children to receive critical developmental support in environments where they spend much of their time. Services include physical therapy (e.g., gross motor control and coordination for safely navigating stairs, playground equipment and the classroom setting), occupational therapy (e.g., fine

motor control and coordination for handwriting, cutting and using hand tools, as well as sensory and behavioral regulation) and speech-language pathology (e.g., support with articulation, verbal expression, listening comprehension and alternative communication device training).

At its core, school-based therapy is about more than meeting physical or developmental goals — it’s about inclusion and empowerment.

“Take the first grader who needs to make a paper pumpkin today — not tomorrow when her arms or hands are stronger,” said Jackie Bryson, MLCO Rehab Services Supervisor for Occupational and Physical Therapy. “Our therapists are there to help that student shore up whatever skills she needs to complete her paper pumpkin, so she can feel the same sense of pride as her classmates.”

According to Bryson, who has worked in school-based therapy for more than 25 years, the program’s primary focus is ensuring that all children, regardless of their abilities, have the opportunity to participate fully in their learning environments. She recounted a particularly moving experience when a child with an orthopedic impairment was able to walk up the stairs independently at her kindergarten graduation, thanks to the coordinated efforts of her therapy team. In another case, a child with limited verbal skills was able to use their communication device to participate in their school’s holiday program. These triumphs of inclusion and independence speak to the profound impact school-based therapy has on children’s lives.

The impact, too, extends far beyond each individual child served.

“I think people would be surprised by the far-reaching impact working with one student can have,” said Laura Beth Knight, MLCO Rehab Services

Supervisor for Speech-Language Pathology. “You’re not just working with that student — you’re also working with their teachers, and other kids benefit as well, because our therapists spend time in the classroom and share lessons and adaptations with the class as a whole.”

**“Seeing a child who has experienced health struggles grow and take control of their illness, learning to live with it, manage it and thrive despite the obstacles, is a very powerful and rewarding experience.”**

Cindy Hogg, BSN, RN, Director of Health Services, Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach

What sets Le Bonheur’s school-based therapy program apart is its holistic, evidence-based approach. Therapists don’t just treat a child’s immediate physical, occupational or speech needs — they look at the broader picture, factoring in the emotional, social and academic challenges children face. The program’s school-based therapists work closely with teachers, administrators, students and families to create individualized plans for each child receiving services, ensuring their unique needs are met in real-time.

“When behaviors or traits are identified as an individualized need, rather than a problematic behavior, it can make a massive difference in how a child is perceived by peers and educators, and how they feel about themselves,” said Danielle Keeton, Le Bonheur’s senior director of Rehab and



From left to right, Le Bonheur school-based therapists Joseph Quinn, OT, Jessica Herron, PT, Kimberly Jones, SLP, Allonda Meriwether, SLP, Carol McCallen, OT, and Ashley Kemp, SLP, provide onsite inclusion services to help students at Cornerstone Prep-Lester Elementary achieve their physical and developmental goals.





Allonda Meriwether, a speech language pathologist with Le Bonheur's school-based therapy program, coaches Cornerstone Prep student Jasiah Jefferson on his verbal expression using an engaging flashcards activity.

Developmental Services. "This program creates space to maximize the educational potential for kids, and can change the trajectory of children's lives."

For schools like Libertas School of Memphis, which serves a high percentage of children with special needs, the program has been transformative. "As the host of the largest special education program of any Tennessee charter, Libertas is grateful for many years of partnership with Le Bonheur for school-based therapy," says Bob Nardo, Executive Director and Founding Head of Libertas. "Le Bonheur is one of the reasons why Libertas students with disabilities are achieving in the top 15% of their peers across the state."

Similarly, a partnership with Le Bonheur has helped students at Journey Community Schools (JCS) achieve significant academic and developmental gains. According to Monicah Branch, Managing Director of Special Populations and Student Services for JCS, the Le Bonheur-led integration of the Ready Bodies Learning Lab into the school's classrooms has been a game-changer for students, backed by the therapists' "unmatched expertise and genuine commitment to the well-being of students."

"We were able to see gains in our students' development within one semester of this program," said Branch. "School-based therapy not only supports

students with specific needs but also enriches the school culture by promoting collaboration and continuous growth. This holistic approach strengthens the entire JCS community, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment."

Allonda Meriwether, a Le Bonheur speech-language pathologist serving at Cornerstone Prep-Lester Elementary, emphasizes the

collaborative, community focus at the heart of the school-based therapy program. Meriwether works at a school established for students living in some of the city's highest areas of need.

"We have the unique opportunity to serve our city's schools and families by offering high-quality therapy services to children in our most vulnerable communities," said Meriwether. "Advocating, educating and partnering with community schools has truly been the highlight of my career."

For many families, Le Bonheur's school-based therapy is not just a service — it's a support system that extends well beyond the classroom, and stands as a model of what's possible when healthcare and education work together for the well-being of children. Scarlet Crain, director of Educational Rehab at Le Bonheur, highlights the deep relational value of the program's continuity, as some therapists may work with the same children from pre-K through 12th grade.

"We know these families, we've built their trust, and we can get them back into their medical centers when needed," said Crain. "School-based therapy serves to bridge the gap for children with special needs between their families, the medical world and the educational world, so they can meet their maximum potential independence in life." ❤️



Le Bonheur Physical Therapist Jessica Herron guides Cornerstone Prep kindergartener Adisyn Gilliam in a series of fun exercises designed to improve gross motor skills such as movement, strength and flexibility.

# Recent Events



## Enchanted Forest

The Enchanted Forest Festival of Trees begins each year with a stroll through the magical Festival of Trees that fills the Pink Palace Mezzanine with beautifully decorated trees. Once inside the exhibit, children of all ages are charmed by the animated characters set in the magical snowy setting of The Enchanted Forest. In 2024, the event raised more than \$236,000 for Le Bonheur Children's! If you are interested in getting involved by becoming a Tree decorator, Sponsor or a Gingerbread House decorator for 2025's event, please contact Elizabeth Boywid at [emboywid@gmail.com](mailto:emboywid@gmail.com). A perfect holiday tradition for the whole family to enjoy!



## Pumpkin Run

Le Bonheur Pumpkin Run celebrated its 20th year in 2024 with events held in Memphis, Tenn.; Tupelo, Miss.; and Jackson, Tenn., throughout the month of October. Pumpkin Run participants raised more than \$212,765 for Le Bonheur! A post-race family friendly party was held, including a kids' costume contest, at each location. Fun for the whole family was had across the region!



## Le Bon Appetit



Since its inception, Le Bon Appetit has raised more than \$1.2 million for specialized medical equipment, child-specific programming and technology for the Mid-South's first and only comprehensive hospital dedicated to kids. To Chef Kelly English, this event is more than just a way to give back to his community; it was also born from a childhood experience of his own. At the age of 6, English spent two months in an adult hospital in his hometown recovering from a life-threatening fall; it was his memory of daunting, sterile facilities that began his dream of supporting the work of a family-friendly hospital, like Le Bonheur Children's, that is dedicated to kids.

Kelly quickly found that he was not alone in his desire to offer his skills and time in the name of helping children. Le Bon Appetit features more than 30 of the nation's best chefs who come together with one goal: to offer up great food for a great cause.

## Gurus of Golf

The 16th annual Gurus of Golf raised more than \$317,000, bringing the 16-year event total to more than \$4 million. The event brought the best teaching pros in the world to spend a day working with players as they raised money to support Le Bonheur.

At 2024's event, Le Bonheur mom Erin Lasley, shared her daughter's inspiring Le Bonheur story with golfers. Thanks to Le Bonheur, 3-year-old Zib is able to receive the coordinated care she needs in one place! Please contact Joanie Taylor at [joanie.taylor@lebonheur.org](mailto:joanie.taylor@lebonheur.org) if you'd like to participate in 2025.



# A Le Bonheur Legacy



In 1982, Jennilyn Uktov, BSN, RN, MBA, started her career as a nurse intern at Le Bonheur Children's. For more than 40 years, Jennilyn has served in roles across the hospital, including emergency department nurse and Le Bonheur director of marketing.

Since 2015, Jennilyn has led Le Bonheur's programs outside the walls of the hospital through our Community Outreach division and she now serves as vice president, Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach, overseeing more than 20 evidence-based community programs and 250 health professionals working in the community.

Not only has Jennilyn dedicated her career to serving children and their families in our community, she makes gifts each year to support Le Bonheur and has also included Le Bonheur in her estate plans by naming Le Bonheur a beneficiary of her donor advised fund (DAF).

Opening a DAF is a simple way to manage current giving and create a plan to continue support of charities like Le Bonheur far into the future. Local community foundations and large financial firms offer DAFs which serve as a charitable savings account.

"Of all the work I have done in more than 40 years at the hospital, the community work at Le Bonheur has been the most rewarding," Jennilyn said. "I am proud to give back to help ensure that this work will continue."

If you would like information about how you also can support Le Bonheur through a gift from your estate plan, please contact Cathy Wilson at 901-287-5575 or [catherine.wilson@lebonheur.org](mailto:catherine.wilson@lebonheur.org) or go to <https://lebonheur.planmygift.org/>.



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