



COMFORT BEARS♥

For children battling serious illnesses or trauma.



Annual Report 2024



We set out on a journey to create a program that would provide comfort and support for children who were terminally ill, managing serious illness or experiencing trauma.

Comfort Bears was launched October 2021 providing soft and cuddly teddy bears with the intent of serving Hamilton, Halton and Niagara communities. It did not take long to realize the need was far reaching, and before long our service expanded from London, ON to Kenora, ON and everywhere in between.

The community responded with open arms understanding what we were trying to achieve. The comfort a teddy bear can provide cannot be underestimated. For many it's just a teddy bear, but for our kids receiving the bears, it provides someone to talk to and will never leave their side, no matter how difficult their situation might become.

Endless stories of tragedy, pain and medical crisis were shared with us. It can be difficult to fathom the strength and resilience of our kids and their families. When the child's eyes lock with their Comfort Bear and they give it that first tight hug, it reminds us of why Comfort Bears was started. **If we have provided, even for one second, a distraction and a feeling of love and hope, then we have achieved our goal.**

It was our intent to distribute 1,000 bears in our first two years of operation. Instead, we distributed 8,000 bears to 48 incredibly caring and supportive organization partners, who lovingly distributed Comfort Bears to children with whom they work.

None of this work would be possible without the enduring compassion, dedication and generosity of our donors and volunteers. Thank you for being by our side on this journey, every step of the way, as we bring comfort to some very special and brave kids.

Lena 

Lena Bassford
Founder and Board Chair

Mission:

Our mission is to provide Comfort Bears as a symbol of well-being for children experiencing treatments for serious illnesses or trauma to lessen their anxiety and stress.



Our Mandate:

- We believe that providing children receiving invasive treatment with a symbol of comfort will lessen the stress associated with their illness or trauma.
- We believe in interacting with children and their families in a non-stigmatizing, impactful and inclusive manner ensuring dignity.
- We believe in collaborative partnerships with volunteers, hospitals, first responders, businesses, and funders to collectively support children and their families.
- We believe that by maintaining the highest standards, we can provide a valuable service through transparency and fiscal accountability





Our Community Partners



- Bob Kemp Hospice
- Cancer Assistance Program
- CAS Kenora
- Children's Aid Halton
- Children's Aid London
- Children's Aid Peel
- Darling Home for Kids
- Halton Victim Services
- Hamilton Police Victim Services
- Hospice Niagara
- Interval House
- Juravinski Hospital
- Kristin French Advocacy
- Lighthouse for Grieving Children
- London Children's Hospital
- McMaster Children's Hospital
- Michael Garron Hospital
- Nanny Angel Network
- Native Women's Centre
- Niagara Children's Centre
- Oakville Trafalgar Hospital
- Ronald McDonald House
- St Catharine's General Hospital
- Wellspring Cancer Support



Our Community Sponsors



- Canadian Western Bank
- Charity of Hope
- CHML Children's Fund
- DKM Foundation
- Envision MotorSports
- Google Canada
- IA Financial
- Joe Apps Technology Support
- Kalkaden Productions
- Kelly Dunham Foundation
- Linh Chao Real Estate
- Hamilton Community Foundation
- Hamilton Firefighters for Charity
- Hamilton Police
- Pen Financial
- RBC Foundation
- Sam & Roma Mercanti Foundation
- Scotia Bank
- Spin Master Canada
- Sprott Foundation
- Turkstra Lumber
- The Purple Butterfly of Hope
- Walmart Canada

A Special Thank You

We are grateful to **Nicole Martin**, from CHCH TV for serving as a member of our Board of Directors as well as serving as Program Ambassador. We are grateful for her endless energy, kind heart and willingness to serve in any capacity.

We are beyond appreciative for the support received from **CHCH TV**. They have so generously donated airtime for our Public Service Ads, helping generate awareness of our program and outreach. Thank you so much.

A heartfelt thank you to **Spin Master Toys**. They opened their hearts to donate 1,000 Gund teddy bears to our program, allowing us to expand our service area and bring happiness to so many kids.



Our Kids



2022023 Financials

Income:

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Donations..... | \$99,611 |
| Fundraising..... | \$12,661 |
| In-Kind..... | \$40,000 |
| Total: | \$152,272 |

Expenses:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Program (Teddy Bears)..... | \$82,191 |
| Office Expenses..... | \$ 8,367 |
| Insurance..... | \$1,820 |
| Rent..... | \$15,741 |
| Professional Fees..... | \$ 6,408 |
| Promotion& Fundraising..... | 19,653 |
| Total: | \$ 134,180 |

Surplus of \$18,092 used for
start up costs for 2024 - 2025
year



