



For Immediate Release

Ronald McDonald House Charities® Newfoundland and Labrador Breaks Ground for the Family Time Park Project

(July 13, 2022 St. John's, NL) – Ronald McDonald House Charities® Newfoundland and Labrador (RMHC NL) is pleased to announce today, along with many volunteers, donors and families, it has broken ground for the reconstruction and development of its outdoor space. This new space will give sick or injured children a safe and accessible space to play and enjoy much needed outdoor family time.

“September 2022 will mark the 10th anniversary of RMHC in Newfoundland and Labrador. In that time a lot has been accomplished, but there is still more work to be done. It’s now the perfect time! Time for more mission, more family support and more quality family time. It’s time for Family Time Park” said RMHC NL Board Chair Theresa Rahal. **“Providing a fun, accessible and secure space for our families to interact in a park setting, will help us enhance the experience for all sick or injured children and their families that need the Ronald McDonald House.”**

“Through our partnership with Ronald McDonald House over the past 10 years, we have seen first-hand the positive impact that this home-away-from-home provides to families from our province,” said Jennifer Williams, President and CEO of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. **“The addition of the Family Time Park will provide a much-needed space where families can spend time together outside in a safe and accessible environment, and that's why Hydro and our employees are honoured to support Ronald McDonald House as they make the park a reality.”**

“While \$750,000 is an ambitious goal, it becomes attainable when you consider the generosity and confidence shown by our early donors,” said Gerry Beresford, volunteer with the Campaign Working Group. **“We are thrilled to break ground on the Family Time Park today. This safe, assessible and fun outdoor space will be sure to have a positive impact for families at Ronald McDonald House.”**

The project will see the development of an accessible and fenced outdoor area surrounding the Ronald McDonald House with improvements such as fencing, entrance gate, bbq/patio area, and most importantly a children’s playground with rubber play surface, two bay accessible swing set, and nature-based play features.

“The plan is to upgrade the land in front of the building between the front and woods area that is beyond it. There is a new pavilion going to be there, a great place where families will be able to have barbeques or picnics. There will be a court there to shoot basketballs and score hockey goals. Everything we do with this park will have accessibility and safety at the forefront. The project has been awarded to Modern Paving and is expected to be completed later this fall.” said John Poole, volunteer on the RMHC NL Facilities Committee.

Ashley Renouf of Cape St. George has spent the last 80 nights at Ronald McDonald House when her son Ryder is fighting leukemia. **“My kids love being outside. Prior to Ryders diagnosis we were a very active outdoors family. So being able to have a space for the kids to burn their energy will be amazing. They have also made some friends and even had a soccer game or two with some other families! It gives the kids time to unwind and just be kids, to let them forget about everything else going on. The Family Time Park will be a great distraction for everyone. Children love to play, even with health limitations. Being able to accommodate those limitations still gives children and families that sense of normalcy while still letting them explore and just be a kid! It brings families together during stressful times. Even on Ryders worst days, he enjoys going outside to the RMHC playground for some fun!”**

Nature and the outdoors have always been associated with positive energy, wellness and a place to enhance overall mental health. Spending time and being physically active in nature has been proven to promote a healthy lifestyle and improve overall well-being. Spending time outside helps us recover from the effects of stress and our everyday worries. The positive physical and mental benefits of spending time outdoors align perfectly with the mission of Ronald McDonald House Charities and the goal of supporting and caring for sick or injured children and their families.

Subsequent to the Ground-breaking ceremony, **Iron Ore Company of Canada** announced a generous donation to the campaign.

“IOC has been a proud supporter of the Ronald McDonald House Newfoundland and Labrador since its inception. Supporting a family during a child’s sickness is such an important mission for our community, and many of our employees have benefitted from the services of the Ronald McDonald House over the last ten years. This is why we are very pleased to donate \$100,000 through the IOC Together We Care Community Investment Program for the development of an accessible outdoor family park at Ronald McDonald House. This new space will further support the overall wellness and mental health of family members during difficult times,” said Mike McCann, CEO & President of IOC.

The campaign has now reached 83% with \$125,000 remaining to reach the full goal. The success of the Family Time Park campaign will position Ronald McDonald House to continue to positively impact the lives of sick or injured children and their families. **Please consider a gift of any amount in support Family Time Park to help reach our goal; we CAN do this together!**

This year Ronald McDonald House Charities Newfoundland and Labrador celebrates 10 years caring and commitment to families with a sick or injured child. To learn more about Ronald McDonald House and its programs and services and **make a gift to this campaign**, visit www.RMHCNL.ca

Ronald McDonald House Charities® Newfoundland and Labrador helps keep families with a sick or injured child close to each other and the care and resources they need, when they need it most. Open 24 hours a day/7 days a week, Ronald McDonald House features many common areas including a large kitchen, family room, television room, resource center, home office, children’s play areas and laundry facilities. Ronald McDonald House is open to parents, siblings and at times, extended family members of children receiving medical treatment in St. John’s. It draws on a large pool of committed volunteers who help families feel at home. While each Ronald McDonald House shares a common mission, each house is independently governed by a Board of Directors with its own charitable registration number. Since opening in 2012, Ronald McDonald House Charities® Newfoundland and Labrador have accommodated more than 1600 families during 40,000 nights dealing with their child’s illness far from home. It is estimated that RMHC NL saved these families more than \$8.2M.

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Charitable Registration Number: 85050 2865 RR 0001

FAMILY TIME PARK



Campaign Video -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tfqc7_yxvZI



Family Time Park Ground Breaking

L-R: Christina Morgan, CFRE (RMHC NL Director Development & Communications), Ted Davis (RBC Foundation), Wessam Almegbel (RBC Foundation), Donna Payne (RBC Foundation), John Poole (RMHC NL Facilities Committee), Jennifer Williams (Hydro), Heather Bruce-Veitch (Iron Ore Company of Canada), Sam Houston (Iron Ore of Company), Theresa Rahal (RMHC NL Board Chair), Paul Rogers (RMHC NL Board of Directors/McDonald's), David Pippy (R.D. Pippy Foundation), Robert Pippy (R.D. Pippy Foundation), George Battcock (Campaign Gift team),

Gerry Beresford (Campaign Gift Team), Tom Williamson (Atlantic Star Foundation)

Annette Godsell (RMHC NL Executive Director),

Ian Renouf (RMHC Family) & 3 year old Ryder Renouf



