



Tracy's Kids
2021 Annual Report
www.tracyskids.org

Message from Matt Gerson, Founder and President of *Tracy's Kids*

Just like everyone else, Tracy's Kids spent 2021 easing back into some semblance of our pre-COVID lives. Thanks to the ongoing support of our loyal donors, we were able to keep all our programs on track despite the disruption to our customary fundraising activities. The Board has my gratitude for its sound and thoughtful stewardship.

But, as always, the real heroes are the dedicated Art Therapists who kept their eyes on the prize – providing aid and comfort to the patients, siblings, and parents we serve. COVID presented a great many obstacles – to their work and home lives. Each clinic seemed to operate under different rules for in person care, sibling participation, hygiene, and other steps taken to keep their charges and communities safe.

The only constant was the dedication, ingenuity and commitment of the professionals who work under the Tracy's Kids umbrella. Their improvisational skills – be it in the clinic or through telemedicine – kept Tracy's Kids flourishing and our kids successfully navigating this unfair chapter of their lives.

Therefore, this letter is an open and heartfelt thank you to the women who make all the difference –

- Tracy
- Beth
- Courtney
- Kristin
- Peyton
- Lauren
- Alby
- Danielle
- Jacqueline
- Sarah
- Catherine
- Jessica

-Matt Gerson, Founder and President

Our Mission

Tracy's Kids helps young cancer patients and their families cope with the emotional stress and trauma imposed by cancer and its treatment. We are dedicated to helping the children and families we serve to be emotionally prepared to fight the disease as actively as possible—and prepared for the time when they are cancer free.

What is art therapy?

Art therapy is a mental health profession in which patients and Art Therapists use the creative process and the resulting artwork to explore feelings, reduce anxiety, and improve social skills and confidence. The Tracy's Kids team of ten Masters-trained and credentialed Art Therapists offer a wealth of art media and approaches to patients from toddlers to twenty-somethings.



Processing medical trauma

Young people who endure long courses of treatment or sudden, life altering diagnoses often experience overwhelmingly scary events. Events too frightening to be remembered and understood are stored as non-verbal memories. Smells, sounds, visual images, and bodily sensations can trigger distress. Visual communication helps our patients identify troubling sensations and memories, put their feelings on paper, and reflect on their experiences in both art and words, gaining distance from scary events.



In 2021, the Tracy's Kids programs provided 10,464 hours of art therapy, over 14,743 art therapy contacts with patients and family members, and 1,478 hours of consultation with treatment teams.

Tracy's Kids' Work

In 2021 *Tracy's Kids* operated at seven treatment centers across the country--four in the Washington, DC Metropolitan area, one in New York City, one in Baltimore, and one in San Antonio, Texas. All of our services are offered at no cost to the patients and families we serve. Our patient-centered, open studio approach for inpatients and outpatients allows us to provide support during all phases of cancer treatment.

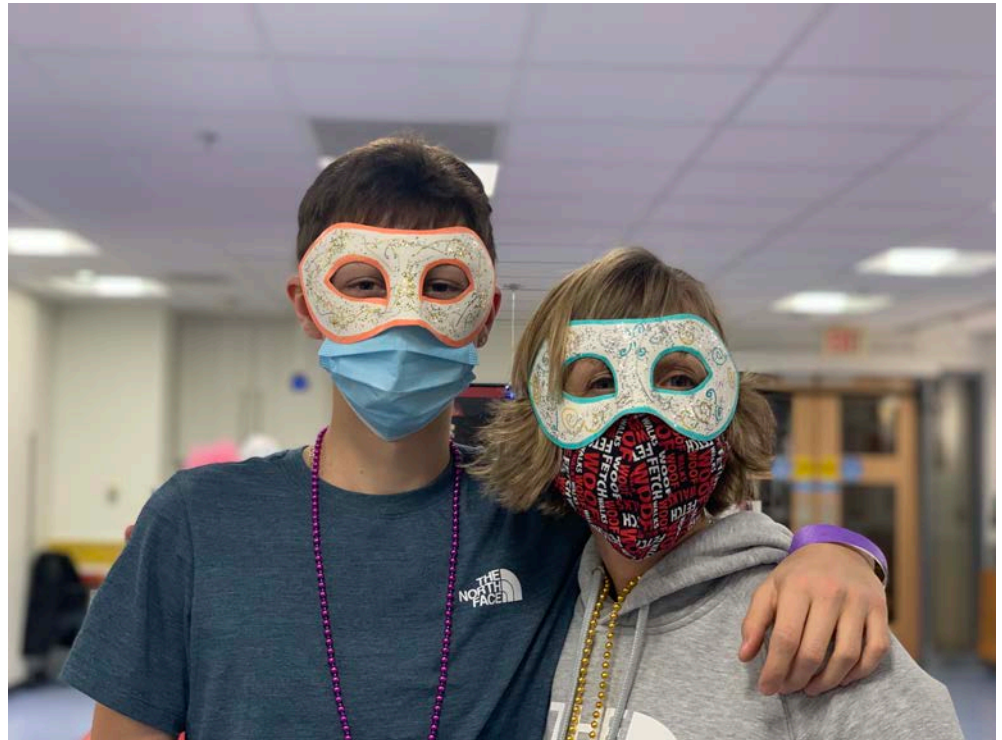
Tracy's Kids began at the Lombardi Cancer Center of Georgetown University Hospital in 1991, and has grown from one art therapist at one hospital to ten art therapists. They are integrated members of the medical teams and work directly with physicians, nurses and medical professionals to help address the multi-faceted needs of each patient.

Tracy's Kids provides opportunities for relaxation, confidence-building, and self-expression. Using art to identify fears and feelings, whether conscious or unconscious, the *Tracy's Kids* program allows young patients and their siblings and parents to gain some control over the difficult experiences they are going through.

Year after year, parents tell us that their children come to our clinics eagerly anticipating the art projects they will do. Shifting the focus from medicine and discomfort to creativity makes treatment days less stressful. Art therapy can't replace the soccer games, sleepovers and normalcy that are lost during cancer treatment, but through art kids are able to experience themselves not just as a patient or sick kid, but as creators, in charge of their art and engaged in meaningful work. We help them find what they are able to do and what they enjoy, cultivating resilience and hope that the illness will not be forever. And in the process they can trust our trained art therapists with whatever is on their minds.

Tracy's Kids and the Family

Tracy's Kids focuses on the children undergoing cancer treatment, but the impact of this disruptive and scary chapter of their lives extends well beyond the patient. We know the entire family suffers when a child has cancer, and we encourage siblings, patients and other family members to work with our art therapists whenever they can.



Tracy's Kids and the Pandemic

Though Covid-19 limited our reach, we have been able to re-expand our work in all seven Tracy's Kids locations. All our hospitals still require masks and social distancing for both staff and patients, but we see patients at their bedsides and in all our outpatient clinics. Many of our locations started remote art therapy during Covid isolation, and some have continued to provide tele-health art therapy in addition to in-person services.

Community Collaboration

During the pandemic we supported community organizations that serve young cancer patients such as the Cool Kids Campaign and Special Love, and we have continued these partnerships through virtual art and support group sessions. The image below shows symbolic self-portraits by four kids done at a virtual Camp Fantastic art session enhanced with glow in the dark paint for a digital surprise!



Tracy's Kids Unmasked

Tracy's Kids is all about building community by working creatively together. As the pandemic continued to limit indoor gatherings, we sought to give kids and families a way to show up in their communities. In May, we held a series of community chalk-painting events called "Tracy's Kids Unmasked," where patients and kids came together in neighborhoods and parks to create masking-tape chalk art and learn about art therapy.

We wrapped it up with a Zoom where the kids who participated from different places got to meet each other and win cool prizes.



Art Therapy Research

In 2021, we were able to begin our long-awaited PCATS art therapy research study, with participants enrolled at our Georgetown and Children's National Hospital locations, with other hospitals soon to follow. The study is a collaboration between our hospital partners and the National Endowment for the Arts, seeking to quantify the impact of our work.

2021 Grants to Provide Art Therapy

In 2021, **Tracy's Kids** awarded \$559,821 in grants to our seven art therapy program sites.

In 2021, **Tracy's Kids** granted the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center \$85,875.

The Tracy's Kids program at Medstar Georgetown University Hospital continues with Tracy Council serving as a full-time art therapist. **Tracy's Kids** has long been the focus of life in Lombardi's pediatric oncology outpatient clinic, fostering an inviting atmosphere of relaxation while inspiring reflection through creativity. Creating art in the midst of treatment allows patients to process and respond to their experiences in a healthy and empowering way. Georgetown Hospital's motto "*cura personalis*" means "care of the whole person," and our program focuses not only on the needs of patients, but of their family members and the medical team as well.



The program at Georgetown serves patients across the pediatric oncology spectrum, with a special focus on adolescents and young adults. Young professionals, college, high school, and elementary-age patients work together at the art tables, exploring a variety of challenging media. The examples above show a self-portrait in pencil, an abstract self-portrait in clay, and a collaborative drawing created by Tracy and a young patient.

Art Therapist **Tracy Council** serves as an integrated member of the treatment team, working with patients, siblings and caregivers in both inpatient and outpatient settings.

In 2021, **Tracy's Kids** at **Georgetown Lombardi** provided 1,429 hours of art therapy sessions, 2,033 patient contacts, and 141 hours of consultation with treatment teams.

In 2021, *Tracy's Kids* granted Children's National Hospital \$163,690.

Children's National has the Washington DC area's largest pediatric oncology program, with a 30-bed inpatient unit that is often filled to capacity, in addition to a twelve-bed Bone Marrow Transplant unit.

Beth Tutt, Lauren Schlenger and **Alby Gyamah-Boadi** make up the Tracy's Kids team at Children's National Hospital. We reopened the art room in the Spring of 2021, with limited occupancy, and we hope to offer our popular Scribbling Siblings program in 2022.



The TK art therapy team works with patients mostly individually at bedside and in small groups in the art room, due to ongoing pandemic restrictions. They also helped facilitate two hospital-wide art events, a Chalk Drawing Party in June, and a group syringe-painting mural as part of a larger arts celebration.

The Sickle Cell Art Therapy Group restarted in person, after a year-long hiatus during 2020. Facilitating a combination of bedside, virtual, and socially-distanced art therapy in the art room has allowed the TK team to meet patients where they are. The TK team at CNH is participating in the PCATS Art Therapy Research Study, a collaboration between participating hospitals and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Three-year old Wes benefited greatly from the art room during his leukemia treatment. About the re-opening of the art room in March, his mom wrote, "That room makes magic! Being in this welcoming, fun space with so much to do helped Wes forget he was attached to an IV. The art therapists helped him enjoy wonderful, unstructured chaos . . . Art therapy makes coming to the hospital a positive."

Tracy's Kids at Children's National Hospital logged 2,910 hours of art therapy, 2,727 patient contacts, and 375 hours of consultation with treatment teams in 2021.



Artist of the Month

Though patients still cannot gather freely, the CNH team has preserved a sense of connection through the Artist of the Month program that displays artwork by an individual child in the hallway for a month.



Thanksgiving

A young patient found herself in the hospital over Thanksgiving--their favorite holiday. Together, the patient and her mom made a miniature Thanksgiving feast to take the place of the real one they had to miss.

In 2021 *Tracy's Kids* granted PSV's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders and Inova Children's Hospital \$100,000.

The *Tracy's Kids* program at PSV provides a safe, therapeutic, and fun space for patients of all ages and their family members to process the emotional stress and anxieties that often go hand-in-hand with the diagnosis of a chronic medical illness. **PSV's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders** is housed in the Inova Schar Cancer Institute. This spacious facility allowed clinic operations, including the Tracy's Kids program implemented by **Jessica Girard**, to continue during the pandemic. **Catherine Rubin** leads the Tracy's Kids Program at the L.J. Murphy Children's Hospital in Fairfax.

Relationship

A young patient was admitted to the hospital during the pandemic. Though she worked with Catherine often, after several months she realized that she had never seen Catherine without a mask!

She asked for a photo, so she could know what Catherine looked like. When Catherine gave her the picture, she created this excellent portrait of her!



Coping with Isolation

As isolation from the pandemic wore on into a second year, Catherine developed a plan of taping a big roll of paper to the floor or the wall in the inpatient hallway, and having two or three kids come out of their rooms and work together--but safely distanced from each other!

A fifteen-year old patient who came nearly every day for treatment made her afternoons with Jess in the art room the focus of her days. As she escaped the rigors of treatment through painting and collage, the young patient said over and over how much she appreciated the opportunity to be herself!

Jess Girard works full-time at the outpatient Infusion Center. Their common spaces have remained closed during 2021, but Jess has been permitted to work with kids in the art room one at a time. She has also worked with kids in exam rooms and infusion chairs so that kids receiving treatment in the infusion bays can work together. Jess has also been able to create a protocol for siblings to tour the clinic and spend some time with her in the art room, even though they cannot routinely accompany patients for their infusions.

During 2021, the *Tracy's Kids* program at **PSV** provided 1,110 hours of art therapy, 2,487 patient contacts, and 145 hours of consultation with medical teams.

At **Inova Children's Hospital**, we provided 900 hours of art therapy, 857 patient contacts, and 58 hours of consultation with medical teams.

In 2021, *Tracy's Kids* granted Methodist Children's Hospital in San Antonio \$48,610.

The *Tracy's Kids* program at Methodist Children's Hospital in San Antonio, TX serves a very large and growing population at a regional medical center. Art Therapist **Courtney Martin**, who is in her seventh year at Methodist, is well-integrated into the medical and psychosocial support teams.

This year the Hematology-Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant programs at Methodist continued to grow at an exponential rate while the pandemic shuttered common spaces on both inpatient and outpatient units. Courtney works hard to meet the needs of a 23-bed Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, a 16-bed inpatient unit and a burgeoning outpatient clinic.



"We never knew such a person existed until we went to the hospital . . .It has been a great honor to know that the art projects she does with each patient is not only beneficial to the patient but also the parents. Art therapy time is such a calming effect to the patient during a scary and unknown time in their young life. Art therapy gives the parents a sense of peace that their child is busy doing an art project and not solely focused on their treatment." --Cyndee's mom



In 2021 *Tracy's Kids* at **Methodist Children's Hospital** provided 1,134 hours of art therapy sessions, 2,449 patient contacts, and 191 hours of consultation with treatment teams.

In 2021, **Tracy's Kids** granted New York Presbyterian Hospital \$77,000.

The NYP program was implemented by **Jacqueline Tassiello** for most of 2021. Jackie left in September to pursue other opportunities. Art therapist Sarah Fine was hired to re-start the program in December, 2021. Here are some reflections by the staff at NYP during the period when the **Tracy's Kids** program there was shuttered.

“Over the past two months, since Jackie left, the absence of the art therapy program has been felt by the patients and their families. We are excited for Sarah’s arrival and the continuation of the program.” Rae Jean Hemway, Director of Nursing – Department of Pediatrics

“Art therapy is incredibly important to my patients. I work with pediatric patients being treated for all sorts of serious, long-term illnesses. When the kids have an art therapist to work with, they are visibly happier to be here; they have a project, a purpose, a way to express the feelings they are having. The patients who do art therapy are also not bored and annoyed to be here; they are busy and they have work to do. Whether they draw about their pain or do work that has nothing to do with their diagnosis, it helps. As a nurse, I greatly appreciate the work of art therapists. They do what I cannot do—I can attempt to physically care for my patients, but the art therapists help our patients to work through and move through these traumatic experiences in an emotionally healthy way.” Maria Dolci, Pediatric Hematology/Oncology RN

Before she left, Jackie helped develop a new art therapy space on the inpatient floor, shared with Music Therapy and Child Life. We look forward to another exciting year of **Tracy's Kids** at NYP in 2022!



In 2021, **Tracy's Kids** at New York Presbyterian Hospital provided 999 hours of art therapy, 2,465 patient contacts, and 70 hours of consultation to treatment teams.

In 2021, *Tracy's Kids* granted the Herman and Walter Samuelson Children's Hospital at Sinai in Baltimore \$52,719.

Danielle Eichner and **Peyton Kirkendall** are the Tracy's Kids Art Therapists at Sinai. With masking and social distance, the program at Sinai is relatively “normal.” Peyton is full-time at the hospital and outpatient clinic. Danielle is part-time, focusing on building a new Late Effects/Survivorship program set to open in 2022. Both Danielle and Peyton see a number of off-treatment patients for individual sessions, either in-person or via Zoom.

A very touching example from the program at Sinai is the work of a pair of four-year-old twin boys. One twin was diagnosed with leukemia early in 2021, and tragically the other with a brain tumor this summer! These resilient and creative boys are a dynamic duo in the art room, near the holidays making gingerbread houses out of cardboard!

Peyton also tells of Noelle, who was disappointed that Peyton didn't have any dolls to play with in the clinic, because all the toys were removed during the height of the pandemic. Her solution was to draw and cut out her own paper people—and to ask Peyton to help her draw a kitchen so they could play out Thanksgiving dinner. She went on to make scenery for a bathroom and a pizza oven to extend their puppet play—a whole playhouse out of paper!



During 2021, the *Tracy's Kids* program at **Sinai** provided 1,249 hours of art therapy, 1,101 patient contacts, and 238 hours of medical team consultation.

In 2021, **Tracy's Kids** granted the Henry M. Jackson Foundation \$31,827 to support the art therapy program at Walter Reed Military Medical Center's Murtha Cancer Center.

Kristin Ramsey is the Tracy's Kids Art Therapist at Walter Reed Military Medical Center. Their team's receptiveness and appreciation for Tracy's Kids has allowed Kristin to develop a multi-faceted program that has become integrated into their practice in a very short time. While the pandemic still prohibits group art therapy at the art table, Kristin is able to provide 1:1 art therapy both in-person and remotely.

Kristin has also developed a support group for young adult patients, that meets in-person, outdoors in the hospital's Healing Garden. Kristin has developed strategies for exhibiting patient art in the outpatient clinic and inpatient unit, and has spearheaded efforts to commission a mural to make their inpatient unit more appealing and child-friendly.



Art Therapy as the Standard of Care

Military life places a strong emphasis on tradition and symbolism. One such tradition is that military units have their own unique metal coins that symbolize membership in the unit's "family." A new physician envisioned the Phoenix and worked with Kristin to design the coin. Their slogan is "Pugna Fortis," or "Fight Strong."

Kristin used the Phoenix design from the coin to create a large interactive art piece for staff and patients to create together. In an outdoor workshop staff drove nails into a large board, creating the outline of the Phoenix. The nails were then connected with string, filling in the image. The mural has been installed in the outpatient clinic hallway, so that when patients complete treatment and receive the special coin, they also choose a colorful string to connect from the central Phoenix to the border of the board. This brief ceremony symbolizes their movement from treatment to life outside the hospital. Families of patients who die are also invited to add a string to the mural, to symbolize their child's presence in the community.

The hospital leadership have told us that, thanks to Tracy's Kids, art therapy is now considered the standard of care at Walter Reed.

During 2021, the **Tracy's Kids** program at the Henry M. Jackson Foundation provided 915 hours of art therapy, 624 patient contacts, and 260 hours of medical team consultation.

Community Support



The Country Club of Fairfax Ladies 9 Hole Golf Group raised \$3,384 for Tracy's Kids at their annual Cancer Awareness Tournament in May.



Our Art Unmasked events challenged patients and families from all the Tracy's Kids programs to hold chalk-in events in their neighborhoods, to bring people together in a pandemic-safe way.



The uncle of a patient at Methodist Children's Hospital facilitated a donation of \$5,000 from his employer, the Pentagon Federal Credit Union.



A former patient who is now in high school organized a "Cards4Kindness" club to send greetings to kids in the hospital.

Special Events in 2021



Simone Biles' GOAT Tour

Thank you to our friends at Boeing in Washington for giving some of our kids an experience to remember - seats in a Capital One Arena suite to watch the GOAT: Simone Biles in November.



An Outing with the Nats

In September, the DC-area *Tracy's Kids* Art Therapists enjoyed a Washington Nationals game, as the guests of Curtis LeGeyt and the National Association of Broadcasters.



The Show Must Go On!

Tracy's Kids organized a Vegan Cooking Class on Zoom, taught by Chef Nicholas Stefanelli and hosted by Adam Schiff and Ted Deutch. **Methodist Children's Hospital** art therapist Courtney Martin participated--creating a technically challenging artichoke pasta dish!





THE SHOW MUST GO ON

OUR FIRST VIRTUAL COOKING DEMONSTRATION WAS A GREAT SUCCESS THANKS TO CHEF GEOFF TRACY.

JOIN MASSERIA'S CHEF NICHOLAS STEFANELLI FOR A VEGAN COOKING CLASS

with Guest Hosts Cong. Adam Schiff and Ted Deutch

MONDAY, MARCH 22ND AT 7:00 PM

Chef Nicholas Stefanelli has great ideas for two easy to make courses. Prior to our event, we'll deliver to your home -- and the homes of your guests -- a gift box with recipes, ingredients and treats. Join us as the Chef shows some of what he learned in the country's most respected kitchens and his award-winning restaurants about the power of quality ingredients and home cooking.

And here's a preview of events being planned...

- "Too Many Chiefs in the Kitchen: Risotto and Politics" with Chef John Podesta -- Chief of Staff to President Bill Clinton -- and Josh Bolten -- Chief of Staff to President George W. Bush and other special guests.
- "Get the Grill Going" -- enjoy a tutorial from D.C.'s St. Anselm and chefs devoted to the pleasures of grilled meats and great ingredients simply cooked.
- A private screening hosted by ViacomCBS and with special guests Senator Patrick Leahy and Tracy's Kids Board Member, Marcelle Leahy

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Tracy's Kids helps children with cancer cope with the emotional toll imposed by the disease and its treatment. We have programs at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital's Lombardi Cancer Center, Washington, D.C.; Children's National Hospital, Washington, D.C.; the oncology programs at Inova Children's Hospital and Schar Cancer Institute, Fairfax, VA, through a grant to the Henry Jackson Foundation, we serve the children of service members at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center; Methodist Children's Hospital, San Antonio, TX; New York Presbyterian Hospital, and Children's Hospital at Sinai, Baltimore. We are a 501(c)(3) charitable organization (EIN 26-3835257).

www.tracyskids.org

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Kristin Ramsey, MA, ATR-BC RYT-500 Art Therapist, Henry Jackson Foundation/Walter Reed Military Medical Center MA, Art Therapy GWU BA, Architecture, Penn State



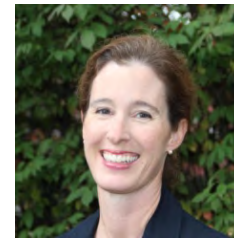
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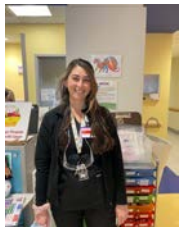
O. Peyton Kirkendall, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT Art Therapist Sinai, BA Studio Art and Art History, Washington College, MA, Art Therapy GWU



Jacqueline Tassiello, MA, ATR-BC Art Therapist, NYP MA, Art Therapy, NYU



Catherine Rubin, MS, ATR-BC Art Therapist—PSV, Inova (PT) MPS, Creative Arts Therapy, Pratt Institute BA, English Literature, American University



Sarah Fine, MPS, LCAT-LP Art Therapist, NYP BA, Medicine, Health and Society, Vanderbilt MPS, Art Therapy, School of Visual Arts



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