

Discovery Arts



PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES FUN AND CREATIVITY to critically ill children

Since 1998, Discovery Arts has provided the gift of creativity and imagination to thousands of children hospitalized with cancer and life-threatening illnesses. Through their weekly "Arts Adventure" programs, young patients are uplifted and given the opportunity for joy through hands-on experience with music, art, dance, drama, and many other forms of artistic expression.

"You can't underestimate the power of fun," says Marilyn Clements, Co-Founder of Discovery Arts. "Kids of all ages enjoy participating in our programs. When they do, they transcend and transform before our eyes from the pain and discomfort that accompany life-threatening illness."

"Discovery Arts provides a healthy breather," continues Clements. "The children, their families, even doctors and nurses can get involved and enjoy an opportunity to have a good time."

The activities provided by Discovery Arts strengthen the emotional health and well-being of the children involved, helping them to better cope with the enormous stress of being in the hospital, and positively affecting their treatment and recovery. "When children are singing, playing an instrument, or working on an art project," states Clements, "they act and feel well. We don't treat them like they are sick. We look beyond the illness and look simply at the child."



Kids love costumes, and Discovery Arts provides them to their young patients to keep and enjoy, understanding that dressing up is an important part of childhood. In addition, each child receives a Bedside Adventure Kit, loaded with art supplies and projects to keep them entertained until the next week, when their friends from Discovery Arts arrive for another fun-filled visit.

Isolation can be a debilitating side effect for critically ill children; participation in Discovery Arts creates opportunities for friendship that can have powerful emotional and health benefits. The children also have the opportunity to be socially involved with other critically ill children who are in the hospital. Meeting other criti-

cally ill children provides an invaluable peer experience for youngsters who may not otherwise have a chance to meet others in similar situations. Many lasting friendships are formed through participation in the program, leading to ongoing support both in and out of the hospital.

The Allergan Foundation is proud to support innovative programs providing care and relief to so many very special youngsters. Thanks to Discovery Arts, children already working against difficult odds get a chance to create, bond, and express themselves with joyous abandon, allowing a break from trying circumstances, and just letting kids be kids.

