Dear Friends,

If you live in the Bay Area, you have likely seen commercials, billboards, and even trains displaying the new Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford logo and tagline, “Extraordinary care for your extraordinary kid.”

Along with our new look, you’ll also discover a network of partners and affiliates who have joined us to become “Stanford Children’s Health”— bringing our care closer to home for thousands of families throughout the Bay Area.

Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford remains the heart of Stanford Children’s Health, and continues to carry out the vision of our generous founder, Lucile Salter Packard, to care for the body and soul of every patient, every day.

As you’ll see in this issue of the Children’s Fund Update, our child life specialists help us achieve Lucile’s vision, from holding a child’s hand as he gets a “poke,” to using wooden toys and iPads to make CT scans less scary.

Thank you for your support, which enables our child life specialists and all our caregivers to provide extraordinary care for extraordinary kids.

Sincerely,

Hugh O’Brodovich, MD
Arline and Pete Harman Professor and Chair, Department of Pediatrics,
Stanford School of Medicine
Adelyn Jay Physician-In-Chief, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford
Director, Stanford Child Health Research Institute

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The responsibilities of child life specialists span from procedure preparation and expressive play activities, to bereavement and sibling support. “As child life specialists, our work is based on child development theory and supporting children in the face of illness, surgery, or hospitalization,” added Allison Brooks of the cardiovascular intensive care unit. This focus on children’s emotional well-being can help speed up healing and shorten hospital stays.

A Hand to Hold

In the emergency department, child life specialist Kristen Beckler met a 5-year-old boy who had a laceration above his eye. Sitting at his level, Beckler spoke to the crying child and described step-by-step what would happen, using words that he could understand. “First we’re going to put a cold cotton ball over your cut,” she said, explaining the numbing process. “Then you will go to a room, watch a movie, and wait for the doctor to decide how to fix it.” Beckler described the sensations he’d feel receiving stitches, and she and the child came up with a coping plan that included holding her hand, watching videos on an iPad, and breathing exercises. “He did amazing and was so proud of himself after it was over,” Beckler recalled. “It was a very sweet moment to see him succeed. There were a lot of high fives and fist pumps as he headed out the door.”

A Member of the Care Team

Every day, throughout our hospital, child life specialists collaborate on care teams to ensure that patients and their families play an active role in their care. “I attend rounds throughout the week and talk with staff about patient goals, treatment, upcoming procedures, and coping needs,” said Nick Gliatas, a child life specialist in the Bass Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Diseases.

Sarah Grace (top) prepares for an IV by giving one to Deana the bunny, while Lizzie receives a visit from child life specialist Allison Brooks.