



LOCAL WISHES LASTING IMPACT

2025 Northern Alberta & the Northwest Territories Report

With Gratitude: A Letter to You

On behalf of Make-A-Wish® Canada, thank you for the generosity and belief that make our work possible. Your support continues to deliver meaningful impact for children with critical illness and their families across Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

Children facing critical illness endure far more than physical symptoms; they experience prolonged uncertainty, fear, and emotional strain. A wish intervenes at a pivotal moment, providing more than joy or distraction. Wishes help restore hope, strengthen resilience, and support emotional well-being at a time when it is needed most. *Wishes Are Medicine.*

As a supporter in Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories, you are an essential part of this impact. This report highlights how your generosity translates into measurable outcomes and real experiences for children in your community – from key statistics and insights to stories that reflect the depth of change a wish can create.

Your commitment ensures that more children can access this critical intervention when they need it most. As Wish Mom, Jessie, shared: “I truly felt [my daughter] had given up on her fight. Experiencing her wish was a breath of fresh air, and post-wish she is happier, more content, and has regained her willingness to endure medical procedures along with a happy spirit that shines so brightly. Having her personality restored is the biggest win I could have ever asked for.”

Thank you for believing in the power of a wish and for helping deliver hope, strength, and healing to wish kids and families across Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

With sincere appreciation,



Meaghan Stovel McKnight
Chief Executive Officer
Make-A-Wish Canada



Karen Shaver
Vice President Mission
Make-A-Wish Canada

ABOUT MAKE-A-WISH CANADA – Make-A-Wish Canada creates life-changing wishes for children diagnosed with critical illnesses. *Wishes Are Medicine* – a vital part of a child’s medical journey that helps restore strength, hope, and resilience. Research shows that prescribed wishes can improve adherence to treatment, reduce emergency room visits, and deliver lasting health benefits.

Make-A-Wish Canada is part of the world’s leading children’s wish-granting organization, serving children in communities across Canada and in 50 countries worldwide. Over the past 43 years, Make-A-Wish Canada has granted more than 40,000 wishes, including 1,835 last year alone.

(On the cover: Navy, 3, I wish to go to my favourite theme park)

Not All Medicine Comes in a Bottle

Wishes Are Medicine

Every day across Canada, children face critical illnesses no child should have to endure. In these moments, hope, strength and resilience matter more than ever. With your support, they receive something research shows is a powerful part of their care: a wish prescription that supports their medical journey and reminds them they are so much more than their diagnosis.



“Having a wish to look forward to definitely helped Millie get through her treatments. When she felt like she couldn’t handle another poke or IV, we reminded her of seeing dolphins soon and she would muster up her strength.”

Pamela, Millie’s mom

[Click to watch Millie’s story](#)



95% of surveyed doctors believe wishes improve health outcomes.

Patients who received a wish reduced their likelihood of using the emergency room by half.

95% of surveyed medical providers observed that wishes gave children strength to fight their critical illness.

Medical Advisory Committee



“As an oncologist, I see wishes as medicine every day. When I’m discussing wishes, or the kids come to clinic so excited to tell me about their recent wish experience. You just really see the child change when they’re telling you about the joy of the wish, and you can see the instant improvement in their emotional, mental, and often even physical well-being.”

Dr. Rod Rassekh, Pediatric Oncologist, BC Children’s Hospital
Make-A-Wish Canada Medical Advisory Committee

[Click to learn more from Dr. Rassekh](#)



A Splash of Hope – Julianna’s Wish

Six-year-old Julianna is a happy, energetic, and sweet little girl. She is most joyous near the water, and loves splashing, floating, and soaking in the tub at bath time! Growing up, Julianna did not meet typical developmental milestones, and this caused her pediatrician to refer her to a neurologist. Julianna underwent several MRIs and at one year old she was diagnosed with a rare nervous system disorder. Her mom, Dianne, vividly remembers the day her family received the news, “My husband broke down in tears, but my thoughts that day were I have to be strong for our daughter.”

Due to her condition, Julianna also faces global developmental delay and is unable to walk or speak. Julianna relies on a stroller and wheelchair to support her independence. Though there is currently no cure for her disorder, Julianna is doing great, and her family remains hopeful for her future.



Since Julianna loves the water, her family knew they had to go somewhere tropical, with sparkling turquoise waters and soft white sand for her to explore. Together they chose Aruba. On their trip, the family finally had the chance to breathe, relax, and enjoy themselves, creating memories that will last a lifetime. “I could tell that she was excited and happy every day to go swimming at the beach and in the pool where we stayed,” Dianne shared. “She was so happy and just smiling the whole time. Our bond was strengthened with this experience.”

Since returning home, Dianne has noticed a change in Julianna. She is “happier and more energetic. We felt like we were refreshed and like a new hope has sprouted. It gave us more hope that Julianna will only get better and better.”

I wish to go to Aruba

Julianna, 6
nervous system disorder



A World of Wonder – Bodhi’s Wish



Bodhi is eight years old and full of energy, light and joy. He loves to dirt bike, golf, camp and spend time with his family and friends. At home, he can often be found gaming, reading Dogman or Minecraft novels, or planning his next outdoor adventure. Bodhi’s parents, Kristen and Matthew, say their son is smart, kind and wonderfully goofy. “He truly lights up the room with his spirit,” Kristen said. Bodhi’s younger sister, Briar, is his biggest fan.

But life for Bodhi has been anything but simple. Born with a birth defect that required surgical repair at two weeks old, he faced a devastating complication at six weeks. His vocal cords were left paralyzed, and doctors told the family he would need a tracheostomy to survive.

“[We felt] devastation and relief all at the same time. We finally had answers for why our son was constantly in critical condition and how to help him which was a relief. On the other hand, we were hit by a brick wall with the reality of life with a tracheostomy and what that would look like for Bodhi and our family, which was completely devastating,” Kristen said.

Since then, Bodhi has undergone numerous procedures including a tracheotomy, G-tube insertion and removal, adenoid removal, bronchoscopy and biopsies. His family has had to adjust every part of their lives to accommodate his critical airway, from school attendance to family activities. “Our lives truly revolve around the diagnosis – what we do, how we do it, when we do it,” recalls, Kristen.

Despite the challenges, Bodhi remains active and loves life. His wish trip to his favourite theme park gave him and his family memories they will treasure forever. Highlights included the magic of Give Kids The World Village, the thrill of rides, and a visit to the Castle of Miracles, where the ceiling is adorned with thousands of stars, each personalized by a child with a critical illness.

I wish to go to my favourite theme park

Bodhi, 8
genetic disorder



Wishes by the Numbers in Northern Alberta and the NWT

148

Wishes granted in Northern Alberta and the NWT in FY25

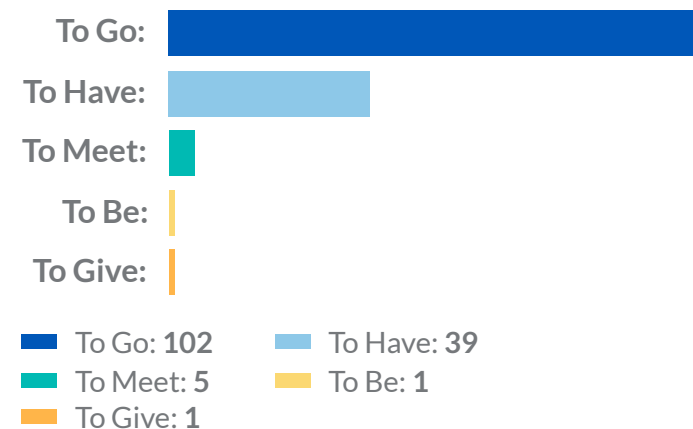
1,835

Wishes granted in Canada in FY25

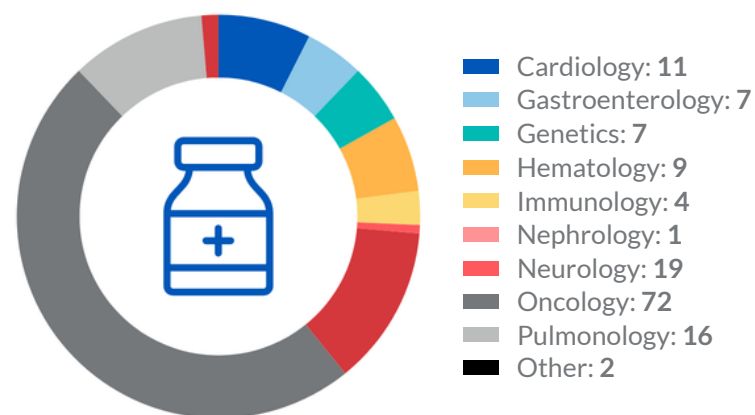
54

Communities wishes were granted in Northern Alberta and the NWT in FY25

Wishes by type in Northern Alberta and the NWT: 148



Wishes by Illness in Northern Alberta and the NWT:



Every 2 hours...

a child in Canada is diagnosed with a critical illness

3,531 Wishes Are Waiting

in Canada as of October 1, 2025

149 referrals

were received in Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories in FY25

Want to Learn More?

Click to view our FY25 Annual Impact Report.

Wish Leadership

Celebrating those who guide, inspire, and support wishes across Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

STARboard unites wish alumni ages 13 to 18 who volunteer to be a voice for wish children. Their advice, event support, and ambassador work help Make-A-Wish Canada better respond to the needs of wish families across the country.

Meet Your STARboard Member: Kaylin

“Hello, my name is Kaylin, and I’m 16. Just weeks before my 13th birthday, I was diagnosed with leukemia. Treatment was intense, with chemotherapy, surgeries, and hospital stays, and some days it felt impossible to keep going. I’m so grateful for the doctors, nurses, and support system who helped me through it.

Early in my treatment, I learned I qualified for Make-A-Wish. After much thought, I chose a classic wish to go to my favourite theme park. My family and I stayed at Give Kids The World Village and spent seven magical days together. One of my favourite memories was riding a rollercoaster eight times in a row with my brother. The wish marked a joyful farewell to my cancer journey and a celebration of what comes next.

Now, I’m excited to give back by joining STARboard, helping other kids experience the hope and healing a wish can bring.”



Kaylin
STARboard Member

Chapter Advisory Board

Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories Chapter Advisory Board (CAB) supports Make-A-Wish in delivering fundraising and wish-granting efforts across the province and territory. We are deeply grateful to the volunteers who share their expertise, time, and leadership

Adam Merrick
Alastair McKenzie
Alyson Hodson
Barry Murphy
Ian Stephenson

Jason Weiss
Matt Siminiuk
Patrick Kickham
Russ Keddie
Tanya Zurock

Wish Granting Excellence

Generosity takes many forms. Here's just a few examples of how supporters in Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories are helping grant life-changing wishes.

Sherwood Buick GMC

Sherwood Buick GMC continues to make a meaningful impact through their partnership with Make-A-Wish Canada. In 2025, their 4th annual Customs Takeover Event brought together over 3,000 attendees to celebrate car culture while raising over \$32,000 to help grant wishes for children facing critical illnesses. Hundreds of customized trucks, exotic sports cars, and rare classics filled the event, creating unforgettable moments for families and fans alike. Further, through their participation in initiatives like the Heroes Challenge and Trees of Joy, Sherwood Buick GMC's ongoing generosity shows how shared passion and community support can give joy and strength to families when they need it most.



Grand Slam Slo-Pitch Tournament

The 2025 Grand Slam Slo-Pitch Tournament, presented by The Ledcor Group, brought together 16 teams, over 40 volunteers, and countless community supporters to help grant life-changing wishes for children. With auctions, raffles, family-friendly activities, and stories from our brave wish kids, the tournament raised an incredible \$160,000 for Make-A-Wish Canada. The weekend was filled with teamwork and laughter, inspired by the courage and joy of wish kids and the transformative power of a single wish.



West Edmonton Mall

For more than 25 years, the West Edmonton Mall has been a cherished partner of Make-A-Wish Canada, helping grant unforgettable wish experiences for children and families. As a one-stop destination for entertainment, with more than 800 stores and restaurants, 12 world-class attractions, and two hotels, the Mall offers endless opportunities for joy and discovery. In 2025, their generosity made 15 "stay & play" wishes and 11 shopping experiences possible, welcoming families from across the country with warmth and care. As host sponsor of Heroes Challenge, which raises over \$150,000 annually, and through ongoing gifts and passes, the West Edmonton Mall continues to create meaningful moments that stay with wish families long after the visit ends.



Ascendant Financial

In FY25, Ascendant Financial joined Make-A-Wish Canada as a new corporate donor, contributing \$25,000 to help grant life-changing wishes for children facing critical illnesses. CEO, Jayson Lowe, personally invited the organization to their annual conference gala, where wish alumni, Spencer, and his family shared their story and the impact of his wish. Eleven-year-old Spencer lives with congenital heart disease and wished to visit his favourite theme park with his twin sister and family. Ascendant Financial's generosity reflects the powerful role corporate leaders can play in bringing hope and strength to families.



The Valleyview Cup

For more than 15 years, The Valleyview Cup has brought community together in support of Make-A-Wish Canada through its annual three-day hockey tournament. In recent years, organizers expanded their impact by adding a summer golf tournament, an initiative born during COVID-19 restrictions that has become a lasting tradition. Together, these events have raised nearly \$275,000 to help grant life-changing wishes, supported in part by employee matching from Pembina, where the tournament's founding members work. The Valleyview Cup shows how grassroots leadership and community spirit can create enduring impact for wish children.



Smiles from Spencer Foundation

Since 2010, Tyson and Janna Turner and their community have carried forward their son Spencer's legacy through the Smiles from Spencer Foundation, supporting Make-A-Wish Canada as their primary charity. Inspired by wish alumni, Spencer's contagious smile and spirit, the foundation hosts community fundraisers throughout the year to bring hope and happiness to wish families. Over time, their generosity has contributed nearly \$50,000, helping create unforgettable experiences and ensuring that Spencer's commitment to making others smile continues to inspire families and communities.



Ways to Give

Click to learn more about the many ways to support our mission.



Celebration & Recognition

Rebels With a Cause

Youth unite to bring strength and smiles.

Over 800 students came together at Jasper Place High School for the 8th Annual Rebels With a Cause bikeathon, raising funds to support Make-A-Wish Canada and life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. For 24 hours, students pedalled in a single gym, demonstrating teamwork, creativity, and boundless energy while participating in a pizza supper, a pancake breakfast, dodgeball tournaments, karaoke, a late-night dance, and a hypnotist performance.



The event opened with a heartfelt wish reveal, giving students a tangible connection to the children their efforts support. Since 2016, this remarkable student-led initiative has raised over \$1.5 million. In November 2024, Jasper Place was recognized on National Philanthropy Day with the Outstanding Philanthropist Award, honouring how acts of generosity, volunteering, and community engagement can create positive change.

By combining fun, community spirit, and sustained dedication, the students of Jasper Place have shown how grassroots engagement can transform lives. Their efforts provide children and families with moments of hope, strength, and resilience during difficult medical journeys, proving that youth can have a lasting impact in their community.

Number of Active Volunteers in Northern Alberta and the NWT: 120



Rita Vis Dube
Provincial Volunteer
of the Year



Kari Homeniuk
Rookie of the Year



**Make-A-Wish Golf
Classic Committee**
Community Impact Award

Thank You for Making a Difference

Click to join our volunteer team.



What Healing Looks Like

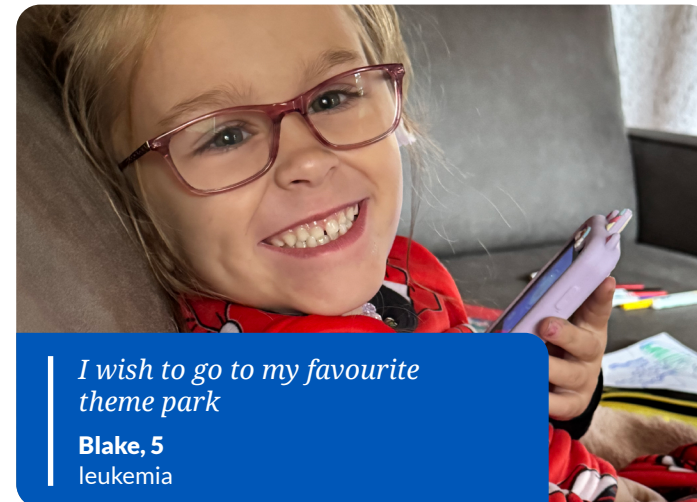
Thanks to your support vital wish prescriptions were filled for kids like...



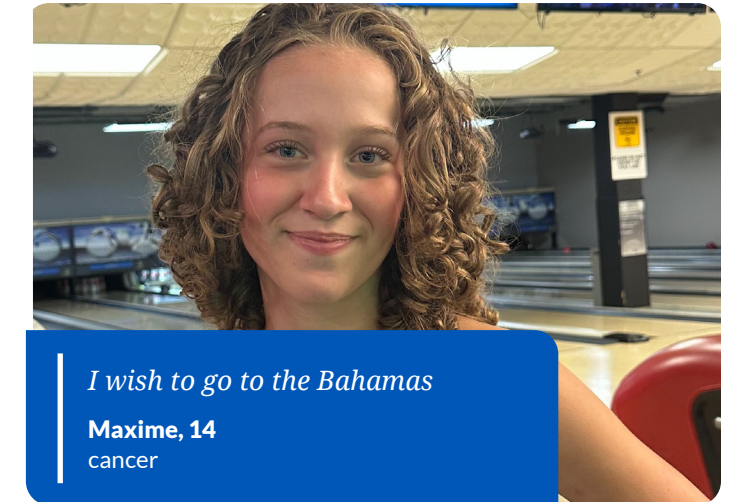
*I wish to go to my favourite
theme park*
Grayson, 8
neurological condition



*I wish to go to my favourite
theme park*
Hudson, 6
immunodeficiency



*I wish to go to my favourite
theme park*
Blake, 5
leukemia



I wish to go to the Bahamas
Maxime, 14
cancer



*I wish to go to my favourite
theme park*
Koen, 6
leukemia



I wish to go to Aruba
Julianna, 6
nervous system disorder



*I wish to go to my favourite
theme park*

Brynn, 5
leukemia

Invest in Hope






A gift of publicly traded securities is a meaningful way to help grant life-changing wishes for children facing critical illness.

You may eliminate capital gains tax and receive a charitable receipt for the full value — while granting more wishes across our province.

Learn how you can invest in hope:
makeawish.ca/donate-securities

Imagine Accreditation

Accredited under Imagine Canada's National Standards Program, Make-A-Wish Canada ensures that every donor gift is managed responsibly to create meaningful impact.

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-  makeawish_canada
-  @MakeAWishCA
-  Make-A-Wish Canada
-  @makeawish_canada

Make-A-Wish Foundation of Canada

4211 Yonge Street, Suite 301A
Toronto, ON, M2P 2A9, Canada

Charitable Registration Number:
881291918 RR 0001

Office Locations:

Northern Alberta Office:
16007 118 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB, T5V 1C7

