



LOCAL WISHES LASTING IMPACT

2025 Nova Scotia Impact 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 Nova Scotia.

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 Nova Scotia, 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 Nova Scotia.

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



“There are reasons why some people do better than others, and we don’t always know what they are. Sometimes it’s the power of positivity, the power of hope, the power of kindness, and that can literally make the difference in people’s care.”

Dr. Sarah Dyack, Medical Geneticist, IWK Health Centre
Make-A-Wish Canada Medical Advisory Committee

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



A Journey to Joy – Gia’s Wish

Gia is an energetic 10-year-old who loves life and brings joy to everyone around her. But her life began with unimaginable challenges. Within weeks of being born, Gia was diagnosed with a rare liver disorder. She showed signs of jaundice, weight loss, and other symptoms that indicated something was terribly wrong. At just one month old, Gia underwent reparative surgery, but it was unsuccessful. “When the doctors told us that a liver transplant was Gia’s only remaining option, her father and I were heartbroken,” recalls Meaghan, Gia’s mom.

Gia was placed on the transplant list, and at six months old, her family received the call that changed everything: a match had been found from an anonymous donor. In March 2015, Gia had her transplant. Her recovery was long and difficult, including pneumonia, a collapsed lung, and multiple surgeries. Today, she still faces ongoing challenges like a narrowed vessel in her liver and regular medical procedures, but despite everything, Gia is thriving. “She’s a happy, spirited girl who loves making memories,” says Meaghan.



Gia’s wish to go to her favorite theme park was something she had dreamt about for years. Walking into the park and seeing the iconic castle was unforgettable, a moment filled with pure joy after so many years of uncertainty and medical challenges. “Gia loved putting up her star at Give Kids The World Village, surrounded by other children who had faced similar challenges,” recalls Meaghan.

The wondrous moments of Gia’s wish, including meeting beloved characters, exploring the parks, and feeling carefree, will stay with Gia and her family forever. “We are so grateful to Make-A-Wish. You gave us all such hope and happiness,” adds Meaghan.

I wish to go to my favourite theme park

Gia, 10
liver transplant

From Picture to Paradise – Zeke’s Wish



Zeke is the centre of his parent’s world and a charismatic little boy. At just three months old, Zeke, who was adopted at birth, was diagnosed with a genetic nervous system disorder. This disorder increased Zeke’s chance of developing tumours during his life. “We worked very closely with his pediatrician since the diagnosis,” said Zeke’s mom, Christa.

Even with regular checkups, it was still a surprise when Zeke began having unexplained seizures around his fourth birthday. “I took a leave from work to care for him full-time,” Christa shared. After a series of tests, doctors discovered a brain tumour. “They called us the same day. We knew it had to be bad news,” Christa recalled. Zeke was admitted to the hospital and underwent two brain surgeries. “It was the longest day of our lives.”

While recovering in the ICU, Zeke began talking about going to the beach and swimming. “That’s when we first started talking about Make-A-Wish. It was a rough time. The treatment made him so sick, but he stayed this amazing, happy-go-lucky kid,” Christa said. While flipping through old photos, Zeke saw pictures of his mom and grandfather with dolphins. “He asked where he was in the photo,” Christa laughed and said the moment sparked his wish to see dolphins.

After taking swimming lessons, Zeke was now ready to visit the Atlantis resort in the Bahamas, see dolphins and fish, and build sandcastles. “He blossomed getting to play in the sand and the water every day and tells everyone he sees all about his trip and how much fun he had,” shared, Christa.

Although Zeke completed one phase of treatment prior to his wish trip, his medical journey isn’t over. Zeke will have to undergo chemotherapy for the next year and a half. Christa said, Zeke’s wish “came at the perfect time because now we all feel ready as he goes into another round [of treatment].”

I wish to see dolphins

Zeke, 5
nervous system disorder, brain tumour



Wishes by the Numbers in Nova Scotia

59

Wishes granted in Nova Scotia in FY25

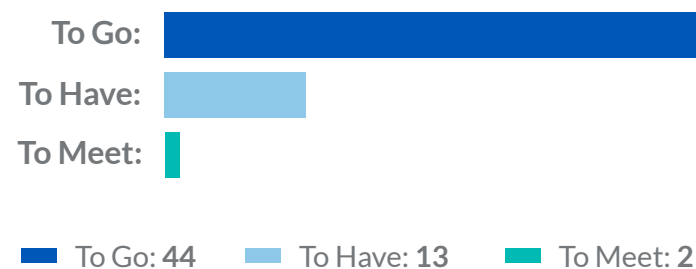
1,835

Wishes granted in Canada in FY25

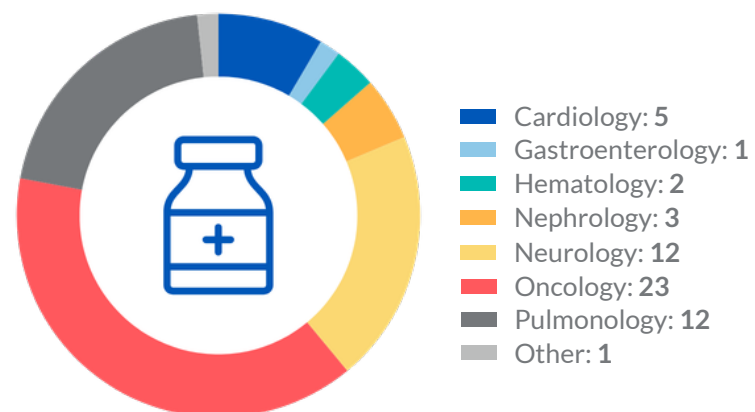
38

Communities wishes were granted in Nova Scotia in FY25

Wishes by type in Nova Scotia: 59



Wishes by Illness in Nova Scotia:



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

39 referrals were received in Nova Scotia 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 Nova Scotia.

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: Canon

"Hello, my name is Canon, and I'm 14. When I was 11, I started having pain in the left side of my stomach. After months of scans, doctors found a mass on my kidney, and I had to have my entire left kidney removed. I was diagnosed with cancer and began seven months of intense chemotherapy. Losing my hair and feeling sick week after week was difficult, but learning I was eligible for a wish gave me something to look forward to and helped me stay positive.

I'm obsessed with all things Halloween, so I wished to go to the largest Halloween convention in the world as a YouTuber! Getting to cut the ribbon to open the show, explore the massive floor, and connect with other Halloween fans was unforgettable.

I joined the STARboard because I know the impact a wish can have on a child going through treatment. A wish allows someone to dream each day instead of worrying. I'm excited to use my creativity and passion to help make a difference in other children's lives, just like Make-A-Wish did for me."



Canon
STARboard Member

Chapter Advisory Board

Nova Scotia's Chapter Advisory Board (CAB) supports Make-A-Wish in delivering fundraising and wish-granting efforts across the province. We are deeply grateful to the volunteers who share their expertise, time, and leadership.

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| John Flemming (Chair) | Grant Baldwin |
| Cory Bell (Past Chair) | Holly Bond |
| Annie Grigg-Branchflower | Jillian Sexton |
| Dr. Bruce Crooks | Phil Otto |
| Cynthia Warnica | Scott MacKinnon |
| Darren Nantes | Tammy Mercier |
| Dean Shea | Tracy Bentley |
| Fred Dundas | |

Wish Granting Excellence

Generosity takes many forms. Here's just a few examples of how the community is coming together in Nova Scotia to help grant life-changing wishes.

Friends of Charity Bingo

For more than a decade, the Membertou Entertainment Centre has supported local charities across Cape Breton. In 2025, the Friends of Charity Bingo contributed \$20,000 to Make-A-Wish Canada, helping create moments of hope, strength, and healing for wish families. This generous gift demonstrates how community-driven initiatives can make a lasting difference, turning local engagement into life-changing experiences for children and families.



MacKinnon & Olding

For the fifth year, MacKinnon & Olding returned as title sponsor of Golf for Wishes, contributing \$15,000 to help raise over \$140,000 at Glen Arbour Golf Course in 2025. Beyond their golf and Trees of Joy sponsorship, Scott MacKinnon actively supports Make-A-Wish Canada through his volunteer role on the Chapter Advisory Board, while he and his wife, Beth, participate in third-party events including Drive for Wishes and Women Fore Wishes. Their ongoing commitment reflects how leadership, family involvement, and community generosity can come together to create transformative experiences for wish families.



Clearwater Cares

Through its Clearwater Cares program, Clearwater Seafoods demonstrates a deep commitment to supporting causes that benefit children's health and wellness. In 2025, Clearwater contributed \$60,000 to Make-A-Wish Canada, including support for Trees of Joy, to create transformative experiences for wish families. Clearwater also played a special role in a wish reveal for Rowen, a 10-year-old Mi'kmaw youth from the Eskasoni First Nation community, whose wish to visit his favourite theme park became a moment of respite and healing for his family.



Michelin Softball Tournament

Organized by Jennifer Schofield of Michelin and a committee of volunteers from businesses throughout the Annapolis Valley, the Michelin Softball Tournament continues to grow in both impact and community spirit. Held over two weekends in June 2025, the event raised \$30,000 in support of Make-A-Wish Canada. The tournament included a BBQ, live music, and a silent auction, creating a vibrant celebration of community. Over the past 15 years, the tournament has become a highly anticipated annual tradition, showing how collaboration and local leadership can translate into meaningful support for wish families.



Trees of Joy Nova Scotia

An event filled with heart and hope, our second annual Trees of Joy event raised over \$150,000 through the generous support of our sponsors. Each paired with a wish kid, our tree sponsors Lindsay Construction, Ocean Contractors, MacKinnon & Olding, Workspace Atlantic, MBS Radio, Dexter Construction, Castone Construction, Hector Building Supplies, Scotia Investments, TD Canada, Halifax Harbourfront Marriott, Pineapple Bytes, and Alliance Dental got the chance to experience their impact firsthand. Through engaging their employees and creating spectacular personalized trees for their wish kid, our tree sponsors created lasting memories for our wish kids and their teams alike.



Women Fore Wishes Golf Tournament

The third annual Women Fore Wishes golf tournament returned to the Chester Golf Club on October 9, raising over \$80,000 towards our annual Make-A-Wish Women for Wishes campaign! Co-founded by one of our dedicated Chapter Advisory Board members, Tammy Mercier, and Nancy Regan, this all-female golf tournament sells out every year. This fundraiser brings together friends, community members, and corporate teams for a lively day filled with friendly competition in support of our wish kids! The Women Fore Wishes golf tournament is an example of the impact that can be made when women come together for a meaningful cause.



Ways to Give

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



Celebration & Recognition

On Course for Healing

A grassroots tournament transforms generosity into life-changing wishes.

On June 13, 2025, the Drive for Wishes Golf Tournament returned to Brightwood Golf Club in Dartmouth, bringing together friends, community members, and supporters united by a shared purpose. What began as an idea among Dartmouth resident, Tony Breau, and a group of friends has grown into an annual tradition that continues to build momentum and impact year after year.

In 2025, the tournament raised \$20,000 in support of Make-A-Wish Canada, helping create moments of hope, strength, and healing for children and families across Nova Scotia. Events like Drive for Wishes show how grassroots leadership and community generosity can translate into meaningful experiences for families when they need them most.

Beyond the funds raised, the tournament reflects the power of connection. When people come together in support of a common cause, their collective efforts help ensure that more children can experience the transformative impact of a wish.



Number of Active Volunteers in Nova Scotia: 113



Dale Ling
Provincial Volunteer
of the Year



Suzan Park MacLeod
Rookie of the Year



Shanna Burke
Community Impact Award

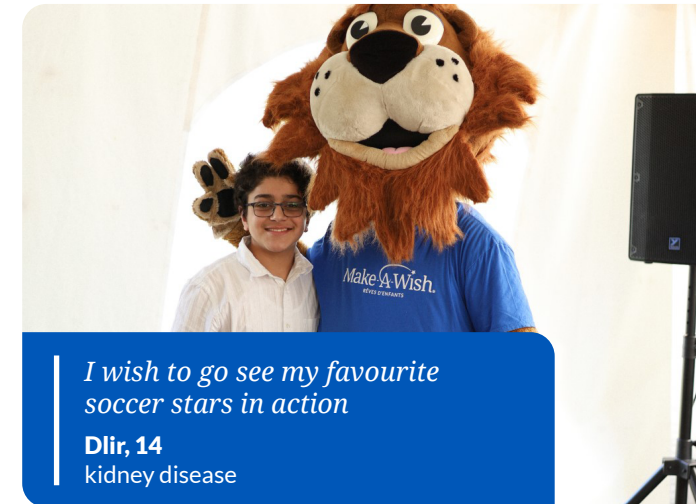
Thank You for Making a Difference

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 see my favourite soccer stars in action

Dhir, 14
kidney disease



I wish to go to my favourite theme park

Rowen, 10
kidney transplant



I wish to have a covered backyard gazebo

Daxton, 5
nervous system disorder



I wish to go to my favourite theme park

Sophie, 9
rare genetic disorder



I wish to go to my favourite theme park

Claire, 10
respiratory disorder



I wish to see dolphins

Zeke, 5
nervous system disorder, brain tumour



*I wish to go to a beach resort
in Cancun*

Rose, 7
brain tumour

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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-  [Make-A-Wish Canada](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Make-A-Wish-Canada)
-  [@makeawish_canada](https://www.tiktok.com/@makeawish_canada)

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