

# HEROES OF HOPE

YOUR IMPACT ON THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AT THE CHILDREN'S CENTER

JUNE 2020



**“My son can feel the enormous change in the world. I just wish I could fix this for him.”**



## Danyelle & Sebastian: Practicing Gratitude during COVID-19

Danyelle and Sebastian (age 11) have come a long way since Sebastian was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder at three years old. But like most families, their lives have changed immensely since the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the Shelter-in-Place Order, Danyelle is working from home and Sebastian is attending online school. They can't see Sebastian's grandmother or Uncle as much, which puts a lot of strain on Danyelle as a single mother. One of the biggest challenges has been Sebastian's virtual therapy at The Children's Center. Sebastian shared, "I'm so angry because my life has changed so much and it's not fair. It's not the same because I'm not seeing Melissa in person." When Sebastian was younger "he used to not even want to play next to

children," says Danyelle. "Now he's in a mainstream classroom. He's in the chess club and athletics at school. He is so smart and surprises me every day with how much he knows."

Recently Danyelle and Melissa came up with a good solution to virtual therapy. Melissa video chats with Sebastian on the phone, which gives him privacy; and then Melissa and Danyelle video chat to debrief.

Danyelle is grateful for the flexibility. She says, "Sebastian can feel the enormous change in the world. I just wish I could fix this for him. But COVID-19 is not something I can fix. Every day we are thankful that we are alive and healthy, and that we still have our family and a roof over our heads. It's more than many people have right now."



### Feel Good Food

Many families rely on the daily free meals provided at school and The Children's Center after-school programming. With our campus and schools closed, we are working to get every family the food they need, but this continues to be a challenge. Two local businesses, Anuja Tolia Jewelry and Fern Boutique, stepped up to help families struggling to keep food on their tables. The pair provided 80 healthy lunches from Cooking with Que to our children and families in May! Thank you for your inspiring generosity!



## Adapting to the New Normal

In March, COVID-19 took the US by storm. Our campus was forced to close with just hours to prepare how we would continue business. Our entire team has been working diligently to ensure that children and families in Detroit continue to receive the life-changing therapy and services that they need. All of this is possible because of you. Thanks to you, children are continuing to receive life changing therapy and services during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Not only were we able to transition in less than one week to begin offering mental, behavioral, and emotional health services remotely via telehealth, but we began accepting new clients and delivering crisis care services virtually as well.

What's more, the child welfare team has maintained their activity through video and phone calls. They even recruited two new host homes for youth in the Young Adult Self Sufficiency Program (YASS). What a win!

Services for children with autism and other developmental disabilities are gaining strength. Therapists in this department have seen children progress to understanding that their therapist is on the other end of the video call talking and interacting with them. This is something experts were not sure children with these types of disabilities would be able to understand.

This has not been an easy transition for anyone. But you are making it possible for children and families to keep getting the treatment they need to build successful futures.

Thank you!

## Bringing Our Favorite Activities Home

We're all trying to adjust to the new normal. For many families the new normal is causing a lot of stress on parents. Before the pandemic, families enjoyed coming to our campus for a break. Programs like Homework Help, birthday parties, and teen book club were a way to ease stress and unwind.

We have great news! In May, we launched our first virtual enrichment programs! Thanks to your support, we can now offer families their favorite activities in their homes:

- Homework Help
- Art Advanced (art skills for our advanced artists)
- Game Time
- Teen Book Club

We're thrilled to connect with our families in fun and community. Thank you for making these programs possible.





## You Can Still Make a Wish Come True

Most months we assemble a wishlist with the items our families most need. Unfortunately, in light of COVID-19, we cannot accept material donations at the moment. Here's a great idea – why not make a financial donation this month? Our families need help now more than ever to meet their basic needs.

## We Need Believers More than Ever



**HEROES  
OF HOPE**

Danyelle and Sebastian, and so many other families we serve, are significantly challenged every day by COVID-19. Unable to see or receive support from trusted family members, nor enjoy the comfort of their normal routines. Directly and indirectly, our children are some of the hardest hit by the pandemic. Show them that you believe in them by signing up to be a Believer by making a monthly financial donation at any amount. Even better – under the CARES Act limitations on charitable donation tax deductions have been lifted for 2020! You can make a difference and receive tax benefits.

You'll be fulfilling a critical role in helping our families during this devastating time. Join Believers today.

[TheChildrensCenter.com/believers](https://TheChildrensCenter.com/believers)



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