

STORYBOOK

A Publication of Coastal Kids Home Care

Winter 2020

Home Is Where Our Hearts Is

In late 2020, Central California Alliance for Health (The Alliance) awarded Coastal Kids Home Care a grant of \$1.2M toward the purchase and renovation of a new facility. We are so honored to partner with The Alliance to increase the availability, quality, and access to healthcare for children in our community.

You can contribute to this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a lasting home for pediatric health and mental health as well. Already, generous donors have contributed an additional \$650,000 to this campaign, and in late November we purchased a new home at 427 Pajaro Street in Salinas (pictured below). Donate today and show that you believe the health and mental health of our children is a priority.

Contact **Kelli Mullen Brown** to learn more about donor recognition and naming opportunities at our new home.

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Hope and Oreo Cookies



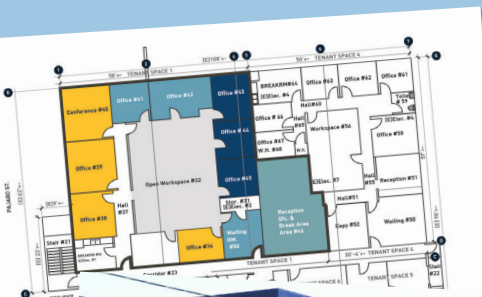
When Elliot Cortijo was born, his mom knew right away that something was wrong. In addition to respiratory and gastrointestinal issues, Elliot was unable to keep down food -- aspirating even his milk. After almost two years of check-ups and hospital stays, doctors are still unsure of Elliot's overall diagnosis. Despite being a mystery to his doctors, he is a delight to his mom, Danielle, who was anxious to bring her infant home.

"You find out that all of your fears have come true, in a hospital, with no support, and then a doctor referred me to Coastal Kids Home Care," mom recalls. "You want to be able to go for a walk, cuddle with your kid in bed, but you can't do anything like that in the hospital. Without the help

of Coastal Kids, [Elliot] would not have ever come home...and it's been so amazing to be home and feel supported."

Due to the life-threatening nature of his medical complications, Elliot qualifies for Coastal Kids Home Care's home-based Pediatric Palliative Care Program. In addition to nursing visits, Danielle receives support from social worker Kate Hulse, MA, AMFT. Kate checks in monthly, listens to Danielle's concerns, assists her to find educational and financial resources and helps her to plan for emergencies. According to Kate, "Mom is doing the best she can with a lot on her plate. I am just there to remind her that if she needs any support, I can be there to help."

Today, despite the difficulties of COVID, Elliot and his mom are doing much better. At nearly two years old, he is crawling, can sit unsupported, and is working on pulling to stand. He has also moved up the growth charts from zero to the 55th percentile. Although Elliot continues to be 100% tube-fed, he is beginning to try small tastes by mouth too. So far his favorite food is the sweet frosting inside an oreo cookie. "When he came home, he was failure-to-thrive," mom recalls. "Coastal Kids nurses came every week to check his weight and make sure he was getting the correct nutrition. He went from not eating anything to eating the inside of an oreo cookie, and I am so thankful to have had their support."



Our Mission

Coastal Kids Home Care improves the quality of life for children healing from injury or short-term illness, coping with chronic conditions or developmental delays, and those facing the end-of-life. Our staff provides in-home nursing, specialized therapies, social services and bereavement counseling to support the whole family.



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Courage throughout COVID

Molly Holmes is a typical 12 year old who loves Tik-Tok, Roblox, and her dog Annie. And this year, like most kids in California, she is attending school online, missing her friends and anxiously awaiting an end to the pandemic. However, unlike most other preteens, Molly knows how scary being really sick can be -- she has Cystic Fibrosis, a hereditary disease that affects her respiratory and digestive systems.

Just last year, a vacation to Disneyland was cut short when Molly's fever spiked while she was at the theme park. Thankfully, her Coastal Kids nurses had helped her sister Shannon, who is her primary caregiver, prepare for just such an emergency. Shannon called her Pulmonologist at Stanford and then Margy Mayfield, RN and they put in motion a plan to get Molly to a local emergency

room that specialized in pediatrics. Unfortunately for Molly, during 2019 she spent a total of 99 days in the hospital fighting off tough infections.

This year has been better for Molly, but with the threat of COVID-19, her family is being ultra cautious. Coastal Kids nurse Theresa Wynn, RN checks in on her once a month. "She is always a delight to visit and is full of spunk." Her sister Shannon is especially grateful, "With Coastal Kids coming to the house, we are able to keep Molly out of a clinic visit that could expose her to COVID-19."

Although Molly would rather be going to school and dealing with regular preteen challenges, she is making the best of this unusual year. She spends time snuggling and playing with Annie, connecting with friends on social media and soon she hopes to take horseback



riding lessons. Molly's courage during COVID is a reminder of why being healthy at home has a new meaning in 2020.



Lucy's Joyful Smile

Lucy is a happy nine month old with a sweet laugh and a social disposition. Early on, however, her moms Kristen and Christine noticed that their infant was having trouble eating, gaining weight and moving in a typical way. Lucy was referred to UCSF, underwent dozens of tests, and had a g-tube placed to ensure she was getting adequate nutrition.

Doctors have not yet determined the cause of her challenges and her family expects to undergo additional genetic testing soon. Meanwhile, Lucy is developing at her own pace under the watchful eye of Pediatric Physical Therapist, Trish Krall, PT, DPT, C/NDT, "When [Lucy] was evaluated for physical therapy back in April, she was having difficulty with gaining weight which prevented her from exploring her world and made her very tired," recalls Trish. "Now, she uses a g-tube for nourishment and is catching up on her gross motor skills like rolling, sitting and standing with support."

According to Kristen, Lucy has progressed leaps and bounds since April. "It's been amazing to see how far she has come from when we first met Trish. She didn't have any energy and even the simplest movement was really challenging. Today, Lucy is still a little behind, but she is now rolling across the living room. We would not be to this point and seeing these positive changes without the help from Trish and all the different specialties involved in her care. We are so thankful." Lucy's four-year-old brother, Oliver, is a big help too. In fact, trying to keep up with Oliver is her best motivation. Although Kristen and Christine continue to look for answers to Lucy's puzzling condition, they also enjoy each moment with their precious daughter. Kristen recently joked that, "Lucy is a joy to be around -- despite her teething."

In 2020, vulnerable children needed us even more. Your support brought...

COVID-19 testing to dozens of medically fragile children in the safety and comfort of their homes.

Clinic based and telehealth counseling for 50 children with anxiety and other mild mental health concerns.

More than 40,000 hours of shift and respite nursing for children with round-the-clock medical needs.

Home nursing and therapy visits for 500 children with cancer or other serious-illness or injury.

Family centered palliative care services to 65 children with life-limiting illness including compassionate end-of-life care for nine children and their families.

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