The Veliz-De los Santos family have been coming to Family House for more than four years while their son, Marcello, is treated for COPD. Our goal of providing family-centered care means that the whole family—mom, dad, grandma and baby sister—can be with Marcello while he gets better.
Dear Friends,

As we turn the page on another chapter at Family House marking our 40th anniversary, it is clear that we must be doing something good. Reflecting on the numbers of children served (over 50,000) and the best-in-their-field UCSF pediatric physicians who have conducted excellent research and treatment, the opportunity to provide family-centered care alongside these unsung heroes is a privilege. The ongoing banter about heroes common in the media these days is pale in comparison to the dedication, hard work and compassion of our doctors and the courage of their patients.

One of the things of which I am most proud is that Family House provides our children equal access to the brightest minds in pediatric medicine, no matter social status, income level, family background or geography of our families. We are here to serve. We are here to listen. And we are here because cancer and other life-threatening illnesses do not discriminate on the size of a family’s house, income, culture, or education. What I know for sure after 20 years at Family House is that a parent is a force of nature when it comes to keeping their child safe. Think of the reaction of any adult when seeing a child in the path of an oncoming car: you jump into action without thinking. That’s what happens when a diagnosis; parents want to act and act quickly to correct whatever anomaly has ripped a family from normalcy. Throughout the years, I have seen parents with no resources accomplish magnificent acts against all odds to get their sick child to San Francisco and am in awe.

Family House is the conduit between a sick child’s family and the hospital that makes long term treatment possible for families who live at least 50 miles away. We provide gas cards to families so they don’t have to go dumpster diving for cans and bottles to raise gas money; special diets can be easily accommodated at Family House; and this house becomes a home with meals, birthday parties and small events of every kind that celebrate the cultural differences and similarities among us. The coin of the realm is dignity, and I thank each of you for your role in making that space possible.

As we look forward to 2022 and another 40 years of providing comfort of other families, and we are forever grateful to them for making it happen. The Meditation Room was provided for the whole Kovacevich family that the Meditation Room be provided for the comfort of other families, and we are forever grateful to them for making that space possible.

Welcome Todd Kovacevich

We’re delighted to welcome Todd Kovacevich as the incoming Chair of the Family House Board of Directors. Todd brings leadership, compassion and humor to this role. Todd and his family became involved with Family House after the loss of son, Joey, to brain cancer. The Meditation Room on our first floor is named for Joey and inspired by the beauty of one of his favorite places, the Maroon Bells in Colorado. It was important to the whole Kovacevich family that the Meditation Room be provided for the comfort of other families, and we are forever grateful to them for making that space possible.

Jocelyn Story: Jocelyn Dominguez

By Chrissy, Family House Mom

Right after her 1st birthday, Jocelyn was diagnosed with stage 4, high-risk neuroblastoma. When we found the giant 7x7cm tumor in her chest, it was wrapped around major arteries and nerves and dangerously close to her spinal cord. We were faced with the decision of starting treatment near our home in Sacramento, or to go to one of the top Children’s hospitals in the world… over two hours away. Ultimately, the logistics of it didn’t matter and off to UCSF we went to save her life.

We also had an older son to take care of, so we found a routine that allowed us to switch every few days so Jocelyn would always have a fresh parent. Every weekend, we tried to bring our son down so we could all be together as a family. It was in these moments when we found out about Family House.

The last thing we were concerned with was whether it be food, a hot shower, or sleep. But when we were brought over to Family House and had all of that, and more, we were recharged for this marathon fight like nothing else could have provided. The staff were so welcoming and had this unspoken warmth as if they knew the exhaustion and emotional drain our bodies had been through.

After sleeping in the hospital for days on end, it wasn’t lost on me that I finally had a private and quiet space to rest. No beeping machines or nurses walking in every hour. Then, I awoke to find a refrigerator stocked with food and a warm breakfast already prepared and ready to eat. I was filled with gratitude. It’s like they thought of all the things I wasn’t thinking of that I needed to take care of myself. And I walked back to the hospital happy, and most importantly hopeful, to take on another day.

When Jocelyn was able to leave the hospital, but needed to stay close by for daily treatment, Family House was a blessing. Instead of worrying about spending thousands on hotels to be close to the hospital, we had a space to call home, a kitchen with food, toys for everyone to relax, and incredible volunteers who cooked meals for us, chatted with us and played with our children. It felt like a glimpse of normal life again where we weren’t thinking about the hospital for a moment.

Jocelyn loved running the halls there, playing with the other kids going through the same thing, and all the special events they held to keep the kids and families happy. There were bounce house birthday parties, music parties, arts and crafts, cookie making, movie nights, and a celebration for every possible holiday so you never felt like you were missing out. They literally thought of it all and we felt so special and loved.

This place was joyous, it was comfortable, it was clean and welcoming, it was nothing short of “home.”

Jocelyn just celebrated 3 years since the completion of her treatment and is a wild and joyous 5-year-old finishing her first year of kindergarten. She enters the next phase of her journey at UCSF which is joining the Survivor’s Clinic—a miracle milestone we never knew if we would reach.

We continue to rely on Family House for our routine scans and appointments every few months and Jocelyn squeals with delight when she knows we’re going to be staying there. To be able to continue our outstanding care at UCSF and not have to worry about where to stay or the logistics of it all is such an unbelievable blessing. We absolutely LOVE Family House and they will be part of our family forever.

“Family House was joyous, it was comfortable, it was clean and welcoming, it was nothing short of ‘home.’”
Making an Impact in 2021

Family House celebrated our 40th anniversary last year, and because of friends like you, we have served more than 75,000 families since 1981!

Each night, Family House provides up to 80 families with temporary housing and a supportive community, 100% free of charge. These families travel at least 50 miles to receive world class treatment for their life-threatening diagnosis. Here’s how you helped us make a difference in 2021.

Families served reporting a household income of under $50,000: 62%

PATIENTS BY DIAGNOSIS

- 15.6% are from the Bay Area
- 74.1% are from the rest of California
- 10.3% are from outside California

In 2021, we served families from 22 different U.S. states and 4 foreign countries!

PATIENTS BY LOCATION

- 50% Oncology & Hematology
- 21% Cardiac Care
- 14% Fetal Treatment
- 15% Other life-threatening illnesses

“Family House has made our stay, and my daughter’s medical treatment, so much easier. This is an amazing and supportive facility.”

– Sarah, mom to 8-year old Elle, traveling from Connecticut to be treated for a brain tumor

In 2021, $3,409,325 was spent directly on serving families in need. Our diverse sources of income and sound fiscal oversight ensure that we can continue to deliver on our mission and meet our annual operating costs of more than $4.7 million.

How You Can Help!

There are many ways to make an impact at Family House!

- Donor-Advised Funds: Contact your fund to recommend a distribution to Family House using our tax ID 94-2722663.
- Check or Credit Card: Make checks payable to Family House, Inc. and mail to: 540 Mission Bay Blvd. North San Francisco, CA 94158
- Donate online at familyhouseinc.org/donate
- Stocks & Securities: By donating stock directly to Family House, you can avoid paying capital gains taxes when the stock is sold. Email jcreager@familyhouseinc.org to donate stock and securities.
- Will or Trust: Making a gift to Family House through your will or trust is a generous way to provide lasting support that will allow families to live in dignity for years to come. Visit familyhouseinc.org/plannedgiving to learn more.
- Fozzy’s Toy Room: Every child—patient or sibling!—receives a toy when they check in to Family House to make it feel more like home. Whether it’s a book, puzzle, stuffed animal or game, we welcome new gifts for children of all ages! Learn more at familyhouseinc.org/fozzy.

Join the Conversation!

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube @FamilyHouseSF to stay up-to-date with what’s happening at the house, and to share our impact with your friends.
Keeping Families Together

THE CAMPAIGN FOR FAMILY HOUSE’S FUTURE

A life-threatening illness causes chaos, and when it’s a child who is sick, families are turned upside down. Navigating the unrelenting stress of fighting a disease is compounded by the added complexities of traveling to access necessary, cutting-edge treatment.

In 1981 a small group of pediatric oncology physicians and parents recognized the need for a guest house near the hospital at UCSF. They established Family House.

FAMILY HOUSE TODAY

The Nancy and Stephen Grand Family House is a haven for families in need. Shelter, sustenance and support are in ample supply so parents can focus on family and the challenges they must face. Family House is the critical link to the best medical care available and it is completely free of charge and within walking distance of the UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital, a national center for cutting edge research of pediatric diseases.

The tangible benefits of Family House are clear; the most meaningful experience of staying at Family House is the emotional support shared among resident families. Only those in similar circumstances can truly appreciate what it means to care for a critically ill child and suspend normal family life.

Nearly 75% of families served qualify as low income.

Without Family House, they could not come to San Francisco to participate in life-saving research and treatment. Not only does Family House provide critical social services and community support for patient families, we bring equity in access to the best healthcare.

THE FUTURE AT FAMILY HOUSE

To secure the future of uninterrupted compassionate housing for the families we are privileged to serve, Family House has launched a $40 million campaign, Family House Fund for the Future.

This fund will ensure that our essential services will never be interrupted.

At Family House, we are mindful that the past can inform and help shape the future. The COVID pandemic made clear that the unprecedented is possible, and if unprepared, could have a devastating effect on our ability to provide core services to our families. The campaign will provide critical resources for the following three initiatives. First, Ensuring a Stable Foundation, supporting our People & Programs. Second, Strengthening Our Walls, supporting our Facility. Third, Expanding Our View, supporting our Vision.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

Family House Fund for the Future

1 Strengthening Our Walls

Supporting our Facility

- Facility upkeep
- Building upgrades
- Ongoing fund for replacing Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment

Since 1981, Family House has served more than 75,000 families.

Your support will strengthen the walls of Family House—literally. Your gift will be used to ensure the continued upkeep and maintenance of our Mission Bay facility, construct a commercial kitchen, and convert spaces to better serve our families, including ADA compliant restrooms in public spaces.

In addition, we will be able to purchase additional COVID/virus resistant furniture and disinfecting equipment. And, these funds will help us complete key maintenance and upgrade work to maintain the extraordinary standards of service our families deserve.

2 Ensuring a Stable Foundation

Supporting our People & Programs

- Ongoing baseline program support
- Living Wage

The foundation of Family House is not just concrete - our true foundation is the families we serve and those who give so much to serve them.

Our annual budget is projected to remain at $5.2M. This initiative will help support current programs and service levels right away, as well as our new operating procedures that ensure the health and physical safety for our families and staff as a result of COVID. In addition, we will use your gift to help establish a living wage for our team, and to support critical DEI initiatives that are a key backbone to serving a diverse community of families.

3 Expanding Our View

Supporting our Vision

- Program Innovation & Expansion
- Expanded mental health services
- Increased capacity

At Family House, we pride ourselves on the innovation and growth of our programs and services. While the original mission primarily focused on pediatric oncology patient families, we now provide refuge and community to families whose children are in need of critical support for issues ranging from cardiology to fetal treatment to life-saving transplants.

Your gift will be used to provide additional programs and financial support for our families, including expansion of our mental health professional services, an absolutely critical need post-COVID. In addition we intend to establish a reserve fund to explore expansion of Family House to serve more families, potentially involving other hospitals and locations.

WWW.FAMILYHOUSEINC.ORG/FUNDFUTURE

MEASURING YOUR IMPACT

“My son, Kingston, was diagnosed with biliary Atresia at 10 weeks old. He received a liver transplant at five months. When he was discharged from the hospital, we were so grateful for the opportunity to stay at Family House, along with my 2-year-old son and my mom. Family House was a beautiful and safe place for us to stay while my son was returning to the hospital nearly every day for treatment. I can’t say enough about Family House, and how they truly made us feel like a family.”

LISA, KINGSTON’S MOM, SANTA ROSA, CA

“When families have a child with an illness that requires extended medical care, they often have to move away from home, further increasing stress. Family House provides a safe, comfortable, and welcoming home away from home where the whole family can recover. Family House is essential for families in their time of greatest need.”

HAMMIN LEE, MD, PROFESSOR AND SURGEON IN CHIEF, UCSF BENIOFF CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

“Unfortunately cancer doesn’t come alone; it comes with lots of bills and lots of driving miles to the hospital. We are very blessed to have a place to stay and to get warm food while our daughter is receiving chemo. Driving 275 miles each way is hard with a sick child.”

CARLA, MOM TO 18-YEAR OLD DARLY WHO IS BEING TREATED FOR AN ABDOMINAL TUMOR, FORTUNA, CA
Thank you, Bobby!

We’d like to extend a special thanks to our rockstar volunteer and community member, Bobby Thomas, also known as “Bobby the Bunny.” Bobby has been volunteering with us for 26 years and has raised more than $310,000 for the families that rely on us for care, comfort and compassion.

OUR MISSION & CORE VALUES

Founded in 1981, Family House serves as a home away from home for families of children with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses by providing physical comfort and emotional support, free from financial concerns.

Compassion: Support for families who endure the most trying experience of their lives is central to our mission.

Sanctuary: Providing a safe, comfortable, worry-free living environment enables families to focus on their healing.

Family: Providing an environment where families naturally connect and find hope, comfort, and healing within each other.

Care: Affordability is not a factor for parents looking for world class care for their child’s life-threatening illness.

Community: Providing opportunities for 5,000 volunteers annually to make an impact on the lives of our families.

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