



# THE THERAPEUTIC PLAYGROUND PROJECT 2022



**THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL TRUST**



## A DREAM PLAYGROUND IS ON ITS WAY

*An inclusive play area will provide a rich, inclusive play space where children of all abilities can grow and learn through physical, sensory and social experiences. Play is a crucial part of any child's development and holistic healing journey.*

In a world of imagination, children are the most powerful creators. Suddenly a cardboard box is a magical vehicle for extraordinary adventures; a makeshift tent of blankets and chairs becomes a cave with a sleeping bear inside. For many of the little patients at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, all they dream of is being healthy and happy again, to be with their families and to play with their friends.

Based on global statistics, half of the world's 2 billion children have been victims of at least one or more types of serious traumatic experience. The Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital sees over 250 000 patients each year with various high-risk and specialised medical conditions. Medical professionals who perform life-saving interventions on patients recognise the need for Therapeutic Play as it plays a crucial role in the journey of healing and rehabilitating patients back into their normal lives.

**The Children's Hospital Trust has embarked on a remarkable project that will develop safe and stimulating new multi-purpose Therapeutic Play areas at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital which will cater for children of all ages and abilities, including outpatients, their caregivers and other family members as well as inpatients who are well enough to leave the ward supervised.**

**100% of your donations** will go towards building a magical and interactive **Therapeutic Playground** which will provide each child with an escape from the reality of their traumatic associations and experiences.

This beautiful playground was designed in partnership with the Hospital management team, the Occupational Department and specialist medical staff in an inpatient environment like RCWMCH whose hearts are joined to give back childhood.





## HEALING THROUGH PLAY THERAPY

*“My dream is to be a policeman when I grow up, so that I can help children just like me.”* These are the words of 9-year-old Bethu, a courageous little boy from Philippi. Bethu was in a tragic accident that left him reliant on a wheelchair and unable to walk without assistance, and despite his health challenges he continues to dream of walking and playing with his friends again.

*His healing journey started when he entered the doors of Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital; he immediately received specialist care and medical attention at the Emergency Centre after the awful accident.*

*Now, Bethu is on his way to healing and attends the physiotherapy department to help him rehabilitate back into his everyday life. He requires special assistance to help him regain full mobility and various exercises that will help him regain the elasticity of his skin. Through Therapeutic Play, children like Bethu can heal faster and have fun while learning to overcome their traumatic and stressful experiences.*

*The play areas will allow children to learn how to socialise, increase their mobility, and reduce anxiety. Especially so for the little ones who have experienced trauma, play is a way to rebuild trust and confidence. We also know that it is proven that play reduces anxiety, improves motor skills, and aids in the neurological, cognitive, and overall holistic development of children.*

***“Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child’s soul.”***

**- Friedrich Froebel  
(founder of the concept  
of kindergarten)**



# A DREAM PLAYGROUND IS ON ITS WAY

## WHY DO CHILDREN NEED PLAY?

Play is the primary and most significant occupation of any child. Through play, children develop critical physical, cognitive, social and emotional skills. They learn how to interact with their environment and people within their environment - most importantly for many of the children at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital (RCWMCH), they heal with every journey to the playground!



### 1. Did you know?

Rocking activities activate the vestibular system by moving the body in a rocking manner. This provides the patient with a sense of balance and helps them understand information about their body positioning.



### 3. Did you know?

Equipment like a hand or footrest improves static and dynamic balance as well as strengthens and builds the core of the body. This is ideal for children who are recovering from motor vehicle accidents or who have experienced broken bones.



### 5. Did you know?

Symbolic play like a stage, playhouse or steering wheels provides children with an imaginary escape from the traumatic and stressful hospital environment.



### 4. Did you know?

Activities that address sense of touch like sensory walls, sensory gardens, a sandpit or a maze aids in the sensory development and cultivates their sense of touch again after trauma.



### 2. Did you know?

Climbing a jungle gym addresses the proprioceptive system by providing activities that allow for the contraction and stretching of muscles and the compression of the body's joints. This specifically aids children who experience weak muscles or skin tightening from burns.

An inclusive play area addresses the needs of all children, including those with physical, developmental, cognitive, and sensory disabilities.

## YOUR CONTRIBUTION & PROJECT INFORMATION

### YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL HELP US TO:

1. Develop a safe and stimulating new play area and garden outside the main entrance to the Hospital that will cater for children of all ages and abilities.
2. Upgrade the S1 courtyard to a multi-purpose play area for patients who are awaiting services.
3. Upgrade the courtyard adjacent to the Occupational Therapy and Neurodevelopmental Clinic to an area that allows for Therapeutic Play as part of the rehabilitation process as well as a space to play while they wait for clinicians.
4. Upgrade the play area at DCAP (specifically for the inpatients at the Therapeutic Learning Centre) to allow for therapeutic play during admission.

### PROJECT INFO:

Commencement Date: **2022**  
Duration of Project: **12-month period**

### OUR TARGET

**R17.5 million** to fund the Therapeutic Play Area over the next year.

### IMPACT:

- Annually, the RCWMCH Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Departments see approximately:
- Physio Department: **10 000 Patients**
- Occupational Department: **9000 Patients**



# DONATE TODAY

Help us heal through play because every little one counts!

## Donate at:

[www.childrenshospitaltrust.org.za](http://www.childrenshospitaltrust.org.za)

Tel: +27 21 686 7860

WhatsApp: +27 71 224 4777

Email: [cht@chtrust.org.za](mailto:cht@chtrust.org.za)

## South Africa

Bank: Standard Bank

Branch: Rondebosch

Branch code: 025009

Account No: 071 443 126

Reference: Play + Cell phone Number

Physiotherapist Rukaiya dreams of thriving kids and families:

[CLICK TO WATCH VIDEO](#)

Dr Dirk dreams of a new playground at Red Cross Children's Hospital:

[CLICK TO WATCH VIDEO](#)



# Every little one counts

