

2024 Impact Report

# A VISION TO KEEP OUR CHILDREN HERE



Lincoln, heart patient



# THERE IS NO BETTER TIME THAN NOW

Each year, thousands of families in Central Texas receive the news no parent wants to hear—your child has a serious, life-threatening disease.

For these families, the words that often follow are difficult: Your child's best chance of survival lies elsewhere. At Dell Children's, we're committed to ensuring that the children in our community and their families do not have to hear these words or leave home for lifesaving care.

With community support, Dell Children's continues to invest in people, facilities, and technology as we take a giant leap toward becoming one of the top-tier pediatric institutions in the country.

**71%** of Dell Children's kids are un/underinsured



Tucker and Kate Thompson with son Holtin, DCMC patient

## Dear friends and supporters,

In the Fall of 2022, Kate and Tucker Thompson learned that their unborn baby had a complex and life-threatening heart condition. They were told that their child would not survive, that termination was their best choice. Desperate for another option, the Thompson family found Dell Children's, our Fetal and Heart Centers and Dr. Charles Fraser.

Holtin Thompson was born in March 2023 in the Dell Children's Specialized Delivery Unit and underwent immediate, life-saving heart surgery. He quickly began to grow and thrive. **Holtin turns two this spring, and his health and his family represent the exact purpose of Dell Children's HERE Campaign.**

Without the visionary growth of Dell Children's over the past 5 years, we would not have been ready to care for Holtin. His parents would have had to seek care far away from home. Things could have been very different for this precious baby and his family.

Gratefully, Dell Children's is poised and ready to care for complex babies, children and adolescents unlike ever before. **Through strategic investments in people, facilities and technology, Dell Children's has grown to be a true destination for world-class pediatric care** while doubling down on our commitment to equity and access. This advancement has been catapulted by philanthropy, an investment of \$106,000,000, made possible by you. Thank you for believing in our mission and giving so generously so that we may serve all children in need.

In the pages that follow, we are honored to celebrate the accomplishments of the Dell Children's HERE Campaign for Growth, with a focus on the achievements of this most recent year. This moment is historic for Dell Children's as we look to the future to ensure our pediatric ecosystem is HERE to stay for generations to come.

Gratefully,

Susan Hewlitt, Executive Director  
Dell Children's Foundation

## Investing where it matters most



**Access**  
The Fetal Center has begun to expand fetal imaging resources for Central Texas as they are the only program to offer Fetal MRIs and have recently begun offering fetal echocardiograms last year.



**Equity**  
The embedded psychosocial team at the Fetal Center is dedicated to removing barriers to care for their patients. Whether it is the utilization of a travel fund to aid patients and families to afford travel to Austin or lodging once here, or thoughtful and thorough navigation of resources for families facing hardship with copays or lack of insurance.



**Cutting Edge Care**  
The Fetal Center performed their first EXIT Procedure this year. This procedure is highly specialized and only three Fetal Centers in Texas, including Dell Children's, can do them. This procedure is performed when a baby's airway is blocked prior to delivery and they will not be able to breathe once they leave the placenta. Dell Children's fetal surgeons partially delivered this baby, allowing them to preserve critical circulation while our team secured the baby's airway, over a 60-90 minute window.

# AN AMBITIOUS GOAL RIGHT HERE AT HOME

Dell Children’s Foundation launched HERE Campaign fundraising efforts in 2019, and an ambitious \$90 million dollar goal set the stage for the largest campaign in the Foundation’s history.

The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation committed to a **\$30 million matching grant** for the advancement of pediatric care in Central Texas in support of Dell Children’s HERE Campaign for growth. Because of this generosity, the impact of our partner’s investments have gone further, ensuring quality specialty care for children right here, at home.

This comprehensive campaign successfully raised critical funds for three key areas; capital, program, and endowment. Capital funding led to the construction and opening of new cutting edge facilities expanding the hospital’s capacity and providing spaces and state of the art equipment for the most advanced specialty care. Program funding established and expanded the following Centers of Excellence: the Texas Center for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Disease, the UT Health Austin Pediatric Neurosciences Program, the Children’s Blood and Cancer Center, and the Comprehensive Fetal Care Center.

Perhaps the most important part of these acclaimed Centers of Excellence are the people. **HERE Campaign programmatic funds have helped to recruit world class physicians** across these key areas. These visionary leaders have inspired supporters to ensure their work will be perpetually sustained for years to come with the establishment of Dell Children’s first ever Endowed Chairs. We know this is just the exciting beginning of so much more to come.



## Grace’s Story

Grace Jennings was born with a congenital heart defect that required multiple cardiac operations early in life. In September 2019, Grace became the first pediatric patient in Central Texas to undergo the implantation of a left ventricular assist device (LVAD), which is a mechanical pump that supports the circulation and partially replaces heart function in people who have weakened hearts.

For 15 months, Grace was connected to a battery pack and controller that stored the LVAD while waiting for a heart transplant at her home. She attended school and remained active at home while being supported by the LVAD. However, on December 9, 2020 Grace was airlifted to Dell Children’s after suffering a brain hemorrhage. She remained in the intensive care unit at Dell Children’s until she received her donor heart.

Due to Grace’s complex medical history, her unique anatomy and a multitude of past operations, she was not able to receive a heart transplant at other healthcare facilities. **Dell Children’s cardiac surgical team has been committed to providing the best possible outcome for this remarkable little girl**, first with the LVAD, and 15 months later with a heart transplant.

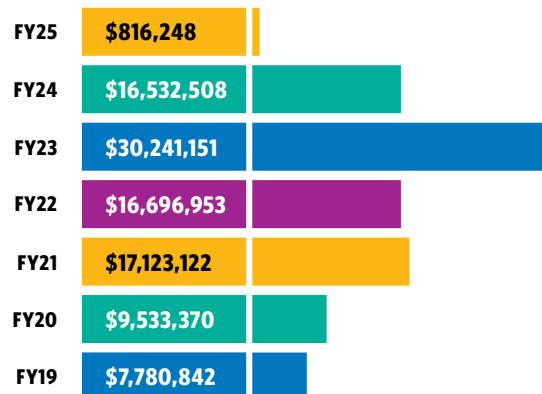
“Grace has an indomitable spirit, and she’s determined to get better and stronger everyday.”  
—Dr. Charles Fraser, Chief of Pediatric and Congenital Surgery for UT Health Austin’s Texas Center for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Disease at Dell Children’s.

**\$106**  
Million

In 2024, Dell Children’s Foundation surpassed the \$90 Million HERE Campaign goal with gifts committed of more than \$106 Million.

## HERE Campaign Dollars

FY20-FY24 DCF Fiscal Year July 1 - June 30



Capital: \$71,125,677  
Program: \$11,234,102  
Endowment: \$16,364,414

# WHERE PEDIATRIC CARE IS ALWAYS MOVING FORWARD

- Program & People Milestones
- Capital & Equipment Milestones

2018                      2020                      2021                      2022                      2023                      2024



**2018**  
 Dr. Charles D. Fraser, Jr. joins Dell Children's to establish Heart Center  
 Dr. Steve Roach joins Dell Children's to lead Pediatric Neurology



**March 2020**  
 Specialty Pavilion Groundbreaking



**Summer 2020**  
 Special Delivery Unit Groundbreaking

**2020**  
 Dr. Kenneth Moise joins Dell Children's to lead newly developed Fetal Care Center

**December 2020**  
 First Heart Transplant



**April 2021**  
 Specialty Pavilion Opening

**May 2021**  
 Construction begins on Dell Children's North

**July 2021**  
 Special Delivery Unit Opening

**July 2021**  
 First baby (Paisley) born in Dell Children's Special Delivery Unit



**November 2022**  
 4th Bed Tower Opening

**February 2023**  
 First Ever Endowed Distinguished Chair at Dell Children's honoring Charles D. Fraser Jr., MD

**October 2023**  
 Dr. Amir Mian joins Dell Children's to lead Children's Blood and Cancer Center



**2023**  
 Neurosciences, Heart, and Neonatal programs Nationally Ranked in US News & World Report among the nation's best



**April 2023**  
 Dell Children's North Opening

**December 2023**  
 NICU expansion adding an additional 24 beds for a total of 56



**February 2024**  
 Doubled capacity of Cardiac Critical Care Unit from 24 to 48 beds

**February 2024**  
 2,000 Heart surgeries in 5 years

**Spring 2024**  
 Dr. Dave Clarke honored with Inaugural Kozmetsky Family Foundation Endowed Chair

**October 2024**  
 Six programs ranked in U.S. News & World Report



**January 2025**  
 Dr. Erin Gottlieb honored with the Sewell Family Endowed Chair in Pediatric Cardiac Anesthesia

**January 2025**  
 iMRI Estimated Project Completion



**YOUR SUPPORT HELPS THOUSANDS OF KIDS, LIKE WILL.**

### Will's Story

On Sunday, February 3rd, 2019, Will Allen and his father, Tim, were leaving baseball practice when they were involved in a near fatal, head-on collision auto accident. Tim had just returned home to Dripping Springs after his mother's funeral, and was ready to be back home with his family. Will, who was only seven years old at the time, had just entered the select baseball world and was a focused and fierce competitor. They were headed home from baseball practice to go watch the Super Bowl with his family when the head on collision happened.

When help arrived at the traumatic scene, Will was taken to Dell Children's Medical Center where the family learned he suffered a spinal cord injury and was paralyzed from right below the chest down. Following surgery, Will was moved to the inpatient rehabilitation unit where he started his road to recovery. He remained at the hospital for 6 weeks where he worked with speech, occupational, and physical therapists who all saw Will's resilience each day. When he was released from the hospital, Will didn't look back and faced the challenges of his new life head-on.

Five years later, Will is doing exceptionally well! Wheelchair basketball has provided him an outlet for competition and remaining active. He goes to therapy weekly and the ultimate goal remains to one day stand and walk again. For everyone that knows Will, they know and believe it will happen one day. He's a kid that has incredible spirit, strength and determination. He's a kid that has inspired all that know him with the way he's handled his situation. As he told his dad, "Dad I wouldn't change anything, this is the path that has been chosen for me." He's his family's hero and they are so proud of the young man he's becoming. The future for Will is bright and the progress the family has made since this accident would never have been possible without the amazing support from family, friends and our community.

### In 2023, Dell Children's provided pediatric care for



**69,959**

Emergency Room Visits



**424,043**

Patient Encounters at Dell Children's Medical Center



**9,305**

Surgical Cases

# HERE, OUR CARE IS AWARD-WINNING

Dell Children's ranks among America's best multiple years in a row in U.S. News & World Report



**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
NEONATOLOGY  
2024-2025

**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
ORTHOPEDICS  
2024-2025

**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
PULMONOLOGY  
2024-2025

**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
RANKED IN 6 SPECIALTIES  
2024-2025


**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
CARDIOLOGY & HEART SURGERY  
2024-2025

**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
PEDIATRIC & ADOLESCENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
2024-2025

**BEST CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS**  
U.S. News & World Report  
NEUROLOGY & NEUROSURGERY  
2024-2025

## Dell Children's Growth in Numbers

 **48**  
Sub-Specialties

 **21**  
Outpatient Clinics

 **6**  
Emergency Departments

 **4,098**  
Team Members

 **335**  
Hospital Beds

 **5**  
Dell Children's NICUs



## Charlotte's Story

Charli is almost five, but the past three years have felt much longer for the Hilz family. Their world took a dramatic turn when she began experiencing seizures at just two years old. "They pretty quickly diagnosed her with epilepsy," Charli's mother, Mackenzie, recalls. **Charli was experiencing up to 20 seizures a day**, many appearing as brief absences or moments where she seemed to "space out." She even had a 25-minute seizure that only went away after a visit to the ER of another hospital where doctors initially downplayed the severity of her condition.

Things changed when Mackenzie's aunt, a doctor at Dell Children's, connected them with Dr. Dave Clarke, Chief of the Dell Children's Comprehensive Pediatric Epilepsy Center at DCMC. **The real breakthrough came when Dr. Clarke pinpointed the cause of Charli's seizures—a small coil in her brain that had formed incorrectly in utero.** Since her surgeries, Charli's progress has been nothing short of miraculous. "Dr. Clarke gave us our lives back," Mackenzie says, her voice filled with gratitude.

"I'll never forget, before her surgery, she couldn't color inside the lines. Two days after we got home, she was coloring perfectly—it was like this barrier in her brain was gone."

Much of Charli's remarkable recovery is credited to the care she received at Dell Children's Medical Center. The family felt supported at every step, from Dr. Clarke's expert guidance to the compassionate nurses and staff.

“From Dr. Clarke to the guard at the front of the hospital, we felt like our hands were being held the whole time.”  
—Mackenzie, Charlotte's mother

## Holtin's Story

Kate and Tucker Thompson were expecting their first baby boy in March of 2023. During an ultrasound, they discovered a heart defect and heard news no parent wants to hear. **Holtin was diagnosed in utero with a congenital heart defect called Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS)**, where the left ventricle does not fully develop in utero. HLHS is 100% fatal if no intervention takes place.

They later learned that Holtin had another complication at hand called TAPVR (total anomalous pulmonary venous return), where the veins that bring blood from the lungs back to the heart do not properly hook up to the heart. To treat HLHS, Holtin would eventually need three open heart surgeries in the first few years of life. Holtin's diagnosis was extremely complex and critical. Despite this, his parents remained strong and faithful and did everything they could to find him the best care. This led them to Dell Children's Medical Center.

In the weeks following his diagnosis, Kate and Tucker met with both the Texas Center for Pediatric and Congenital

Heart Disease and the Comprehensive Fetal Care Center at Dell Children's. They uprooted their lives in Canyon Lake, Texas to make Austin their temporary home for the months to come.

On March 3, 2023, their miracle boy arrived. He was born at Dell Children's Special Delivery Unit via planned c-section. At three days old, Holtin went in for his first of three open-heart surgeries. His recovery over the next few months was nothing short of a miracle. **Through many ups and downs, Holtin was defying all odds and quickly earned the nickname "Little Lion."** He was and is a fighter. Holtin went on to have his second open-heart surgery on July 28, 2023 and went home just three weeks later.

He and his parents remain close to Dell Children's, but are savoring every moment with their boy at 'home'. They spend countless hours staring at him in awe of all that he has accomplished in his first few months of life. Kate and Tucker are forever grateful for the amazing care they received at Dell Children's.



## Jackson's Story

Jackson was a happy, easygoing and sporty 3 year old, when he started to complain of leg pain. He then started experiencing intense leg pain that would wake him in the middle of the night. After about 2 sleepless nights and follow ups, the thought was that Jackson had viral arthritis, which is sometimes a side effect after having strep. Jackson was treated with pain relievers and seemed to recover – until the sleepless nights returned 2 weeks later, with Jackson even calling out “It’s in my bones!” Back to the doctor he went, where after a negative Strep test and a normal CBC panel Jackson’s doctor thought it might be growing pains, but to cover all bases ordered an x-ray.

It was on August 16, 2021 that the Limburg’s lives were turned upside down with x-ray results showing a growth on Jackson’s left femur. On September 28th, the Limburg’s received the call from Dr. Neff at the Dell Children’s Blood and Cancer Center that it was **Burkitt Lymphoma, a form of fast growing non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma that impairs immunity and is rapidly fatal if left untreated. Jackson’s medical team at Dell Children’s wasted no time and his treatment began immediately!** Over the course of six months, Jackson received 5 rounds of treatment which consisted of chemotherapy, lumbar punctures, transfusions, infusions, oral medications, and steroids, spending the majority of those months’ inpatient at Dell Children’s on 4 North and at the Blood & Cancer Center.

**The Limburg’s are so grateful for everyone who took the absolute BEST care of Jackson, making him feel like being at the hospital was an adventure,** including a never ending supply of toys and snacks, visits to the fish pond to feed the coy fish and Patrolling 4N in one of the little vehicles; making the nurses, doctors and other staff laugh as he made his rounds.

On March 4, 2022 Jackson received his remission diagnosis and the Limburg’s couldn’t be more excited to be on the other side of this journey. However, it was bittersweet knowing they wouldn’t be spending as much time at Dell with all their friends they have come to know and love. Jackson will have quarterly follow-ups and afterwards he makes sure to stop by and say hello to his friends on 4 North. The Limburg’s want them to know they will never forget them!



# OUR EFFORTS TODAY, BRING HOPE TOMORROW

The Mission of Dell Children’s Foundation is to raise philanthropic dollars in an ethical and strategic way to impact the most children with the best care.

Our vision for the future is to endow the hospital so that our efforts today will, in perpetuity, help to heal and bring hope to children in future generations.

Now that the Foundation’s HERE Campaign has successfully established the needed cash flow propelling Dell Children’s growth forward to meet the needs of our vibrant community, we are looking ahead to the next phase.

## HERE TO STAY

### **A march to grow the Endowment for Dell Children’s to \$250 Million.**

Looking back on all that we have built, it is now time to build a safety net to sustain it. Sustaining these powerful Centers of Excellence, and all that Dell Children’s is to our community for generations to come means growing the endowment.

**An endowment is more than a philanthropic fund; it is a perpetual source of financial stability and growth.** It is also an essential resource that helps bring healing and hope to children and their families when they need it most. When you make a gift to the Endowment for Dell Children’s, you create a lasting legacy that ensures continuous support for our programs and services—for all children.



Join us today. Scan here to give to the Endowment at Dell Children’s.



WHERE

BIG

things are

HAPPENING



Claire, neuro patient