



Families FIRST



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Letter from Executive Director

Hey friends,

You're likely reading this during the time of a pandemic and are tired of Zoom meetings and hand-sanitizer. The refreshing part about this report is that it looks at 2019 and all of the positives that year brought to Me Fine. Hopefully you can use this as a bit of respite from quarantine fatigue.

While it has been bandied about over the recent past, I'm quick to lean on the Fred Rogers quote about "Look(ing) for the helpers." Every year, Me Fine is met with new challenges: changes in how healthcare is delivered and accessed, a growing population of need and referrals, our own motivation to do more for our community, etc. I remember when I started at Me Fine almost eight years ago, Lori told me that there was something about this organization in that things would "always seem to work out." I'm not sure if it's kismet, providence, or something more, but 2019 was another example of things working out for Me Fine. Sure, we face our challenges like anyone else, but the support that we receive from the community continues to push us forward, stretching our imaginations and abilities to new heights.

Simply put: you, the readers of this Gratitude Book and all of our supporters like you are *the helpers*. On behalf of our staff, Board of Directors, and most importantly the families we serve, I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for the ways you've helped us be a vital part of this community. As we continue to meet the needs of our neighbors, we hope you'll continue to help us: Give, volunteer, spread the word - whatever your heart moves you to do. We're thankful for it.

Humbly,

Joey Powell
Executive Director, Me Fine Foundation

Our Core Values

At Me Fine Foundation, we have one guiding principle: *Families come first.*

This means:

- ✓ We prioritize family dignity, privacy, and self-determination.
- ✓ We use our mission as the litmus test for all operational decisions.
- ✓ We honor and affirm the lived experiences of the families we serve, in their own words whenever possible.



OUR MISSION: to provide hope through emotional support and financial assistance to families whose children are receiving care at North Carolina partner hospitals.

OUR VISION: to build and sustain partnerships to eliminate barriers so families can focus on their children.

Your Impact in 2019

Family Financial Assistance Program

Financial Assistance **grew over 46%** in 2019—Me Fine provided support to a record **418** families, up from our previous record of 286 in 2018.



418
FAMILIES

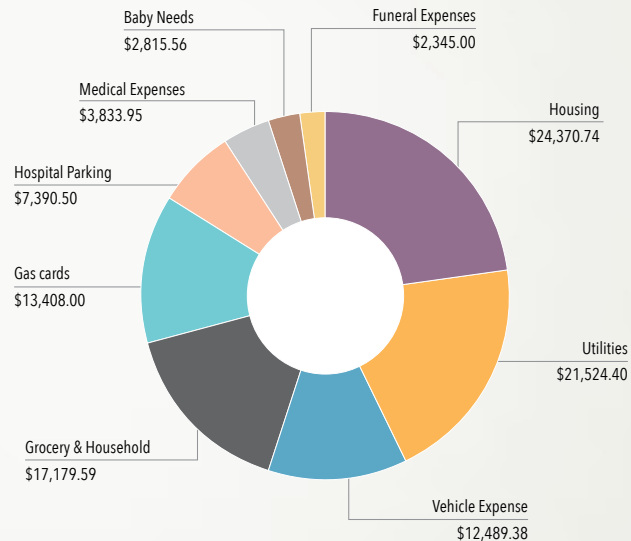
benefited from financial support

\$252

average family request filled



Range from \$10 (one day of hospital parking or a small gas card) to \$995 (a car payment, a partial mortgage payment, and a month of cell phone service over the course of a 6 month admission).



Families at our partner hospitals **received \$108,779 in in-kind support**, ranging from toys and gifts through our Christmas In July and Hope for the Holidays programs, basic needs support, and even hockey nights in our donor-provided private suite for Carolina Hurricanes home games.

Your Impact in 2019

Emotional and Social Support Programs

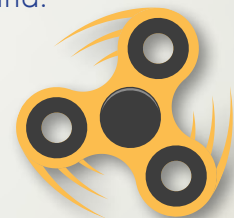
Beads of Courage

Now sponsored at seven units across all three partner hospitals. Long-time Me Fine supporters may already be familiar with Beads of Courage, the internationally-renowned program that enables pediatric patients to record, tell, and own their stories using colorful beads as meaningful symbols of courage and hope along their treatment journey. But how can we celebrate the unique journey that caregivers experience during their child's treatment? Enter the **BeadStrong Parent Program!** Me Fine is proud to expand our sponsorship of Beads of Courage to include this arts-in-medicine supplement especially for caregivers to recognize their own moments of courage and hope.



Sensory Kits

Expanded from 1 kit at the end of 2018 to 18 kits across our partner hospitals. The hospital can be a scary and anxiety-producing place for anyone. The bright fluorescent lights, constant beeping of equipment, and unfamiliar routines can be especially challenging for pediatric patients who have sensory processing issues or require sensory distractions to help manage their emotions. "Fidget" items, such as the Busy Fingers Marble Maze, an air-filled "wobble seat", or Frik Frack Fidgets, offer an outlet for excess energy; Find-It Games and Sight & Sound Tubes help focus an active mind. Noise-reduction headphones, weighted blankets, and weighted stuffed animals provide sensations of safety and security, helping to calm anxiety. Liquid Motion bubblers and LED Light Projectors bring soothing visual fluidity to a sharp, stark, and scary hospital room. All of these tools in the hands of hospital staff can help de-escalate tense treatment situations and ensure the best possible outcomes—medically, emotionally, and psychologically—for the entire family.



Your Impact in 2019

Emotional and Social Support Programs

NEW Program Spotlight: On-Site Resource Boxes

Me Fine strives to be both flexible and responsive: we partner with hospital social workers for referrals and assistance can often be provided the same day. Yet we've learned that some situations require an even faster response.

For example...

- A parent struggling to feed multiple siblings during her child's prolonged hospitalization needs a grocery card in her hand today, not sent to her home 150 miles away.
- The parent who misses paychecks to bring their child for multiple treatments each week needs a gas card to cover fuel costs for the trip home from their hospital visit.
- The family who just sat with their child as they passed away and can't afford to pay the fee to exit the hospital lot deserves the dignity of a parking voucher.

To meet these needs, Me Fine began an **On-Site Resource Box program** in Fall 2019. Our resource boxes contain gas cards, hospital parking and meal vouchers, and grocery/gift cards that are essential for families of pediatric patients. By allowing hospital social workers to have quick, direct access to these forms of assistance, we remove another barrier to family togetherness.

The initial results have been positively staggering: though the Resource Boxes were only introduced in September, **25% of the 418 families we served in 2019** received support from them. In just 6 months, these Resource Boxes have already benefited nearly 200 families!



Your Impact in 2019

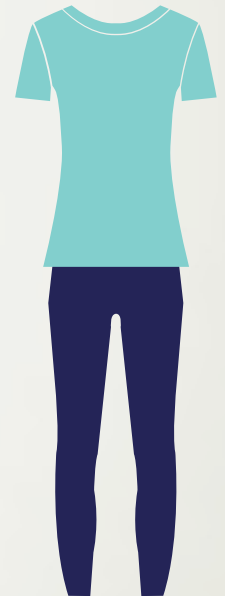
Emotional and Social Support Programs

NEW Program Spotlight: Meeting Basic Needs for Inpatient Families

In our listening sessions with hospital staff last Spring, Me Fine heard again and again of the challenges families face during an unplanned admission. Many arrive with only the clothes on their backs and won't be able to go back home for days or weeks. The personal care products available at the hospital are designed to keep overhead costs low rather than to provide true comfort. In response, Me Fine initiated two new programs to meet families' basic needs:

CLOTHING CLOSET (piloting at UNC Children's, expansion to Duke Children's planned for 2020)

An assortment of new clothing items in a range of sizes for adults and adolescents. We stocked the closet with men's and women's underwear, cozy tops and pajama pants, sports bras, and sweats. Thanks to Cisco for their in-kind support!



TOILETRY KITS (available for all partner hospitals)

Individual kits with hygiene essentials, including quality hair care products, face wash, lotion, deodorant, shower scrubby, and more! Thanks to Yardi for their in-kind support and to Chiesi USA for their financial and hands-on support of this project!

In Their Own Words

Family Story



Will and I are first time parents and we were blessed with twin girls, Olive and Rosemary. At 27 weeks, we were informed of Rosemary's condition. We were introduced to Duke staff/doctors/surgeons and had a lot of confidence in them. Shortly after, we learned the girls were in the 2nd percentile of growth. This isn't uncommon for twins but for Rosemary, this could keep her from her much needed surgery and if she did have her surgery, her small size could play a role in her success. We only shared this with immediate family and our employers. Fast forward to today and we are 5+ weeks post-op and Rosemary has been moved to the progressive care unit at Duke. This is a journey and every day, we learn more about what our lives will or could look like. Rosemary is our fierce little fighter and Olive is her loving sister.

We have found that patience is so helpful from others. Patience with responses, patience with our exhaustion, patience with our emotions, and patience with our time. This has been a huge help to us and those close to us.

For me, what I wish others knew or understood about a family with a child who has a chronic/critical illness is that this is a marathon. We will have strong moments, weak moments, apathetic moments, and asking "Is your child okay now?" is a very difficult question to answer as it's a constantly changing response. Also, know that love, understanding, and positive thoughts/prayers go so far and are always appreciated.

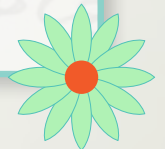
In Their Own Words

Family Story

Four months ago, [my daughter] was saying she wanted to go to school at UNC Chapel Hill. She said she wanted to study pediatric oncology nursing. This was all before she was ever diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma. Once she was diagnosed, she really wanted to go through chemotherapy because she wanted to have the experience to share with other people.

Life is crazy since we found out about [her] cancer. We've learned to be extremely flexible in our schedule, where before all this started, our calendar was planned four months in advance. Now, we go week to week. We have all sorts of extra medication, shower chairs, wheel chairs, crutches, a "go" bag, etc.

Additional costs for us come mostly at home & travel, things like grabbing a quick meal on the road or buying a new removable shower head. Those little things tend to add up. Our insurance has covered everything so far. We've been fortunate to have a church and people around us to help support us. Another thing we wish people knew is they are not alone. We've had more people who have been through childhood cancer journeys give us advice and point us in the right direction.



How You Raised Awareness

Music for Me Fine

The Fourth Annual Music for Me Fine was the largest and most successful of its kind! The Stock Room at 230 hosted nearly 300 Me Fine supporters and music lovers on April 26. Local fave Tonk opened up for New Reveille, filling the venue with the sounds of Americana to raise money for Me Fine. **Music for Me Fine 2019 raised nearly \$100,000, surpassing all prior goals for the event.**

Special thanks goes out to Southern First Bank for their presenting sponsorship of such a great evening.



How You Raised Awareness

Me Fine Gala



Me Fine took the 2019 Gala on the road for the first time in many years, hosting our signature event at The Cotton Room in Durham on October 26th. **Over 400 of our best friends donned their best frills and bowties for the “Roaring Twenties” theme. Raising more money than any single event in Me Fine’s history, the Gala generated over a quarter of a million dollars for Me Fine’s work.** Centrifuge Media served as the evening’s presenting sponsor for the eighth year in a row(!).

In the first ever public-nomination of Me Fine’s Hero For Life, **Katie Haynes was named the 2019 recipient of Me Fine’s highest honor.** The Founder of “Smiling While Sending Hope,” Katie has battled many complex illnesses in her twenty years, and has consistently been a beacon of light for others dealing with chronic illness and the providers caring for them. The award recognizes those who go above and beyond to help critically ill kids and families in ways aligning with Me Fine’s mission. Headbands of Hope founder, Entrepreneur and Author Jess Ekstrom served as the keynote speaker.



“

“We were able to accomplish so much this year,” said Jaclyn Starritt, Gala chair and board member. “Our committee went above and beyond to create an amazing evening, and our supporters again gave with their hearts to show how much they care for the children and families that Me Fine serves.”

**Gala photography credit to Davies Photography*

How You Gave in 2019

Major Donor - Michelle and Clark Morris

"It's no surprise we support the Me Fine Foundation - we do it for the kids! In our personal and professional lives [at Carolina Pediatric Dentistry], we feel a sense of calling in our shared mission in caring for all children, particularly those receiving treatment for critical illness. The challenges that caregivers of these children face are varied, complicated, and enduring. It is our honor to support a local organization that enables them to be there both physically and emotionally to best support the most precious thing in their lives."



Me Fine Sustainer - Marypaz Mendez

"Over the years of being part of Second Hope I've seen firsthand the many ways that Me Fine supports the families in the hospitals. There are families looking for some support in their weakest point of their lives, seeing their child suffering, struggling to make rent while living in the hospital, and that's where Me Fine comes in. Being part of this really brings joy to my heart because I know that the amount I give goes above and beyond with this Foundation. I personally know that I'm not the richest but if I can help in any way possible I will without a doubt, and at the end of the storm I know there is always hope."



How You Gave in 2019

Corporate Sponsor



People and ideas for innovation in healthcare

From Ken McBean, President and CEO, Chiesi USA

"I'm speaking on behalf of our entire Chiesi USA family when I say how much our partnership with Me Fine Foundation means to every one of us. Your mission to support families of medically fragile children reflects our own commitment to serve people in need in our local communities across the country. The direct support you provide, along with your contributions to emotional support programs offered in your partner hospitals, are critical to helping patients, caregivers, and siblings through this tough time. We honor your work."

In Kind - Empire Properties



EMPIRE
PROPERTIES

★ *Empire Eats* ★
Restaurants!

From Greg Hatem, Founder - Empire Properties & Empire Eats

"At Empire Properties, we think Me Fine is a very fine way to spend our energy. Of all the organizations we support in NC, Me Fine truly tugs on our hearts the most."

Your Support and the Big Picture

Financials

Statement of Financial Position (condensed), as of 12/31/19

Current and Other Assets:	\$172,959.20
Fixed Assets:	\$141,435.40
Total Assets:	\$314,394.60

Long Term Liabilities:	\$57,475.67
Equity:	\$228,788.24
Short Term Liabilities:	\$21,231.13
Total Liabilities:	\$314,394.60

Statement of Financial Activity (condensed), as of 12/31/19

Donations and Grants:	\$177,112.64
Event Revenue:	\$340,821.06
Retail Proceeds:	\$266,431.77
Miscellaneous Income:	\$12,508.80
Total Revenues:	\$796,874.27

Org. Performance:	\$673,327.07
Fundraising:	\$127,090.91
Total Expenses:	\$800,417.98

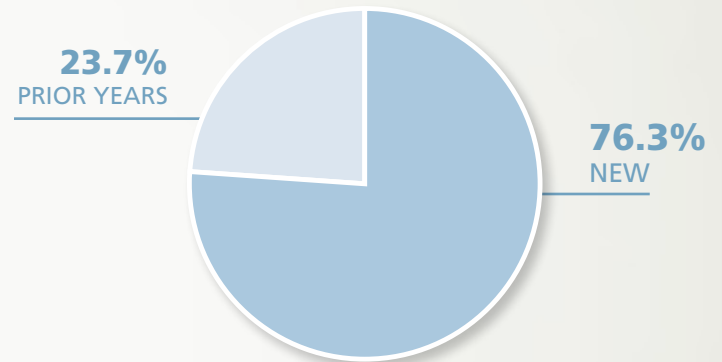
Your Support and the Big Picture

IMPACT by the Numbers



served by Me Fine programs.

Percentage of
New vs. Prior Families



Of 418 Families helped by Financial Assistance,



145

at Duke Children's



218

at UNC Children's



55

at WakeMed Children's

Your Support and the Big Picture

IMPACT by the Numbers

815

total assistance
payments



95%

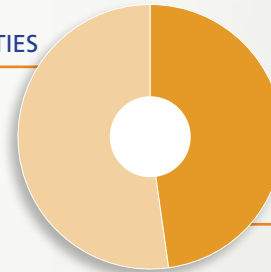
families served
were from NC



503

total financial
donors in 2019

52%
URBAN COUNTIES



48%
RURAL COUNTIES

169

donors gave more than one time



Continue to Provide Hope

Volunteer

Me Fine serves hundreds of children and families each year, and we couldn't do it without community team members like you. Me Fine delivers support to our families as they need it, and our volunteer opportunities reflect that focus.

You can volunteer by collecting gas cards. Throughout the year, we have opportunities for individuals and small groups to join us in packing toys at our storage unit. Me Fine also relies on the generous assistance of volunteers at our two major events, the Me Fine Gala, and Music for Me Fine. **Contact us as these events near for opportunities to support fundraising, logistics, registration, design, and more.**



@ MeFineFoundation



@ MeFineNC



@ MeFineFoundation



Me Fine Foundation



MeFineFoundation.org

Continue to Provide Hope

Second Hope Shop

5100 US Hwy 70 East, Princeton, NC 27569

Want to make a bigger impact? Coordinate a neighborhood drive by posting on social apps like NextDoor or your neighborhood email listserv. Thrift Drives are a great way to involve your work team, civic or religious group, and other groups of people. The Second Hope Shop team can even come pick up your group's donation!



The Second Hope Shop is always looking for new or gently-used items to resell, specifically large (working) appliances and furniture.

Items that the Second Hope Shop cannot accept:


mattresses; waterbeds; computers; printers; pianos and organs; rolling infant walkers; cribs; car seats; newspapers or magazines; worn or stained furniture; ammunition and firearms; hazardous materials; or items that are broken or in need of repair.

Wish List: new or gently-used

- Clothing (all sizes and seasons)
- Shoes
- Purses
- Jewelry
- Books
- Kitchenwares
- Appliances, large and small (*must be functional*)
- Household items
- Towels/Linens
- Home decor
- Furniture
- Electronics
- Toys
- Baby items
- Tools
- Automotive accessories

Second Hope makes regular pickups

around the Johnston/Wake/Durham County areas. If you'd like to schedule a pickup for your donations, please reach out to the contact info below.

 (919) 202-0445

 MaryAngel@SecondHopeShop.com

 SecondHopeShop.com

 [@SecondHopeShop](https://www.facebook.com/SecondHopeShop)

2020 Board of Directors

Colleen McGowan - Chair
Webb Bostic - Immediate Past-Chair
Garret Klas - Finance Committee Chair
Jaclyn Starritt, PhD - Programs Committee Chair
Emily Fera - Gala Committee Co-Chair
Shriya Soora - Gala Committee Co-Chair
Matt Phillips - Development Committee Chair
San Parikh, Esq. - Governance Committee Chair
Ben Steel - Music for Me Fine Chair
Laura Brewer - Mar/Comms Committee Chair
Claudia Cadet, MD - Board Member
Katherine Hutchinson, PhD - Board Member
Rob Hamilton, CPA - Board Member
Bryan Strothmann - Board Member
Stephanie Mazze - Board Member
Alejandro Peña - Board Member

Who We Are

Me Fine Foundation Staff

Joey Powell, Executive Director
Mary Angel Bastin, Second Hope Shop Manager
Meredith Richbourg, Program Director

Feeling inspired? Make an impact on the lives of children and families right now with a donation: mefinefoundation.org

You can also mail contributions:
Me Fine Foundation
Mission Post Suite
318 Blackwell Street, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27701



Give, volunteer,
spread the word—
whatever your heart
moves you to do.
We're thankful for it.



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