

St. Jude Parents

NOVEMBER 2019

Paws at Play offers therapy dogs

St. Jude recently welcomed two new staff members, who walked through the doors on four furry legs. Huckleberry, a goldendoodle, and Puggle, a golden retriever, are the newest members of the Child Life department. They are part of St. Jude Paws at Play, a dog therapy program.

Hospital dogs aren't pet dogs

From the moment hospital dogs are born, they are trained for the important work they will do. These four-legged friends offer patients social contact, reduce stress and stimulate senses through animal-assisted therapy.

Some children at St. Jude may be anxious about treatment. Puggle and Huckleberry work with their humans in Child Life to help patients cope with receiving treatment and being in the hospital.

The Paws at Play program aims to distract patients from their illnesses, symptoms, pain and anxiety. These hospital dogs will offer love and acceptance. They will also motivate and support patients.

Puggle works mostly in the inpatient Solid Tumor and Neuro-Oncology units with primary handler Brittany Reed. Huckleberry works in Diagnostic Imaging with primary handler Shandra Taylor. These St. Jude handlers have received special training to work with the dogs in the hospital.

The dogs live with their primary handlers. When Puggle and Huckleberry are not at work, they

relax and play with other members of the handlers' families.

Paws at Play and Doggy Daze

Child Life organizes two programs that connect patients with dogs—Paws at Play and Doggy Daze. Each helps St. Jude patients in a different way.

Paws at Play therapy dogs are certified service dogs and are official hospital employees. Their job is to help patients achieve goals. These dogs wear green service vests and ID badges to work.

Doggy Daze volunteers are carefully screened therapy dogs that simply provide comfort and affection to patients and their families during volunteer shifts. These dogs wear green bandannas when visiting. Sessions with these dogs are brief and may include several patients at once. See the calendar on the back for Doggy Daze dates and times.

What is the difference between a service dog and a hospital dog?

Service dogs are trained to help perform tasks to ease their handlers' disabilities. These dogs help their handlers gain independence and remain safe. Service dogs should not be petted. This could distract them from their important work.

Hospital dogs, sometimes known as therapy dogs, are also trained service dogs, but their main focus is to provide therapy to people who are not their handlers. Hospital dogs are certified to perform animal-assisted therapy for patients and families at

hospitals.

What will the hospital dogs do?

Puggle and Huckleberry will help children in many ways. They may:

- Offer support during procedures
- Help kids comply with taking medicines
- Encourage patients to move after surgery or during long hospital stays
- Take part in mock-scanner sessions to reduce sedation
- Help with end-of-life needs

What if my child is allergic or fears dogs?

When one of the dogs is in your area, please let the handler know your child is allergic or scared. The handler will work to avoid contact with those who have fears or allergies.

Can I pet the dogs?

Puggle and Huckleberry enjoy love and affection from everyone. Please ask permission first from the handler rather than approaching the dog. Clean your hands with alcohol or wash with soap and water before and after touching a hospital dog.

You can follow the adventures of Puggle and Huckleberry on Instagram @stjudepaws.

Our St. Jude is here

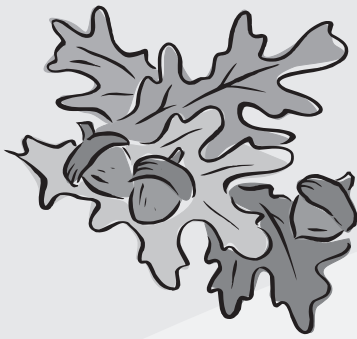
The official app for St. Jude patients and families launched October 21. With the *Our St. Jude* app, you can access your schedule, travel and housing information, meet your care team members, get directions around campus, and discover articles written by St. Jude experts.

Our St. Jude was developed for St. Jude patients and families and designed to make visiting campus as easy as possible. You can download the app from the Apple App Store or Google Play. It can be found by searching "Our St. Jude."

Once you download the app, you'll be asked to create an account. You will need to use the email address of the patient's legal guardian to create your account. If you have questions or concerns about the *Our St. Jude* app, please email oursjsupport@stjude.org.

Puggle and Huckleberry with their primary handlers Brittany Reed and Shandra Taylor.





Flu shots for caregivers, siblings

Influenza, “the flu,” is a virus that causes symptoms like fever, chills, cough and body aches. It can easily pass from one person to the next. In many St. Jude patients the disease can be severe.

These are the best ways to prevent flu infections:

- Clean hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Avoid contact with those who have flu symptoms.
- Avoid crowds during flu season.
- Get an annual flu shot.
- Take anti-viral medicines after exposure to people known to have the flu (under a doctor’s advice).
- Limit the number of visitors your child has at St. Jude and in housing.
- Discourage family members from coming to the hospital if they have flu symptoms (cough, sneezing, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, chills).

When all family members get the flu shot it helps provide a circle of protection around the patient. It is one way to keep the virus from coming close to your child.

St. Jude provides the seasonal flu vaccine to all patients, staff members, adult caregivers and patient siblings who are 6 months old or older.

The free flu shots for caregivers and siblings are offered Monday through Friday from 1–4 p.m. in the Patient Care Center Assessment and Triage area.

Look for signs on bulletin boards around the hospital for times and locations where you, other caregivers and siblings may receive free flu vaccinations.

If you have questions about the vaccine, talk to your doctor or your child’s primary clinic staff.

Family Commons construction begins this month

During the past few years, patients and families have often been asked what would improve the hospital environment. Families offered many ideas that together became St. Jude Family Commons. Scheduled to open in early 2021, Family Commons will be a treatment-free area. It will give families a place to relax, recover and reconnect.

Family Commons will become the central location for non-medical family services. These will include the St. Jude School Program and Patient Services. It will also

offer new spaces for patients to rest between appointments and create art and music.

Family Commons will span the entire Patient Care Center second floor.

To prepare for construction, the Linda R. Hajar Family Resource Center (FRC) and the Family Porch nearby will close Monday, November 11.

During construction, the FRC welcome desk will be in the north lobby of the Patient Care Center first floor. The desk will be near A Clinic

and the Medicine Room. Services will be limited to faxing, printing and helping you locate resources, including notary services.

Once Family Commons is complete, the FRC will return to the second floor. The new FRC will have expanded services for patient families.

Feel free to stop by the FRC welcome desk on the first floor starting November 11. Thank you for your understanding as we work to improve the patient and family experience at St. Jude.

St. Jude Parents is published on the first of each month by Patient Education and Biomedical Communications. Your questions and comments are important to us. **We want to print advice and tips from St. Jude parents to other St. Jude parents.** To share your ideas or to receive this newsletter by email, please call or email Samantha Ransone, RN, PhD, at 901-595-3334 (ParentsNewsletter@stjude.org) or Lois Young (loislane.young@comcast.net). To subscribe to an online version of this newsletter or to learn more about *St. Jude Parents*, visit www.stjude.org/parents-newsletter. St. Jude is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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ATTENTION: If you speak another language, assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-278-5833 (TTY: 1-901-595-1040).

تنبيه: إذا كنت تتحدث باللغة العربية فيمكنك الإستعانة بخدمات المساعدة اللغوية المتوفرة لك مجاناً. يرجى الاتصال بالرقم 1-866-278-5833 (الهاتف النصي: 1-901-595-1040).



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