

## Featured Nonprofit

July 2010

### Ronald McDonald House Charities® Wichita

Ronald McDonald House Charities® Wichita (RMHC Wichita) provides and supports programs that directly improve the health and well being of children. Families are stronger when they are together and their presence helps a sick child heal faster and cope better. Last year, RMHC Wichita supported over 1,700 families, all because of the love and generous donations of our donors and volunteers.

Ronald McDonald House Charities® Wichita serves families with children under the age of 21 who are critically ill or injured and in the hospital, or visiting doctors, traveling to appointments here in the Wichita area, or receiving long term treatment for illness and injury. A survey conducted in 1982 found that many out-of-town families of children hospitalized in Wichita hospitals had nowhere to stay. Many slept in their cars or waiting room chairs. Some chose not to treat their critically ill children because they couldn't find affordable lodging.

The Department of Pediatrics at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita and Junior League of Wichita, in conjunction with the generosity of McDonald's owner/operators and other community support, founded the first Wichita Ronald McDonald House® near Wesley Medical Center in 1983. The House is called the Sleepy Hollow Ronald McDonald House. With the opening of the Midtown Ronald McDonald House in 1985 near Via Christi Hospital at 929 N. St. Francis, Wichita was able to meet the needs of many more families.

The Ronald McDonald Family Room®, located inside Wesley Medical Center, opened in 1998 after it was determined that along with out-of-town families, local families also needed a place to "rejuvenate" while visiting their hospitalized children. The Ronald McDonald Family Room offers a place for families to rest and refresh right at the hospital, only steps away from their sick child's bedside. Staffed completely by volunteers, the Wesley Ronald McDonald Family Room has been a place of respite for thousands of families since the opening.

Susan Smythe, CEO/Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities Wichita, said, "Every day we see families that would literally be sleeping in their cars if it weren't for the tremendous support from all of our staff, volunteers, individual donors, and corporate sponsors. Whether it's a soft bed, a warm house, the smell of freshly baked cookies in the kitchen, or just a sympathetic ear, Ronald McDonald House Charities Wichita meets the needs of these families so that they can concentrate on helping their sick child get well. Thank you for standing with us every day. We are so grateful, and the families that we serve are so grateful as well."

For more information, log on to [www.rmhcwichita.org](http://www.rmhcwichita.org), call RMHC Wichita at 316-269-4182 or send an email to Susan Smythe, CEO/Executive Director at [ssmythe@rmhcwichita.org](mailto:ssmythe@rmhcwichita.org).